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# Naqqāli and Ferdowsi: Creativity in the Iranian National Tradition

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# Naqqāli and Ferdowsi: Creativity in the Iranian National Tradition

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NAQQALI AND FERDOWSI:

CREATIVITY IN THE IRANIAN NATIONAL TRADITION

Mary Ellen Page

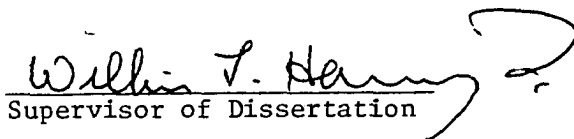
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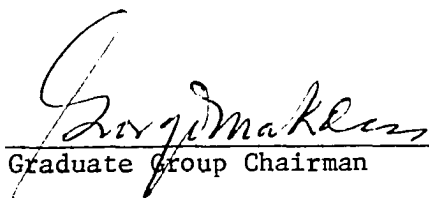
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## I

### Introduction

Around the year 1000 A.D. Abu 'l-Qasem Ferdowsi wrote a verse epic called the Shāhnāma [Book of Kings].<sup>1</sup> In this epic Ferdowsi set down the Iranian past, legendary and historical, drawing upon much pre-Islamic material to explain the legendary history of Iran from the beginnings of the world to the Arab conquest in 636 A.D. Ferdowsi's work has probably been the focus of more research than any other single work in Persian literature and has come to dominate the study of the national tradition.<sup>2</sup> Much research has been concerned with tracing Ferdowsi's motifs, reaching back into the pre-Islamic Zoroastrian tradition to find antecedents,<sup>3</sup> examining the way in which Ferdowsi's version excels in presentation,<sup>4</sup> or how it represents historical reality.<sup>5</sup>

At the same time there has always been the knowledge that Ferdowsi's version of the Shāhnāma is only one version of material of which many other versions exist. Some scholars have been interested in examining written works from the medieval period which expand upon the Shāhnāma stories. The tracing of story lines or motifs has been of great concern.<sup>6</sup>

Recently a few people have become interested in the fact that the national tradition is still being retold and reworked. These scholars have directed their attention to the oral literature of



Iran. One of these scholars, Abu 'l-Qasem Anjavi, has published a collection of Shāhnāma stories which he recorded from lay storytellers around Iran.<sup>7</sup> Even while he is publishing alternate versions of the Shāhnāma stories, Anjavi declares himself a firm believer in the greater value of Ferdowsi's work.<sup>8</sup> He makes no real attempt to explain why such stories abound or what relationship they have with the written tradition. Much of the attitude toward the collection of these texts reflects the judgment of Theodor Nöldeke about the medieval epics which were written after Ferdowsi's version of the Shāhnāma:

It is a common opinion, that a great deal of popular epic tradition has been preserved in those poems. It might sound a little bold, if I flatly deny that and declare the contents of those narratives to be essentially a free fancy of the respective authors.<sup>9</sup>

Furthermore, all the concern with the collection of variants of Shāhnāma stories, coupled with the veneration which Ferdowsi has received, implies that there is a correct version of the Shāhnāma (probably Ferdowsi's) and that any other version is the result of imperfect knowledge on the part of uneducated raconteurs.<sup>10</sup>

The mass of research centering on variants ignores the fact that the national tradition exists only in its being reworked and reinterpreted, so that popular versions are as valid and meaningful as written versions, and need not be merely corruptions of an ideal (written) text. Once the reworking of the tradition ceases to be meaningful to the audience, the tradition will disappear despite written versions.<sup>11</sup>

Virtually no research on Iran exists which comments upon the storyteller's role in his society or the cultural values of storytelling<sup>12</sup> or which attempts to come to terms with the relationship of the oral and written stories of the Shāhnāma. One study, centering on the professional storyteller, was done by Forud Ismail-Begi. Unfortunately, the study amounts to little more than a very superficial, and somewhat romantic, description of storytelling in modern Iran.<sup>13</sup> Several articles have appeared in the last few years in Iran concerning storytelling.<sup>14</sup> These articles, however, tend to consider storytelling only as a rather quaint reflection of past times and a preserve for old traditions, ignoring the social meaning which the activity still has today.

Folklorists studying other parts of the world have been interested in the form and meaning of oral literature.<sup>15</sup> Scholars like Robert Georges have seen that stories do not exist so much in a perfect form with variants as they become real in the telling. Georges feels, however, that a tradition centering on the telling of stories rather than on the story itself exists only in places where written texts have not affected the storytellers:

. . . widespread literacy affects storytelling because the very models, which written stories provide -- even for those people who cannot read them, but who are exposed to and affected by them nevertheless -- are STATIC models; and static models obviously make the STORY rather than the process of TELLING THE STORY the focus of attention.<sup>16</sup>

Since Iran has a very strong literary heritage familiar to virtually every Iranian, we would expect a written work like Ferdowsi's to

provide a static model for storytelling.

It is an assumption of this study that oral and written literatures can and do exist at the same time without the oral literature being utterly dominated by the written text even in societies where the written literature is known and revered. This assumption is supported by the recent article of Ruth Finnegan, who asserts that

the relation between oral and written forms need not just be one of parallel and independent coexistence, far less of mutual exclusion, but can easily exhibit constant and positive interaction.<sup>17</sup>

It is furthermore supported by studies on Iranian literature which demonstrate that just such a positive interaction has historically been the case in Iran.<sup>18</sup> This study will attempt to demonstrate the validity of the assumption using the case of the Iranian national tradition.

Shāhnāma stories provide an example of the interrelationships between the oral and written literatures of Iran in that they have both been written down in a widely known source, and are still told orally in Iran. I will not be concerned in this study with lay storytellers, instead concentrating on the tradition of naqqālī (professional storytelling). The storytellers whom I am discussing are known as naqqāls (professional storytellers) and are by and large literate men with a vast store of memorized texts from the written literature in their mind. The very term naqqāl means literally "transmitter," a fact that would further imply that they

are dependent upon sources other than their own creativity. In fact storytellers commonly attribute their versions of the Shāhnāma to Ferdowsi, so that one would expect that the Shāhnāma has been codified by Ferdowsi and is now a static model for storytellers. As we will see, this is not the case.

This study will be based upon my field work with professional storytellers in Shiraz, Iran during the year 1974-1975. The stories were recorded during regular sessions in the coffee house where the storytellers perform. Information obtained during interviews with the storytellers and audience members in the coffee houses will also be presented, particularly with regards to the meaning and role of the storytellers within their society.

The material I possess consists of approximately one hundred and twenty hours of stories, about eighty sessions, recorded from two storytellers working in Shiraz. The two storytellers were Ḥabīb Allāh Izadkhāsti and ʿAlī Ṣanākhan. From Ḥabīb Allāh I recorded various segments including the story of the hero Rostam and his battle with his own son Sohrāb, stories dealing with other major heroes, and later parts of the legendary material. From ʿAlī I recorded the end of the total material dealing with the death of the King Bahman and the coming of Alexander the Great, and the early parts of the material, up to the appearance of the hero Rostam.

In order to give the reader a familiarity with the manner of the storytellers' presentations, selections of several sessions

have been transcribed and translated within the text of the study. The full text of one storytelling session is included, also in transcription and translation, in the Appendices along with a sample of story summaries.

Drawing on this example of the Iranian national tradition and professional storytelling, I will compare the written and oral texts to discover the degree to which the oral tradition is dependent upon or free from the written sources. In this discussion, I will look for stabilizing influences within the storytelling tradition, examining training and degree of familiarity with written texts. I will also show that the storyteller functions in a variety of ways with regard to his audience. I will examine how the storyteller's roles allow him to reinterpret his material and elaborate upon it. By an examination of the role of the storyteller and the relationship of the oral and written versions of the Shahnama, I hope to show how the telling of the national tradition has remained creative.

### Outline

In the following chapters I will examine the problems discussed above. A short historical background will be presented in Chapter II, citing evidence for the continued presence of professional storytelling in Iran. I will examine references from Islamic and European works to deduce what roles the storyteller has played historically in Iran and what kinds of stories he performed.

Chapter III will present a description of the storytelling

tradition in the city of Shiraz, Iran in 1974-1975. The backgrounds of the two storytellers with whom I worked will be discussed along with some general comments about the material they perform and their audiences. The values of storytelling as expressed by storytellers and their audiences will be examined in light of the training and performance of the storytellers. The role of the storyteller in modern Iran will be discussed and compared with the conclusions made in Chapter II in order to see if storytelling today performs the same functions as it has historically.

Chapter IV will center on the constituent elements of the performance and attempt to discover the ways in which seemingly disparate kinds of material are unified in the storyteller's performance. This will include a discussion of the ways in which the material presented by the storyteller demonstrates the relationships which we have found to exist between the storyteller and his audience. The rowza and its meaning for the coffee house audience will be discussed in this chapter.

Chapter V will examine the relationships between the oral and written materials in the Shāhnāma stories. The discussion will include the relationship of the oral stories to the storyteller's own written source and to the work of Ferdowsi. Trends in the changing national legend and genre differences between the oral stories and Ferdowsi's work will be discussed. Conclusions will be drawn as to the place of the Shāhnāma of Ferdowsi and the oral stories in the national tradition.

In the final chapter I will present the conclusions drawn from this examination of the Shāhnāmā stories told today.

### Definition of Terms Used

Several terms appear in this study which have specialized meanings. They are defined below.

1. Storyteller in this study should be taken to be the Iranian professional storyteller (naqqāl) who tells extended heroic narratives, usually in coffee houses. For convenience I have used the term storyteller in preference to the Persian word naqqāl except when making a distinction between naqqāls and other kinds of storytellers. This definition applies only to the Iranian material. Similarly storytelling is used as an equivalent to naqqāli.

2. Story will be used as enclosed narrative of events arranged in time sequence.<sup>19</sup> By enclosed I mean having an obvious beginning and end. Because of the complexity of the Iranian material, one story does not necessarily end before another begins. In fact, most stories contain within them the beginnings of other stories. In a sense, too, the whole mass of material could be considered one story. There are, however, major sequences of events which do have definable boundaries such as the Rostam and Sohrāb story or the story of Zāl and Rudāba. Culturally these sequences are designated as dāstāns (stories), a term which has no reference to belief or lack of it. Sequences of events in historical narratives are also called dāstān; for example the story of Roqaya (or another of the martyrs)

which is part of the narration of the martyrdom of Hosayn is called a dastān in spite of the fact that it is believed to be literally true.

3. Shāhnāma encompasses all the stories making up the narration. When I mean the written Shāhnāma by Ferdowsi, I will define it as such, except where the context makes the meaning clear. Shāhnāma, as the term is used in this study, includes more material than the written work does.

4. The Iranian national tradition should be understood to be the narratives and beliefs from Iran concerning the beginnings of the world, the development of civilization, and the Iranian kings and heroes.

5. Episodes are the constituent elements of the story. An episode is said to have ended when the time or place of the action changes whether or not a story has ended.

6. Rowza is a story told on religious occasions dealing with the martyrdom of Iran's Islamic leaders (imams). The person who tells the rowza is the rowza-khān.

A list of characters mentioned in this study who appear in the stories is added in the Appendices.

#### Transcription of Foreign Terms

In keeping with the subject matter of this study, I have tried to represent the spoken form of foreign words rather than the written form. Therefore, I have followed the transcription system



used by the International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies with the following exceptions:

1.  $\bar{u}$  is represented as o and  $\bar{u}$  as u.
2.  $\bar{e}$  is represented as e and  $\bar{e}$  as i.
3.  $\bar{ay}$  is represented as ow and  $\bar{ay}$  as ay.

The transcription of vowels has been altered to represent better the vowel sounds in spoken Persian. I have followed this system of transcription in all material discussed in this study, so that even material cited from Arabic works follows a Persian transcription system. Since my consideration of Arabic works in this study is primarily to compare names and terms with the Persian material, such a transcription makes the comparison more immediately recognizable to non-specialists than the use of two different transcription systems would.

In an attempt to bring this study into closer line with other studies of the national tradition, I have made the choice to follow the written rather than the spoken form in the representation of names of heroes and characters who appear in the stories. For example, this study will give Garshasp even though the storyteller commonly pronounces the name Garshasep. Such literary transcriptions will be used only in the text of the study with the spoken form appearing in all lengthy transcribed sections. For the most part the differences between the written and spoken forms of names are minor.

### Historical Periods Discussed

Several historical periods are discussed in the study.

These are as follows:

Pre-Islamic Period                      Before the mid-7th Century A.D.

Safavids                                      1501-1732 A.D.

Qajars                                         1779-1924 A.D.

Constitutional Period                      About 1905-1930 A.D.

Dates are given in reference to the Islamic calendar followed by the date A.D.

## Notes

1. See Abu 'l-Qasem Mansur Ferdowsi, Shāhnāma, ed. A. Y. Bertels, et.al., 9 vols. (Moscow: 1966-71). Throughout this study the Moscow edition of the Shāhnāma will be used. References will be cited as Shāhnāma with the volume, page and line numbers following in that order.

2. For a bibliography of the study of Ferdowsi and his epic, see Iraj Afshar, Ketab-shenasi-e Ferdowsi [Bibliography of Ferdowsi] (Teheran: 1347/1968), which lists approximately 430 book and articles in Persian and Western languages dealing with Ferdowsi. It is not the purpose of this study to review all the literature on Ferdowsi.

3. Such studies would include Ferdinand Justi, Altiranisches Namenbuch (Marburg: 1895); Arthur Christensen, Les Kayanides (Paris: 1932); and Theodor Nöldeke, "Das Iranische Nationalepos" in Grundriss der Iranischen Philologie, 2 vols. (Strassberg: 1895-1904), 2:130-211 (hereafter cited as Nöldeke), and English trans. L. Bogdanov, Journal of the K.R. Cama Oriental Institute 6 (1925), pp. 1-161 (hereafter cited as Bogdanov).

4. See, for example, the text of a speech by Amin Banani in Kayhan 2 Tir, 1354 (June 23, 1975), p. 21.

5. See Mary Boyce, "Some Remarks on the Transmission of the Kayanian Heroic Cycle," Serta Cantabrigiensia (1954), 45-52, and Gustav von Grunebaum, "Firdausi's Concept of History," in Fuad Kōprülü Armaganı (Istanbul: 1953), pp. 177-93.

6. See Mojtabā Minovi, "Dastānhāy-e Hamāsi-e Iran dar Ma'akhāzi Ghayr az Shāhnāma" [Epic stories of Iran in sources other than Shāhnāma], Simorgh 2 (1354/1975), pp. 9-25. Also see Arthur Christensen, Motif et Theme (Helsinki: 1925).

7. Sayyed Abu 'l-Qasem Anjavi, Mardom va Shāhnāma [The people and the Shāhnāma] (Teheran: 1975) (hereafter Anjavi).

8. Anjavi, p. vi.

9. Nöldeke, p. 209; trans. by Bogdanov, p. 133.

10. Anjavi, p. vii.

11. Elli Kōngas and Pierre Maranda, Structural Models in Folklore and Transformational Essays (The Hague: 1971), p. 12.

12. Although they deal with subjects peripheral to this study, three studies should be mentioned here. An article which includes a survey of various kinds of storytelling and mentions naqqali is Stephen Blum's "The Concept of the Āsheq in Northern Khorasan," Asian Music 4 (1972), pp. 27-47. Charlotte Albright's "The Azerbaijani Āshiq and his Performance of a Dastan," Iranian Studies 9 (1976), pp. 220-47 deals with the singer of stories who tells his tales in Azeri Turkish to the accompaniment of music.

13. A Study of the Evolutionary Trend and the "Shahnamikhani" in Iran, unpublished dissertation, Wayne State University, 1973.

14. See Jalil Dustkhāh, "Naqqāli: Honar-e Dāstān-sarā'i-e Melli" [Naqqali: the art of telling the national legend]. Jong-e Esfahan (1345/1967), pp. 73-77; and Kazem Sadatashkuri, "Naqqali va Shāhnāma-khāni" [Naqqali and reciting the Shāhnāma], Honar va Mardom, Numbers 153-54 (1345/1976), pp. 142-48.

15. I have chosen to use the term "oral literature" here rather than "folklore" or "folktale" for the same of comparison with written literature. See also Robert Kellogg, "Oral Literature," New Literary History 5 (1973), pp. 55-66.

16. Robert A. Georges, "Process and Structure in Transitional Storytelling in the Balkans: Some Preliminary Remarks," in Henrik Bimbaum and Speros Vryanis, Jr., eds., Aspects of the Balkans: Continuity and Change (The Hague: 1972), p. 336.

17. "How Oral is Oral Literature?" Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies 37 (1974), p. 57.

18. See Jan Rypka, History of Iranian Literature (Dordrecht: 1968), p. 609. See also William L. Hanaway, Jr., "Variety and Continuity in Popular Literature in Iran," in Peter J. Chelkowski, ed., Iran: Continuity and Variety (New York: 1971), pp. 59-75.

19. This is an amended form of E.M. Forster's definition of "story" quoted in Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics (Princeton: 1965), p. 623.

## Chapter II

### Historical Background

The profession of storytelling has a long history in Iran. Literary and historical sources refer to the court and popular storyteller from early times up to the present. Even before Islam men told the stories of the legendary kings and heroes of Iran's past. Many of these stories were transmitted into the Islamic period. Some material may also be found in the works of historians and travelers of the middle ages and up to the modern period. These works reveal something of the nature of the storyteller's art -- his training, manner of telling, his position in society, the currency of his tales and the kinds of stories he told. In this chapter some of the many references available on the history of storytelling in the past will be examined to discover what is known of its nature before the present day.

It is clear that there was an active minstrel tradition in Iran in the pre-Islamic age. Using material from the early poets of the Islamic period and earlier, Mary Boyce has sketched the possible background of minstrelsy in pre-Islamic Iran.<sup>1</sup> She shows "that the gōsan [minstrel] played a considerable part in the life of the Parthians and their neighbours . . . entertainer of king and commoner, privileged at court and popular with the people; present at the graveside and at the feast, eulogist, satirist, story-teller, musician; recorder of past achievements and commentator of his own

times."<sup>2</sup> She suggests a minstrel-poet-musician who could be attached to the court but might also be a poet of the masses. These were the people who passed the traditional poetry down through the ages until the Islamic conquests. It is probably true, as she also points out, that the form changed after the Islamic conquests brought changes in the cultural tastes.<sup>3</sup> However, the storyteller continued to be seen in Iran throughout the Islamic period and into the present day.

There is evidence within the literary renditions of the romantic stories to support the notion that the storytelling-minstrel tradition continued without interruption into the Islamic period. An account is included in Fakhr al-Din Gorgāni's 5th/11th century Vis and Ramin of how the author came to write the story down in literary form. Gorgāni says that despite its clumsy style,

[ka] miguyand chizi sakht nikust  
dar in keshvar hama kas dāradash dust

They say it is a very good piece;  
Everyone in this area loves it.<sup>4</sup>

From this we may assume that stories from the pre-Islamic period remained popular while the form of their literary representation was being changed to conform with the new tastes.

Although Ferdowsi's main source for his epic was a written text, he still gives clues in his Shāhnāma that he has included material gathered directly from oral sources and stories currently popular. According to Ferdowsi's account, for example, a guest told him the story of "Bizhan and Manizha."<sup>5</sup> Since Ferdowsi describes his written source carefully, it seems certain here that he did in

fact gather this particular story from an oral source. The phrasing of the introduction to the story is therefore not merely conventional or meant to give legitimacy to the story.

The prose romances from the medieval period contain passages intimating that they were originally taken down from storytellers.<sup>6</sup> One such is Samak-e Ayyar, a sixth century rendition, under the authorship of Faramarz b. Khodādad b. Abd Allāh al-Kateb al-Arrajāni. He refers to himself as the compiler (jam<sup>c</sup> konanda) and says that he has heard this tale of the pre-Islamic world from others and not composed it himself.<sup>7</sup> New sections of the tale often open with a phrase like "thus related the composer of the material and the relater of the story" (chonin ravayat konad mo<sup>c</sup>allef-e akhbār va ravi-e qessa).<sup>8</sup> Faramarz credits one Sadaqa b. Abi 'l-Qasem al-Shirāzi with the actual composition of the work. Sadaqa is mentioned in no other literary text.<sup>9</sup>

The term naqqāl does not occur in these early texts and, in fact, seems to be a recent usage. In these early renditions of what were surely oral tales, however, the root naqala ("to transmit") is already used. In Samak-e Ayyar a verb often used for the storyteller's action is naql kardan ("to transmit").<sup>10</sup> In the Darābnama-e Tarsusi Abu Taher b. Hasan b. Ali b. Musā al-Tarsusi, the composer, calls himself one of the "transmitters of traditions" (naqelān-e asār).<sup>11</sup>

Unfortunately none of the literary sources gives a reliable account, if any at all, of how stories were told, who told them, or what their audience was. For hints at such information as this, one

must examine the historical texts.

Bayhaqi's 5th/11th century history gives examples of different kinds of storytellers. He tells an anecdote of a man mistaken for a storyteller (mohaddes). The incident reports that a servant was sent to bring the storyteller to entertain the amir:

khādemi bar āmad va mohaddes khāst va az  
ettefāq hich mohaddes ḥāẓer nabud, āzād mard  
bu aḥmad bar khāst ba khādem raft, va khādem  
pandāsht ka u mohaddes ast, chun u be-khargāh-e  
amir rasid ḥadiṣi āghāz kard . . . sakht sara  
va naghz qeṣṣa'i bud<sup>12</sup>

A servant came in and asked for a storyteller. As it happened, no storyteller was present. The noble Bu Ahmad rose and went with the servant. The servant thought that he was the storyteller. When he reached the amir's private tent he began telling a story . . . it was a very well-wrought and fine story.

Since Bu Ahmad supposedly performed with no preparation or props, we may assume that the stories were told much as they are now, without aids or musical instruments. From this fact, too, we may assume that the stories and the manner of telling must have been well known.

Later in his history Bayhaqi has another occasion to mention storytellers. He laments that the common people spend time listening to stories in the bazaar:

va bishtar mardom-e <sup>c</sup>amma ān-and ka bātel-e  
momtena<sup>c</sup>-rā dusttar dārand chun akhbar-e div



va pari va ghul-e biyābān va kuh va daryā ka  
 ahmaqi hengāma s̄azad va goruhi hamchon u gard  
 āyand va vay guyad ka dar folān daryā jazira'i  
 didam . . . va nān pokhtim va dighā nehādim  
 chun ātesh tiz shod va tabash be-dān zamin rasid  
 az jāy be-raft negāh kardim māhi bud va be-folān  
 kuh chonin u chonin chizhā didam . . . va āncha  
 be-din mānad az khorāfāt . . .<sup>13</sup>

Most of the common people prefer foolishness like stories of demons and fairies and desert ghouls . . . So that a fool may create an assembly and others like him come around and he says in such and such a sea I saw an island, . . . and we cooked bread and set up our cauldrons. When the fire got hot and the heat reached the land, it rose up. We looked. It was a fish. And in such and such a mountain I saw this and that thing . . . and that sort of romantic foolishness.

Here storytelling is a popular phenomenon centering in the areas where the common people gather in the evenings. Bayhaqi gives us a few examples of the sorts of tales told and tells us how effectively they stimulated the imagination of the people. In Bayhaqi's time it appears that storytelling was a current profession both in court circles and among the common people.

From other sources it is known that the legendary stories of the Iranian past were also popular and well known. One of these sources, the 4th/10th century Moḥammad b. Eshāq b. Abi Yaḥqub al-Nadim al-Varrāq al-Baghdādi cites collections of Persian heroic

stories in his Fehrest ("Catalog"). He provides the titles of a number of collections of stories which he calls native to Persia and which are surely heroic tales and legends of the Iranian kings, including some elements of the national legend. Some of the titles which Ebn al-Nadim includes are "Rostam and Esfandiyār" (rostaṃ va esfandiyār), "Shahrezād and Parviz" (shahrezād ma<sup>c</sup>a abarviz), "The Life of Anushiravan" (al-kārnāmaj fi sirat anushravān) and "Darius and the Golden Idol" (dārā va 'l-ṣanam al-zahab).<sup>14</sup>

In short we know several things about storytelling from pre-Islamic and early Islamic Iran. There had been a continuing tradition of minstrelsy which included narrations of national legendary material. Many of these stories appear to have been anecdotal or centering around the kings and heroes of ancient Iran. The storyteller was found attracting royal attention in courts and gathering crowds of commoners informally. The telling of old Iranian stories continued orally at the same time that their written form was being recast in a new form more consistent with the literary tastes imported by the Arabs.

The real flourishing of storytelling as an art of entertainment came in the Safavid period. Here we see a more obvious mingling of the courtly and common threads of storytelling. By the early 17th century the coffee house had become established as an entertainment center both for nobility and commoners.<sup>15</sup> From the years 1631-32, as part of a description of the main square of Isfahan, Adam Olearius provides an account of several kinds of entertainment

which were available to those who lived in the capital. Near the bazaar were drinking houses ("Schirechane") which offered alcoholic drinks and dancing boys. Also there were tea houses ("Tzai Chattai chane") which served tea and where men played chess. The third form of entertainment establishment was described as follows:

Kahweh chane is ein Krug/in welchem die Taback-smaucher und Kahweh Wassertrincker sich finden lassen. In solchen dreenen Krü<sup>e</sup>gen finden sich auch Poeten und Historici/welche ich mitten im Gemache auff hohen Stül<sup>e</sup>n sitzen gesehen/und allerhand Historien/Fabeln und erdichtete Dinge erzeh<sup>e</sup>nhören. Im erzehlen phantasiren sie mit einem Stöcklein/<sup>e</sup>gleich die so aus der Taschen spielen.<sup>16</sup>

The coffee house is an inn in which smokers and coffee drinkers are found. In such shops one also finds poets and historians whom I have seen sitting inside on high stools and heard them telling all manner of legends, fables and fantastic things. While narrating they gesticulate with a little stick like tricksters.

Olearius also points out the closeness of these centers of entertainment to the bazaar and the business area of the city, much as they are today. Even the king and his guests and courtiers went to these places, and it seems that they were perfectly respectable places for men to rest and to be entertained. Today the coffee house has taken over the functions of both tea house and coffee house.

The storyteller attached to the provincial ruler is also documented in Olearius. Near Ardabil he and his group were called to greet a local khan and other notables at the beginning of the New Year's feast. Among them at the table was a storyteller ("Kasiichuan") attending the kahn.<sup>17</sup>

In the Tazkira-e Nasrābādi, Mohammad Mirzā Nasrābādi speaks of Shah <sup>Ḥ</sup>Abbās frequenting coffee houses and engaging the poets there in conversation and showing them signs of respect.<sup>18</sup> While Nasrābādi does not tell us directly of any storytellers attached to the court of the Safavid kings, he does mention people who made their living by entertaining the king. One Mollā Bikhodi Jonābadi was an excellent Shāhnāma reciter (shāhnāma-khāni bālā dast) who performed before Shah <sup>Ḥ</sup>Abbās (dar majles-e shāh <sup>Ḥ</sup>abbās-e māzi khānd).<sup>19</sup>

Nasrābādi also gives us evidence of support of storytellers outside of the capital. He reports on one Ḥosaynā Sabuḥi who travelled in the garb of a dervish until he reached the khan of Tabriz where he was given good clothes and was well treated. From the account of this same person we also learn that storytellers might still be versed in music. This same Ḥosaynā was a master in playing the sāz as well as in telling the stories of Hamza and the Shāhnāma (dar fann-e musiqi kamāl-e rabt dāsht dar sāz-e chahār tār ostād bud qessa-e hamza va shāhnāma-rā ham khub mikhānd).<sup>20</sup>

We may also see that the purely popular tradition was still alive at this time. Mollā Ghayrat Hamadāni is quoted as saying that he began his career gathering people in the square (dar maydān ma<sup>Ḥ</sup>craka mikardam). Later he reports that despite his illiteracy he suddenly became able to create poetry (mowzun shodam).<sup>21</sup> Here we may see how even the popular tradition of poetry without writing remained into Safavid times.

Throughout the Safavid period we continue to see the older forms of popular storytelling and extemporaneous performance, including poetic production, continuing next to the literary life. The storyteller was often also a poet. The courtly and popular traditions seem to merge at this time particularly in the coffee houses where stories and poetry were presented to courtier and commoner alike. The performers themselves seem to be able to move from one group to another with ease, appreciated by the urban dwellers and sometimes richly rewarded by the king. In the Safavid period, too, we begin to see the storyteller as something of a dervish, often touring the countryside in poor clothes and having pretensions toward special godliness. The title mollā seems to have been used frequently for storytellers, as it continued to be into Qajar times.

In a series of articles on the art of oration (sokhanvari), Mohammad Ja<sup>c</sup>far Mahjub has examined storytelling as part of a larger tradition of orators in Iran into the pre-modern period.<sup>22</sup> Mahjub describes the values of the coffee house as an entertainment center and as a center for encouragement of the rhetorical arts in pre-modern and, to a lesser extent, modern times.<sup>23</sup> The author also discusses the relationship of storytelling and the other oral arts to the mystic Sufi tradition and discusses the selsela-e cajam (literally: "the Persian chain"), a professional-mystic society, originating in the Safavid period but no longer in existence. It is clear that storytellers have been part of both the formal, religious, and the informal, mystic, traditions of Iran in the past and continue to be so even

today. This question will be examined further in later chapters.

Once again in the Qajar period the court storyteller appears along with the popular storyteller. John Malcom's History of Persia from the beginning of the nineteenth century discusses the court storyteller at length.

In the court of Persia there is always a person who bears the name of "story-teller" to his majesty; . . . and those . . . [men], sometimes display . . . extraordinary skill. . . . But the art of relating stories is, in Persia, attended both with profit and reputation. Great numbers attempt it, but few succeed. It requires considerable talent and great study. . . . They must not only be acquainted with the best ancient and modern stories, but be able to vary them by the relation of new incidents, which they have heard or invented. They must also recollect the finest passages of the most popular poets, that they may aid the impression of their narrative by appropriate quotations.<sup>24</sup>

The stories of which Malcom speaks are undoubtedly those which are still popular today. From this passage, too, we can get some idea of the manner of performance. Malcom also documents the names of two storytellers, "Darveesh Suffer" and "Moolah Adenāh,"<sup>25</sup> the former a popular storyteller, the latter a storyteller for the king. In these two titles, dervish and mollā, we see the continuation of the tradition of the Safavid period, of attaching names of respect to storytellers and, in the case of dervish a name which implies holiness and poverty. Malcom glosses the use of the term mollā as being a well-read, amiable, cultivated person,<sup>26</sup> while today it means a religious functionary.

Malcom also includes a description of some stories which,

though not incorporated into Ferdowsi's work, are still currently told today. One he cites is the story of the deposed Jamshid's wanderings in Sistan and his secret marriage to the king of Sistan's daughter.<sup>27</sup>

The appreciation which storytelling commanded is demonstrated by the fact that one of the storytellers of Nāser al-Din Shāh composed the story of Amir Arslān which was written down from his telling. The manner in which the story was written down is documented by the Mo<sup>c</sup>ayyer al-Mamālek, a grandson of the king. The storyteller came each night to read to the king. One of his favorite daughters was so enchanted by the stories that she plotted to write them down without the storyteller knowing:

har shab hengāmi ka naqib al-mamālek barāy-e  
shāh naql migoft asbāb-e neveshtan hāzer namuda  
posht-e dar mineshast va goftahāy-e u-rā be-  
ruy-e kaghaz miyāvard. az in jomla dāstān-e  
amir arslān ast.<sup>28</sup>

Every night when Naqib al-Mamālek told a story for the king, she would bring writing materials and sit behind the door and write down on paper what he said. This is how the story of Amir Arslān came to be.

Once written down, the story passed into the literary tradition of Iran, remaining a popular book for some time.

E.G. Browne gives evidence of the effect the popular tradition of storytelling had on the people of the late Qajar period. Quoting a letter of his correspondent of June 19, 1907, he writes:

Everyone seems to read the paper now. In many of the Qahwa-khánas (coffee houses) professional readers are engaged, who, instead of reciting the legendary tales of the Sháh-náma, now regale their clients with political news.<sup>29</sup>

Browne's citation is particularly interesting in that it demonstrates a continuity of storytelling which is only overwhelmed by great political events. Furthermore, we can see in this letter the power which storytellers have had in Iran as an information source for the illiterate segments of the population.

From historical sources and from evidence within material taken from the oral tradition into the literary tradition, we know that storytelling has been a continuous activity in Iran from pre-Islamic times to the present. Storytellers could perform either before a crowd of people in the bazaar or they could, with luck, be attached to a king or provincial ruler. In this sense, the minstrel tradition of pre-Islamic Iran continued and is alive even today. The same tales have continued to be told of Iran's legendary past.

With the appearance of the coffee house in Iran, a center was provided for entertainment which included storytelling. The storytellers in Safavid and Qajar periods were seemingly respected men of learning who might have been poets and musicians as well. The stories of these narrators were sometimes written down and then passed into Iran's literary tradition.

Beyond being entertainers storytellers have historically been religious figures as well. The selsela-e C'ajam grouped storytellers with other artistic figures of the society in a mystical-



religious union. Many storytellers of the Safavid period travelled the countryside as dervishes and seem to have been well-regarded as godly and religious men.

It is clear that storytellers have been considered as transmitters of their culture, as they are now. Works taken down from storytellers, even from the early periods, are not said to be original works, but rather reworkings of material already known. The use of the verbs naql kardan and ravayat kardan (both meaning literally "to transmit") affirms the storyteller as transmitter rather than creator.

In coming chapters we will consider the aspects of storyteller as transmitter versus creative artist, his position with regard to the literary tradition and his functions vis`a`vis his audience.

## Notes

1. "The Parthian Gosān and Iranian Minstrel Tradition," Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (1957): 10-45.
2. Ibid., pp. 17-18.
3. Ibid., p. 38.
4. Vis va Rāmin [Vis and Rāmin], ed. Mohammad Ja<sup>c</sup>far Mahjub (Teheran: 1337/1959), p. 20; trans. George Morrison (New York: 1972), p. 17.
5. Shāhnāma 5:7-8.
6. See also on this subject William L. Hanaway, Jr., "Persian Popular Romances," Review of National Literatures 2<sup>1</sup> (Spring, 1971): 141.
7. Samak-e Ayyār [The hero Samak], ed. Parviz Nātel Khanlari, 4 vols. (Teheran: 1338-44/1959-67), 1:1.
8. Ibid., 3:8.
9. Ibid., 1:95 and see eidtor's introduction, 1:4.
10. Ibid., for instance 1:106, 123, 126, etc.
11. Dārābnāma-e Tarsusi [Tarsusi's tale of Dārāb], ed. Zabih Allah Safā, 2 vols. (Teheran: 1344-48/1959-67), 1:3.
12. Abu 'l-Faẓl Moḥammad b. Ḥosayn Kāteb Bayhaqi, Tārikh-e Mas<sup>c</sup>udi, ed. Qasem Ghani and 'Ali Akbar Fayyāẓ (Teheran: 1324/1945), p. 128. It is very unusual to find the word mohaddes, which should be a teller of religious traditions, used in conjunction with qessa which should be a secular story at this period of time.
13. Ibid., p. 666.
14. al-Fehrest, ed. Gustav Flügel (Beirut: [1871]), p. 305; trans. Bayard Dodge, 2 vols., Records of Civilization: Sources and Studies, number 83 (New York: 1970), p. 716.
15. See Nasr Allāh Falsafi, "Tārikh-e Qahva va Qahvakhāna dar Iran" [The history of coffee and the coffee house in Iran], Sokhan 5 (1333/1954), 258-68.
16. Vermehrte Nuwe Beschreibung der Muscowitischen und Persischen Reyse [Expanded new description of the trip to Russia and Persia] (Schleswig: 1656; repr. Tübingen: 1971), p. 558.

17. Ibid., p. 440.
18. For example see the anecdote reported on Shah <sup>c</sup>Abbās and the poet Mir Elāhi in Tazkira-e Naṣrābādi, ed. V. Dastgerdi (Teheran: 1317/1939), p. 255.
19. Ibid., p. 307.
20. Ibid., p. 357.
21. Ibid., p. 322.
22. "Sokhanvari," Sokhan 9 (1337/1959), 531-35; 631-37; 779-86.
23. Ibid., see especially pp. 631-37 with examples of poetry and orations.
24. History of Persia (London: 1815), pp. 552-53.
25. Ibid., pp. 553 and 554.
26. Ibid., pp. 575-76.
27. Ibid., p. 18.
28. Dust <sup>c</sup>Ali Mo<sup>c</sup>ayyer al-Mamālek , Yaddashtha'i az Zendagani-e Khosus-e Naser al-Din Shāh [Some notes on the private life of Nāser al-Din Shāh], quoted in Sayyed Mohammad Jamālzāda, "Do Ruzi Bā Nāser al-Din Shāh" [Two days with Nāser al-Din Shāh], Yaghmā 8 (1334/1956); 217.
29. The Persian Revolution of 1905-1909 (Cambridge, England: 1910), p. 143.

### Chapter III

#### The Storyteller and His Setting

Many of the traditional elements of professional storytelling which we observed in the last chapter have been preserved in Iran. In major Iranian cities one may still find the professional storyteller (naqqāl) performing daily, sometimes before a crowd of one hundred or more men. While this craft is certainly one which has been practiced for centuries in Iran, it is now rapidly falling off. In only a few segments of the Iranian population does the storyteller still play a vital role.

The material narrated today by the storyteller derives primarily from the Iranian national legend. The source used by all storytellers today is the 11th century national epic, the Shāhnāma of Ferdowsi. According to his preferences, a storyteller may also include in his repertoire material from the national legend as presented in epics such as Garshāspnāma and Borzunāma. He may even move out of this tradition and narrate something like the Safavid romance Hosayn-e Kord or stories of the Safavid rulers. The material of the storyteller will be discussed at greater length in later chapters.

In this chapter I will examine the backgrounds of the storytellers with whom I worked. Their views on the value of storytelling will be discussed and compared with the views of audience members. The purpose of this discussion will be to form some

conclusions on the functions of storytelling in modern Iran.

The vitality of storytelling today may be seen by examining the situation in the city where I worked in 1974-75. During that year Shiraz, a city of about 300,000 people in the south of Iran,<sup>1</sup> supported four full-time storytellers. One was working in a coffee house run by the Iranian National Tourist Organization. This coffee house was frequented by middle to upper class Shirazis, and Iranian and foreign tourists. For the purposes of the traditional audience, therefore, he had dropped out of sight. Of the other three, one was Asghar Afrāsiyābi, a man in his mid-thirties who had only been working as a storyteller for four or five years and had not yet succeeded in attracting a following or a reputation as a good storyteller. He was ill for most of the year of the study and only recommenced his new calling in the spring.

The study which follows will concern itself primarily with the two storytellers described below and their material. These two men were considered by the audience members (and by each other) to be successful and skillful storytellers. They both had loyal followers and both made their living as full-time storytellers.

### The Storytellers

The first of these two storytellers is Habib Allāh Izadkhāsti, a vigorous, aggressive man in his mid-fifties. His home was in Isfahan but he divided his year between Shiraz and Isfahan, a large city to the north of Shiraz. In 1974-75 he spent September through

February in Shiraz, leaving just before the Iranian New Year (on March 21st according to the Iranian calendar). This is apparently an arrangement which he has followed for a number of years. While he is in Shiraz, his wife and children remain in Isfahan. He has five children, one in the army in Teheran who has received his high school diploma.

Habib Allāh worked at the Karamat Coffee House, located at the southwestern corner of the main bazaar in Shiraz.<sup>2</sup> Besides the money he received from the audience, he also said that the coffee house paid him some money. He considers the living he makes working in the coffee house as fairly good.

Habib Allāh's first exposure as a performer had been as a non-professional rowza-khān in Isfahan. According to him, he had listened to the stories of the Shiite martyrs since childhood. Eventually he had collected the stories in a book and learned them. Even as a performer in the coffee house, he uses his skill in telling religious stories as part of his drawing power. Every Thursday evening and Friday morning he tells a rowza at the conclusion of his story segment. He also tells a rowza on religious holidays. During the month of Moharram (when Shiites commemorate the martyrdom of Imam Hosayn), he tells a rowza on Mondays as well. He is able to control the crowd so well during the telling of these religious stories that he receives a good deal more money at the conclusion than he regularly receives for his rendition of the Shāhnāma. It was not unusual for people who regularly give him five or ten

riyāls (about seven to fifteen cents) to give him fifty or one hundred riyāls after a rowza on important religious holidays. Habib Allāh also stated that he did rowza-khāni and related religious performances<sup>3</sup> for friends during Moharram. During the first ten days of Moharram (the holiest part of the month), the coffee house played taped rowzas before the story began. These tapes included some commercially produced rowzas and some of Habib Allāh's rowzas which he said he had recorded at a friend's house. The one form of religious performing which he said he would not take part in is ta<sup>c</sup>ziya, a religious play in which performers act the parts of the martyrs and their enemies.<sup>4</sup> Habib Allāh did however say that it was not uncommon for storytellers to perform in ta<sup>c</sup>ziyas.

Habib Allāh had been working as an artisan in Isfahan when he decided to take up storytelling as a profession at the age of twenty-eight. Having decided to change his profession he then found a teacher whom he paid to teach him the techniques of storytelling. He continued to work at his old profession while learning his new one.

Habib Allāh described his training as follows. Every evening for over a year he went to his teacher (ostād) to learn the Shāhnāma. He was the only student (shāgerd) working with his teacher throughout his training period. He was required to memorize (hefz kardan) the work of Ferdowsi so that he could recite it for his teacher. Every day he was given a section which he had to master by the next lesson. As part of his training he also received from

his teacher a prose abridgement of the actual stories he was learning to tell, called a tumār (literally, scroll) which he copied and learned. He also insisted that another part of his training included learning the poetry and philosophy from well-known Iranian figures. The poetry which he learned formed the openings of his performance. After his year's training, Habib Allāh was on his own, technically a full-fledged storyteller. There was no period of apprenticeship for him, and once the lessons were completed he succeeded or failed on his own talent.

Up to the time when I interviewed him, he had never had a student of his own. He had always regretted this, he said, but attributed it to the fact that young men are no longer interested in such a profession.

He arrived in Shiraz each year with no particular plan in mind. He would look around until he found a coffee house with no storyteller and where one was wanted. Having found such a place he then began telling his stories. In the year 1974-75 he was not at the same coffee house where he had been the year before. As it had happened, the Karamat had been without its accustomed storyteller and had hired Habib Allāh to fill in.

Habib Allāh had planned to remain in Shiraz until the New Year, but as it happened he returned to Isfahan about two weeks early. This hurried departure did not cause him to rush his story at all. Even when he learned he was leaving early, he continued narrating at the same slow pace. The story was incomplete when he left.



While he was in Shiraz, Habib Allāh spent almost all of every day in the coffee house. He performed twice a day, seven days a week. In this period he covered the Shāhnāma material from the beginning up to the conquest of Alexander the Great. He did however have some extra time to pursue other interests. Halfway through his stay in Shiraz, he acted a small part in a movie being filmed locally. He managed to act his part without having it interfere with his two daily performances at the coffee house.

Besides Shiraz and Isfahan, Habib Allāh had also performed in Mashhad (the location of one of the three major Shīte shrines). He used the opportunity of being in Mashhad on a pilgrimage to perform as a storyteller. The funds he earned as a storyteller in turn subsidized his pilgrimage.<sup>5</sup>

The other storyteller with whom I worked in Shiraz was an older man of sixty-five years, named ʿAlī Sanākḥān. He has three children and a number of grandchildren, including one grandson studying in the United States. Although he makes his home and performs in Shiraz, he has also performed in other places such as Teheran and, for a short time, in Mashhad while he was making a religious pilgrimage to the shrine there. He has performed as a naqqāl for about forty years and has a small group of men who come regularly to hear him. Now, however, as he has become older, fewer people seem to be attracted to him as a performer. People sometimes complained that, although he is a skillful storyteller, he has a weak (ẓaʿīf) voice and is hard to listen to.

<sup>c</sup>Ali performs mornings at the Chahār Faṣl Coffee House, about one block north of Ḥabīb Allāh's coffee house, on a side street leading into the Shiraz bazaar. In the afternoon he regularly performs at the Karamāt, where he had been performing before Ḥabīb Allāh arrived. A broken leg had forced <sup>c</sup>Ali into a period of convalescence during which time the Karamāt had been without a storyteller until Ḥabīb Allāh's appearance. Shortly after Ḥabīb Allāh left Shiraz, <sup>c</sup>Ali was asked to return to the Karamāt and again performed there afternoons.

These days <sup>c</sup>Ali's clients pay him only a meager sum for performing, and he depends also on a government stipend of 450 tumans (roughly \$65-\$70) per month. The Ministry of Arts and Cultures in Shiraz pays this stipend to <sup>c</sup>Ali and Aṣghar Afrāsiyābi.<sup>6</sup> For this money the two men also perform each evening in the Ministry's culture house (khāna-e farhang), in the south of Shiraz. The culture houses have been set up to encourage and teach the traditional arts of Iran and to teach other arts, such as painting and guitar playing, to Iranians. There were four of these culture houses in Shiraz while I was there, only one with a tea house. The tea house was actually a large open room in the building with chairs and equipment for tea service. Only <sup>c</sup>Ali and Aṣghar performed in this tea house, where they told fifteen or twenty minute selections in front of a small mixed audience of employes of the culture house and workers in the area.

<sup>c</sup>Ali's last name, Sanākhan, means "singer of praises."

He had chosen this name for himself as appropriate to his life. As he tells his life story, he was born in Teheran and his father, a confectioner (qannad), died when he was about twelve or thirteen years old. His mother was quite young and had difficulty supporting her children. At this time <sup>c</sup>Ali left home and went to Mazandaran, a rich agricultural province in northern Iran. In addition to his own difficult situation at home, the country itself was also experiencing hard times, but the situation in the north was far better than in the capital city of Teheran.<sup>7</sup>

In Mazandaran <sup>c</sup>Ali became acquainted with a group of dervishes and eventually joined their order. To the present day he remains a khaksar dervish,<sup>8</sup> and attends weekly meetings. He adds, however, that the historical link between Sufism and naqqali no longer exists.<sup>9</sup> Although some storytellers are dervishes, by no means do all storytellers have connections with any Sufi order.

For a number of years after becoming a dervish, <sup>c</sup>Ali dressed as a mendicant and made his living reciting poetry in praise of the imams in bazaars all over Iran. Eventually he found himself in Qom (another holy city and pilgrimage center) where he became the student (morid) of a particularly learned and holy man.

By the time <sup>c</sup>Ali was about twenty-five years old, he was living in Shiraz and had married. Feeling the need for a more settled life and more certain income, he apprenticed himself to a storyteller with whom he studied for two years. The manner of training seems to have been much the same as that of Habib Allāh,

in that he copied the teacher's tumar, learned the stories and memorized the Shahnāma. At the end of this period of training, he still did not feel himself to be ready (pokhta, literally: "cooked") to go out on his own. His teacher therefore sent <sup>c</sup>Ali to fill in for him occasionally in a coffee house until <sup>c</sup>Ali was ready to take up on his own.

<sup>c</sup>Ali spends about one and a half to two years telling the Shahnāma, from the beginning up to Alexander's conquest. He completed the whole telling shortly before New Year's and then told a popular story from his tumar dealing with Alexander the Great in Iran for two more months. Afterwards he began to tell the Shahnāma over again. In the Karamat he was telling the Borzunāma and in the culture house he was telling the Jahāngirnāma. Before he selected the Alexander tale, he considered telling stories of the Safavid rulers. He also said one of his favorites was the story of Hosayn-e Kord, but he did not tell this story because the audience did not know it and would therefore not enjoy hearing it.

<sup>c</sup>Ali also tells rowzas but does not pride himself on his ability at this form of storytelling in the same way Habib Allāh does. He admitted that he did not really like to tell rowzas but that he felt his audience expected them. They are, in fact, a required part of the performance on religious days. He confines his rowza telling to the more important religious days, such as Shab-e Qatl (the eve of Hosayn's martyrdom, on the tenth of Moharram), Arba<sup>c</sup>in (the fortieth day after Hosayn's death, the

twentieth of the Moslem month Safar), and Fatema's birthday. His rowzas tend to be shorter than Habib Allah's and they generally evoke less response.

Though he lacks formal schooling, he reads widely, including Persian translations of Western works. Furthermore, he has memorized great amounts of poetry from classical as well as modern Persian poets, and prides himself on his ability to recite it. Twice he departed from the usual panegyric and told short stories in poetry and prose before he began his story proper.

<sup>c</sup>Ali said that he too was acquainted with other storytellers in the city and around the country. He could remember a time when there were many storytellers working in Shiraz, and almost every coffee house employed at least one. He said when he travelled he had always made a point of finding out who the naqqal was in each city he visited. Beyond any mere social value, this also provides a network of exchange of views and comparison of material. This random viewing of other storytellers, he said, had helped him to learn the profession, a belief expressed by most of the storytellers I spoke with.

As a student <sup>c</sup>Ali had received his material from his teacher in the form of a tumar. He had passed this material on to two students of his own in recent years. Asghar Afrāsiyābi was his most recent student. He had had another student some years before who had been imprisoned. <sup>c</sup>Ali said once that a storyteller generally sold his tumar for 1,000 to 2,000 tumans (about \$150 to \$300).

It should be noted that besides these full-time storytellers, there were a few other men who occasionally appeared at the Karamat Coffee House and told stories. These men worked out one story, sometimes from the Iranian national legend, sometimes of Safavid rulers, and tried it out on the coffee house audience. Despite some encouragement from friends, they were unsuccessful and would disappear once again.

### The Setting

The Karamat Coffee House in which Habib Allah performed was constructed from the courtyard of an old house. One side of the courtyard had been walled off and a roof had been added. The coffee house thus took up about half the old courtyard and still had a small courtyard of its own, where the afternoon session was held in the warmer months. The entrance to the coffee house is barely visible from the street, being an unmarked doorway, covered by a gelim in winter, and surrounded by jewelry stores, banks and yard good stores. Only well inside the door is there a sign with the name of the coffee house. The patrons therefore are largely regulars, and there is little traffic off the street.

The patrons may say that they come to hear the story, but they are also regulars of the coffee house itself. Most of the men there are at least acquainted with one another. Among the professions represented at this coffee house were taxi drivers, chauffeurs, shop clerks, painters, builders, truck drivers and

manual laborers around the city and at the oil refinery outside Shiraz. Occasionally soldiers would come in, as well as sidewalk salesmen who brought their suitcases into the coffee house and hawked their wares before the story began. A lot of men were out of work.

Although coffee house attendance is limited by and large to men, one might occasionally find women or young girls there. One girl about eight years old came regularly with her father and sometimes even alone. Also, one would find beggar women with or without children sitting in the courtyard or next to the door listening. The rule is that women do not spend their time in the coffee house listening to storytellers, but the women who did appear were generally allowed to come and go as they pleased.

The audience was mixed in age. There were some very old men, a few of whom came only for the story then left. There were also some very young children who came for the story, either alone or with parents. Adults would often bring their children with them and encourage them to listen to the stories. Sometimes they would bring their children in and listen to the storyteller while the child played quietly or slept near by.

The main part of the audience sat in the lower floor of the coffee house. The converted house provided a balcony on three sides of the main floor where men sat and listened. The coffee house could easily hold two hundred people. Habib Allāh had some particularly good friends who generally congregated near him in the front of the room when he was not performing. During the performance

they either remained where they were or dispersed about the main floor of the coffee house, to return to him again when he was finished. The men who spent time with Habib Allāh came from the usual professions in the coffee house.

Those men who wanted to chat rather than listen either removed to the courtyard in nice weather, or to one of the rooms behind the balcony. There were chess and backgammon games and a small collection of books provided at least in part by the funds from the Ministry of Arts and Culture in Shiraz. There were also some beds in the very back rooms of the upper sections, where men would sleep. A shoe repairman regularly made the rounds, picking up shoes during the early part of the performance and returning them toward the end. Men would regularly come in selling pajamas or second-hand clothes.

In short this coffee house, as all coffee houses, functioned as much as a social center and merchandise market as it did an entertainment center. Besides bringing in money to the coffee house from the large attendance during the performance, the male patrons also provided a ready-made group of customers for several merchants. Beggars also used the opportunity of a large assembly of men to come in and collect money. Sometimes these beggars would stand before the assembly and call out blessings, complaints of their condition, or the names of the imams, asking for money. They were not allowed to interfere with the performance, and should they begin to cause a disruption, they were either forcibly seated or shown



to the door.

The Karamat had a bad reputation for being a place where unemployed men and opium addicts spent their days.<sup>10</sup> There were certainly a number of men who spent whole days there and who were obviously addicts, though mostly legal.<sup>11</sup> Toward the end of Habib Allāh's stay, in fact, the police took action against the addicts in this coffee house. During his last performance, the coffee house was raided by drug agents and a few men were taken away. This is apparently a regular occurrence before the New Year's holiday. Several months after Habib Allāh left, the police began closing the coffee house on Friday afternoons to discourage young addicts from spending the day asleep there.

A number of modishly-dressed, young men spent each evening in the coffee house balcony. They were loud and rowdy, even during the performance, and occasionally the rowdiness would degenerate into arguments among themselves or with the coffee house employes. Habib Allāh never allowed such behavior to disrupt his performance totally. As soon as an outburst would occur, he would comment on this rudeness and begin prayers to attract the audience's attention once again.

Otherwise the audience was very polite with Habib Allāh. The men recognize him as a learned man and have proper respect for him. Most of the regular audience greet him as they come in, even if he is performing. The men, particularly the older men, touch their eyes as they greet him, or offer him his payment with two hands, both

gestures of humility. As he takes the money, he calls down such blessings as "May God bless you" (khodā barakatāt beda). These blessings are commonly said by those who receive money as an offering.

The audience members both speak to and refer to Habib Allāh by the title morshed (teacher), the traditional title applied to naqqāls. The term itself has some religious overtones. According to audience members, the Supreme Morshed is <sup>c</sup>Ali, the son-in-law and nephew of the Prophet Mohammed and first imam of the Shiites. Those men who follow <sup>c</sup>Ali in religiosity and knowledge are also termed morshed, so that the term has come to mean "teacher" and by extension someone who knows books and interprets them for others. Habib Allāh was said to be worthy of respect because he was very learned (bā savād). This is of course important among men, many of whom are only marginally literate or totally illiterate. It would be a mistake, however, to assume that the entire audience is illiterate. Many of the audience members were able to read. Many had read the Shāhnāma, at least in part, and most Iranians have more than a passing acquaintance with Ferdowsi. For many, part of the value of the performance was not only in the story but in the manner in which the story was told. One regular audience member said he had read the Shāhnāma himself, but came to hear someone tell the stories who spoke well (with talaffoz-e khub).

The Karamat Coffee House was receiving a small subsidy from the Ministry of Arts and Cultures.<sup>12</sup> The sum of 150 tumāns (\$23)

was paid to the owner to encourage cultural activities, besides storytelling. Occasionally local poets would appear in the coffee house and read their works. The Karamat was not the only recipient of government funds. The tea house in the culture house is supported by the government as is a fourth coffee house without a storyteller.<sup>13</sup>

The Chahar Fasl Coffee House, in which Ali performs, has been given money from the Ministry of Arts and Culture to be remodelled and for the encouragement of the traditional arts of Iran. At the time of this study, 500 tumans (\$75) per month was being given as a subsidy to the owner. In addition the coffee house receives 760 tumans (\$115) for cultural activities, such as a small library and the purchase of games for the patrons. A total of 1100 tumans (\$165) was given to the coffee house for painting and restoration. Although other coffee houses receive funds from the government, the Chahar Fasl receives by far the most money and attention from the Ministry. In addition to money for the encouragement of storytelling, the Chahar Fasl is also occasionally used as a theater in the evenings where a government-sponsored acting group, made up mostly of young people, puts on folk or folk-style plays. Some of these performances are recorded for showing on the National Iranian Television service. For every event of this nature the government pays the coffee house owner extra money and pays him to provide free tea to the audience.<sup>14</sup>

Unlike the Karamat, the Chahar Fasl advertises its existence with a conspicuous sign above the door on the outside. In

general the Chahār Fasl attracts a larger variety of people than the Karamat. While the audience watching the storyteller is only men, women often come in with their husbands and children for tea. Sometimes the clientele also includes Iranian and even foreign tourists. The audience for such other activities as plays includes both men and women of all ages.

The coffee house is laid out with one main room and a courtyard. The arrangement of pillars and benches in the main room allows those who wish to listen to the story to congregate in one section while those who are not interested can sit in the remainder of the coffee house. <sup>c</sup>Ali attracts only about twenty regulars. The audience sits very close to the storyteller in a semi-circle only one person deep. They converse with him before the performance and comment upon the story's action. At the end of the Shahnāma material, <sup>c</sup>Ali asked his audience what they would like to hear, and they discussed the matter to help him make a decision.

The storyteller sits behind a long table and speaks into a microphone in front of him. The audience members bring their money up to him when he finishes his story. He also makes the rounds of the rest of the coffee house and collects a few more coins from people who were not directly involved in the storytelling audience.

This more intimate arrangement of the storyteller and his audience seems to be better for <sup>c</sup>Ali, particularly considering his age. He has neither the voice nor the physical presence to be able to command a large audience. Whereas Habib Allāh is able to

control the large, rather rowdy group at the Karamat, <sup>c</sup>Ali is not and can only barely be heard there, despite the microphone. His audience in the Chahar Fas̄l is also better suited to him. The men frequenting his storytelling tend to be retired army people, some cab drivers and manual laborers, but only a few unemployed young men. A few high school and college students attached to the theater and arts groups which work at the coffee house occasionally attend the storytelling session and are on friendly terms with <sup>c</sup>Ali. The coffee house employes take their status as a government-subsidized business seriously and anyone who appears less than stable or a potential troublemaker is evicted. The shouting arguments and occasional brawls which kept Habib Allāh and the coffee house employes busy at the Karamat simply do not happen at the Chahar Fas̄l.

<sup>c</sup>Ali himself prefers working at the Chahar Fas̄l because it is more orderly (morattab) and therefore more conducive to listening. A powerful storyteller like Habib Allāh however was able to control the larger group and make it profitable. The audience members of the Chahar Fas̄l do not frequent the Karamat Coffee House by and large, and warned me, unfairly, that it was not a safe place, being full of thieves and criminals.

What <sup>c</sup>Ali gains in quiet and attention with the better behaved, more attentive audience, he loses in the traditional shows of respect. These men no longer adhere to the form of address of morshed, for example, and refer to him simply as Mr. Sanākhān

(Āqāy-e Sanākhan). His audience members have respect for the amount that he has read and his skill in telling stories, but they are aware of the irony of his being dependent upon them even though he is a respected man. They refer to his being well-read and a dervish but do not express the rather simple homage to his position as do Ḥabīb Allāh's clients.

In spite of the fact that ḤAlī's regulars insist that they are really attached to him, none of them followed him to the Karamāt or even to the culture house. His story is as much habit to them as it is appreciation of him. Here too the attachment is also to the pleasant coffee house, the time of day, and the social occasion. One older retired man said that he came every day, as he had for years, simply because it was in his schedule. In the Chahār Fasl Coffee House, as well as the Karamāt, beggars and salesmen come and go, attracted by the gathering of men.

#### General Remarks

It is interesting to note that there is really very little consistency in the background or training of the storyteller.<sup>15</sup> Most storytellers had a teacher, yet such formal training was not required. One fairly successful storyteller in Teheran had had none. He had heard these stories since his childhood and gradually taken up storytelling and succeeded. Even then this had not been his source of income. He had continued as an office worker until he retired. Then he had taken on a fuller load of coffee house sessions.

This difference in his training shows up in his storytelling technique. His tumar, which he uses as an aid in narration, is poetry, not prose, and he follows the text quite closely, doing a great deal of recitation.<sup>16</sup> He also said that he never told rowzas. His poetic introduction was short and varied little from day to day. We have also seen that even with the two primary storytellers whose training was very close, <sup>c</sup>Ali felt the need for a period of transition between being a student and being a performer, while Habib Allāh was ready to go out on his own immediately after having finished his period of training.

There are some strong points of similarity, however, between the careers of the two storytellers with whom I worked. Both <sup>c</sup>Ali and Habib Allāh came to storytelling after having already pursued one career, as did each of the storytellers whom I interviewed. Furthermore, <sup>c</sup>Ali and Habib Allāh had both been involved in performing situations -- <sup>c</sup>Ali as a dervish and Habib Allāh as a non-professional rowza-khan. It also appears from all the interviews that nagqali is not an inherited profession. None of the storytellers with whom I talked came from a family of storytellers or performers of any kind.

Another question to be considered is what the audience and the storytellers consider to be a good storyteller. Storytellers, whether formally trained or self-trained, and audience members all list the same things as important for succeeding as a storyteller. A good storyteller is said to be well-versed (vared) in his material. He feels that he must be in possession of a full and complete

knowledge both of the literary source and of the tumar. If asked where a particular story comes from or how he knows how to tell a story, a storyteller will answer either that he has taken it from the Shahnāma or from the tumar. A good storyteller is said to have a good tumar. A storyteller also prides himself on having in his memory a considerable body of lyric poetry.

This familiarity with material extends also to the audience. A storyteller will not recite material which is unknown to the audience. The audience, he feels, will not come back every day, and pay, to hear a story they have never heard before (balad nistand). In short, the valued aspects of being a good storyteller are those which are most reflected in the traditional training to become a professional storyteller -- memorization and command of material.

Examining what is given for producing a storyteller -- familiarity with material, rote memorization -- one would expect to find in Iran a tradition of storytelling which is very highly text-dominated. This is not the case. The actual texts produced during storytelling sessions will be examined in the following chapters, and compared with the textual tradition. It may be said here that when pressed, the storytellers will admit that they vary (ḥavaż kardan) material, including the rowžas which are more closely historical than the Shahnāma. The audience, said ḥAli, becomes tired (sir mishand) of hearing exactly the same thing over and over again.

Furthermore, it is apparent that other aspects of performance



than the textual come into storytelling. Among these are the purely physical aspects of storytelling. Things like vocal quality and gestures have an effect upon the audience and its reaction to the story. The storyteller is aware of these things and may drink special herbal concoctions before the performance for his voice or chest. Most will, of course, agree one must have a good voice to be a storyteller. Other storytellers may develop stylized manners of presentation. But none of these things are offered as the subject of instruction. The vocal presentation itself seems to be a style which each storyteller has developed through his career and in accordance with his own aims. Here again we may mention Habib Allāh's statement that he learned rowzas by watching them, writing them down, and then developing his own style of performance. All storytellers recognized that they take elements of storytelling style from other storytellers whom they have the occasion to hear. <sup>c</sup>Ali said he made a point, whenever in a different city, to go and hear the storyteller there, to see if he had anything which <sup>c</sup>Ali could work into his own performances. In this way, despite the more formal training, these storytellers are like the men who come into storytelling by informal self-training.

Another aspect of the storytelling phenomenon is the question of why the audience continues to go to the coffee house day after day to hear a storyteller. Part of this has already been touched upon with regard to the other functions which the coffee house fills. It is worth repeating that the attachment is at

least as much to the coffee house as to the storyteller. The proof of this seems to be in the fact that regulars do not follow their storyteller to another coffee house nor do most of them cease frequenting a coffee house when their storyteller leaves. When Habib Allāh left Shiraz only a handful of men ceased going there daily. One or two of Habib Allāh's regulars began appearing at the Chahār Faṣl, but things went on pretty much as they always had. This also brings up the question of real audience and drawing power. The actual number of people attached to Habib Allāh was probably no greater than that attached to ʿAlī. The success which Habib Allāh had was in his ability to draw more people in at the time of the story, and to control and inspire the ready-made audience which he found.

The next question to be considered is the relationship of the storytelling activity to the informal religious life in Iran. It is clear that beyond its value as entertainment or a social occasion or even as business for the coffee house owner, the storytelling session may also be considered as a religious occasion. The coffee house operates on the religious and not the secular calendar, with the sole exception of the New Year. Habib Allāh divided his year in half with respect to the secular New Year. The coffee houses clean up and repaint for the New Year. The coffee houses were open seven days a week including all secular holidays and most religious holidays. The only days they closed were the most important religious holidays like ʿAshurā (the day of Ḥosayn's martyrdom) and Arbaʿin.

The storytellers regularly told rowzas on the religious holidays and during the most important periods of mourning.

Another manifestation of this feeling of religiosity is the use of the term morshed for the storyteller, which as has been pointed out, has religious connotations. The audience in the coffee house was always eager to impress these religious senses on the listener. Furthermore, the storyteller calls down religious blessings on those who give him money.

The relationship between religion, religiosity and storytelling is directly in line with the historical situation examined in the last chapter and is perceived openly by the audience and the storytellers today. Part of this is the common belief that Ferdowsi was a Shiite himself. There is also the testimony, heard from several storytellers and generally attested by audience members, that naqqali was begun by Shah <sup>c</sup>Abbas (1588-1629) to spread the Shiite faith in Iran after the Safavids were in power. That the stories themselves often run counter to the faith has no effect upon this firm belief.

The coffee house, the storyteller and his stories play a complex role in the traditional Iranian cultural life. It is a social, cultural, economic and even religious center which fills several needs for the audience. In the chapters to come I shall examine what the storyteller says in his stories, and how the stories themselves underline the role of naqqali in Iran.

Notes

1. Harvey H. Smith, et. al., Area Handbook for Iran ([Washington, D.C.], 1971), p. 29.

2. It is noteworthy that the coffee house where Habib Allāh performed in Isfahan was also located near the main bazaar, just off the maydan-e shah. This, taken with the testimony of Olearius (see above, page ), affirms the fact that storytelling is an activity which tends to center around the bazaar areas of cities.

3. For a description of some of the forms of mourning rites, see Brian Spooner, "The Function of Religion in Persian Society," Iran 1 (1963), pp. 83-95, and Gustav Thaiss, "Religious Symbolism and Social Change: The Drama of Husain," in N. Keddie, ed., Scholars, Saints and Sufis (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1972), pp. 349-366.

4. On ta<sup>c</sup>ziya in particular, see the excellent study by Šādeq Homāyuni, Ta<sup>c</sup>ziya va Ta<sup>c</sup>ziya-khāni [The ta<sup>c</sup>ziya and performing the ta<sup>c</sup>ziya] (Teheran: [1975]).

5. It seems to be a common practice for storytellers to support their pilgrimages to the religious shrines by performing in local coffee houses in the shrine cities.

6. Interview with Mr. Kojuri of the Shiraz office of the Ministry of Arts and Cultures, February 12, 1975.

7. This was late in the Qajar period, during the reign of Ahmad Shāh, the last Qajar king. Ahmad was appointed king as a child and ruled from 1909 until he left for Europe in 1923. He was formally deposed in 1925. Ahmad's entire reign was fraught with internal rebellion, foreign intervention and bureaucratic weakness. The period which <sup>c</sup>Ali is referring to must have been close to the end of Ahmad's reign. For discussions of this period, see Edward G. Browné, The Persian Revolution of 1905-1909 (Cambridge, England: 1910), and Peter Avery, Modern Iran (New York: 1965), especially pages 140-268.

8. For a discussion of the development of the Sufi orders and the position of the khāksār dervishes in the history of Sufism, see R. Grāmlich, "Die schiitischen Derwischorden Persiens, vol. I: Die Affiliationen," in Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes 38 (1965), esp. pp. 70-88.

9. See above, pp. 22-23.

10. The unfortunate image of the coffee house as being frequented by social misfits and idle people seems to be common all over Iran. See Stephen Blum, "The Concept of the <sup>Ḥ</sup>Asheq in Northern Khorasan," Asian Music 4 (1972), p. 30.

11. It is possible for incurable addicts, particularly older men, to become licensed by the government. They can then buy opium legally.

12. Besides government support in Shiraz, nagqālī has also drawn national attention, being included in the Ferdowsi Festival in Tus in August of 1975. Occasionally storytellers appear on the National Iranian Television as well.

13. Interview with Mr. Kojuri, February 12, 1975.

14. Interview with Mr. Kojuri, February 12, 1975.

15. The steps for becoming a professional orator high in the Sufi order of the selsela-e Ḥajam are set out by M. Mahjub, "Sokhanvari," Sokhan 9 (1337/1959), pp. 780-82.

16. I only saw this storyteller reciting the Borzunāma. Since <sup>Ḥ</sup>Ali consulted his tumār more often when he was telling stories other than the Shāhnāma, it may be that the lack of familiarity with the unusual material account for some of the greater reliance of the Teheran storyteller as well.

## Chapter IV

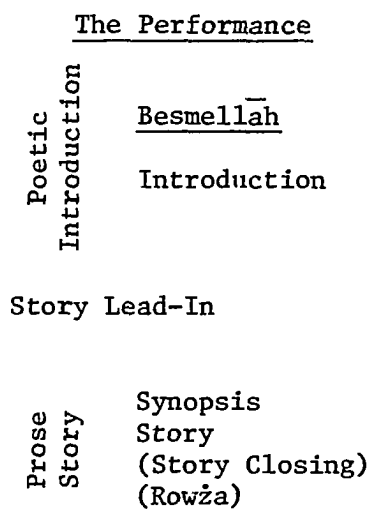
### The Performance

In this chapter I will discuss the material performed and this will serve as a preface to a later discussion of the relationships between the oral material and the literary sources. Despite outward lack of unity, the component parts of the performance actually are unified in intent and theme, each part serving to bind the audience and the storyteller together by underscoring the relations which they have in common with one another and which they have with the national legendary material. As part of this discussion, I will include an examination of poetry inserted into the prose story and of digressions which the storyteller makes during his performance.

A performance lasts approximately one hour and a half. An average performance would be as follows. The storyteller begins with the formula "In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate" (besmellāh al-rahman al-rahim). Then he recites a selection of poetry. This poetry may only be a few lines or may last up to ten minutes. It may be praise of Imam <sup>c</sup>Ali or another imam, or it may be from the other major literary poets of Iran. The bulk of the performance will be taken up with the story proper. The story is serialized, a new segment being told at each session. The story is told in prose with occasional recitation of lines from Ferdowsi's

work (or whatever work the storyteller is performing at the time) or from another poet if it bears on the subject. If it is a religious holiday, the storyteller will add a rowża at the end of the story. When the allotted time is up, the storyteller ends his story for the day. He then circles through the audience and collects his money for telling the story, calling down blessings on those people giving him money.

In order to clarify the terms I will use in the following discussion, a scheme of the performance is provided below. The non-essential parts are in parentheses.



The storyteller's material will be considered in the order that it appears in the performance.

#### The Poetic Introduction

The storyteller uses a poetic introduction to attract

the attention of the audience. He opens his performance with the name of God (the besmellāh) which is the traditional opening for all actions in the Islamic world. He works the besmellāh directly into the poetry making it a part of his own rhymed and metrical lines which join the selections of poetry which he will recite.<sup>1</sup> The storyteller uses the opening words to unite himself to his audience. The besmellāh identifies all participants as Muslims engaged in a Muslim activity, in keeping with the religious functions of the meeting.

As seems common with all storytellers, both <sup>ᶜ</sup>Ali and Ḥabīb Allāh have their own personal besmellāh which they use every day.

<sup>ᶜ</sup>Ali's besmellāh is as follows:

besmellāh al-rah̄mān al-rah̄im  
 yā rah̄mān o yā rah̄im  
 hast kelid-e dar-e ganj-e ḥakim  
 nām-e khodāvand-e karim o rah̄im

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate!  
 O merciful and compassionate [God]!  
 The key to the door of the sage's treasure is  
 The name of the kind and merciful Lord.

The first two hemistiches, the mentioning of God's name itself, can only be forced with difficulty into the ruba<sup>c</sup>i meter,<sup>2</sup> the meter of the final two hemistiches. The rhyme is rah̄im/rah̄im/ḥakim/rah̄im.

Ḥabīb Allāh's opening is different, but encompasses much the same idea:

besmellāh al-rah̄mān al-rah̄im  
 yā rah̄mān o yā rah̄im



esta<sup>c</sup>yn ollāh fi kolle 'l-omur  
 zāda fi qalbi zekro 'l-lahz sorur  
 matla<sup>c</sup>-e dibācha-e hayy-e qadim  
 hast bismellāh al-rahman al-rahim

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate!  
 O merciful and compassionate [God]!  
 Trust in God in all things.  
 The mention of the name [of God] increased joy in  
 my heart.  
 The opening to the beginning of eternal life  
 Is in the name of God the merciful, the compassionate.

This selection is more like rhymed prose than poetry, except that  
 Habib Allāh always recites it with a strong pause at the end of each  
 line. The meter is uneven, even within the rhymed couplets.

Although each storyteller has his own opening, the themes  
 expressed are very close. <sup>c</sup>Ali addresses himself to God as the  
 key to the treasury of wisdom; Habib Allāh addresses himself to God  
 as the way to everlasting life. Both in terms of texture and theme,  
 the bismellāh blends easily into the coming poetry which we shall  
 now examine.

<sup>c</sup>Ali characterizes the poetry which he uses in the intro-  
 duction as attention getting (jalb-e tavajjoh). In fact, the poetry  
 does function as an announcement of the imminent beginning of the  
 story. While in general people do not pay as close attention to the  
 poetry as they do to the story and there is generally a great deal  
 more background noise than during the story, the poetry gives the  
 audience warning that attention will be required shortly. This  
 introduction gives them a short time to finish up conversations or

find a seat and prepare themselves to listen attentively to the story.

The poetry recited by the storyteller is usually by one of the famous poets of Iran, such as Sa<sup>c</sup>di, Nezāmi or Ḥāfez, and is well known to the audience. The poetry may also be more strictly religious or from anonymous poets. The storyteller usually combines short poems at random, arranging and rearranging selections from day to day. Despite this randomness, the selections which he recites in any given performance hang together by virtue of sound and imagery. One short piece suggests the next quite naturally so that each poetic introduction maintains a feeling of cohesion.

Although the amount of poetry used is fairly large, it is also very traditional (and rather limited) in theme and imagery. Storytellers prefer the terse wisdom of the ruba<sup>c</sup>i and the mystic poetry of the ghazal, extolling the virtues of God, to the longer panegyric qasida.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, any storyteller with a large repertoire of poetry and some experience should have no difficulty producing agreeably ordered introductions without preparation.

Two introductions are given below, one in totality, one in part, from the two storytellers in Shiraz. The last introduction is given from a Teheran storyteller for comparison. The first example was recorded in the Chahār Faṣl Coffee House. This introduction is typical of the form used most often by <sup>c</sup>Ali and Ḥabīb Allāh. After the besmellāh <sup>c</sup>Ali recited the following:

I dar kuy-e kharābat̄ yeki mir nashod  
 az mordan-e ādami zamin sir nashod  
 goftam ka be-piri be-rasam towba konam  
 besyār javān mord o yeki pir nashod

No one has become prince on the street of taverns.  
 The earth has not become saturated by human death.  
 I said I would repent should I reach old age,  
 [But] many have died young and none became old.

II afsus ka dowra-e javāni ṭay shod  
 ayyām-e shabāb o kamrāni ṭay shod  
 ān morgh-e ṭarab ka nām-e u bud shabāb  
 faryād nadānam ka kay āmad kay shod (twice)

Alas that the span of youth has passed.  
 The days of youth and happiness have passed.  
 That bird of joy whose name was youth --  
 Alas -- I do not know when he came or when he left (twice).

III simin zaqanā sang delā laḳl ʿozārā (twice)  
 khosh kon be-negāhi del-e ghamdid-e mā-rā (twice)  
 khosh onka za may mast shavi bi-khabar oftī (twice)  
 panhān ze to man busa zanam ān kaf-e pā-rā (twice)  
 āzorda mabādā ka shavad ān tan-e nāzok  
 az bahr-e khodā sakht makon band-e qabā-rā  
 in qāleb-e farsuda ka az kuy-e to dur ast  
 al-qalb lā yahdā laylan va nahārā (twice)  
 jāmi nakonad joz havas-e bazm-e to laykan  
 dar ḥazrat-e solṭān ka dahad rāh gedā-rā  
 O you with silvery chin, stone heart and ruby cheeks  
 (twice)

Satisfy our pained heart with a look (twice).  
 It is good that you get drunk with wine and pass out (twice),  
 So that hidden from you I can kiss your foot (twice).  
 Let that fine body never be afflicted.  
 Don't tie the robe too tight for the sake of God.  
 This worn-out form is far from your street.  
 The heart rests neither night nor day.  
 May Jāmi never desire anything but your banquet, but  
 Who lets a beggar into the presence of the Soltan?

The first section is an unidentified ruba<sup>c</sup>i. The second section is a ruba<sup>c</sup>i written by <sup>c</sup>Omar Khayyām.<sup>4</sup> The two ruba<sup>c</sup>is demonstrate how the storyteller can link together unrelated selections of poetry which appear to have unity. In terms of theme, the second ruba<sup>c</sup>i picks up the allusions to youth versus old age in the first ruba<sup>c</sup>i. For example the word javan (young) of the last line of the first ruba<sup>c</sup>i reappears in the first line of the second ruba<sup>c</sup>i in the form javani (youth). Both of these ruba<sup>c</sup>is rely on standard themes and images from the mystic poetic tradition of Iran. <sup>c</sup>Ali has also chosen two ruba<sup>c</sup>is which compliment one another in terms of form.<sup>5</sup> The two poems share almost the same radif<sup>6</sup> in shod (it became) and nashod (it did not become). While the actual rhyme of the first ruba<sup>c</sup>i is in mir/sir/pir, and of the second is tay/tay/kay, the radif gives the two poems a harmony of sound.

The two ruba<sup>c</sup>is are followed by a ghazal of Nur al-Din <sup>c</sup>Abd al-Rahmān Jāmi, a well known poet of the 15th century.<sup>7</sup> The ghazal uses the themes of the lover and the beloved, the seeker after God, and God the object of the search. Once again all the images in this ghazal are directly in line with the Iranian mystic

tradition of poetry, the poet suggesting divine love with earthly images -- kissing the foot, drinking wine to the state of intoxication. The image of wine and drunkenness leads once again to the taverns (kharābat) of the first ruba<sup>c</sup>i.

<sup>c</sup>Ali completes his introduction with two couplets which mark the end of the poetry and introduce the final ṣalavāt prayer<sup>8</sup> before the story:

delam goft marā<sup>c</sup> elm-e ladoni ḥavas-ast  
ta<sup>c</sup> limam kon agar to-rā dastras-ast

My heart said, "I yearn for divine knowledge,  
Teach me if you are able."

This couplet echoes again yearning for the knowledge of God (elm-e ladoni) and the sense of futility at not being able to reach this knowledge.

The last couplet is one the storyteller uses frequently to mark the end of the poetry and the beginning of the story proper. Sometimes the storyteller simply calls for a ṣalavāt to end the poetry. More often he uses a poetic device such as this one:

ṣafāy-e gol-e sorkh dāni ze chīst  
ze rang-e mohammad [ṣalavāt] ze buy-e <sup>c</sup>alist

Do you know from what the red rose derives its beauty?  
From the color of Mohammed [ṣalavāt] and the fragrance  
of <sup>c</sup>Ali.

The audience automatically calls the ṣalavāt prayer after the mention of Mohammed's name, not only here but wherever it occurs. So, as the poetry opened with the name of God, it ends with the names of

the Prophet of God and His imam, and a prayer from the whole audience. The two actions surround this section of the performance. The combination of the rhyme and the salavat is a sure marker that the first part of the performance is finished.

More often than <sup>°</sup>Ali, Habib Allāh worked the names of the imams or Mohammed into his poetic introduction, or the names of Shāh-nāma heroes, as is demonstrated below. The poet is identified in the signature line (takhallos) as Nuri. This segment follows approximately five minutes of ruba<sup>°</sup>is and short lines extolling <sup>°</sup>Ali and Mohammed. It is immediately preceded by a prayer called for by Habib Allāh. The poetry uses heroes from the Shāhnāma to express images extolling God, images which <sup>°</sup>Ali also uses occasionally. The whole poetic segment is long, lasting about eleven minutes. The poem itself lasts about six minutes. The storyteller begins by calling to God, "O friend!" (ay dust). The section given as an example here concludes the entire segment and constitutes about half of the total poem. The meter is hazaj (E-S 2.1.16).

gamanam dar shoja<sup>°</sup>at giv-e kudarz-i to dar iran  
 va ya hushang ya tahmuras bandi dam-e divan  
 to ya kaykhosrov-i ya kayqobad-i midahi farman  
 namidanam faramarz-e yai-i ya rostam-e dastan  
 ka jud-e pichpichat mikashad manand-e khaqanam (twice)  
 to shah-e keshvar-e hosn-i faridun hast darbanat  
 cho gurang ebn-e balyan mikonam jan-ra be-qorbanat

be-damat Turak oftad napichad sar ze farmanat  
 khadang-e rostam-i khord ashkabus-e yal ze paykanat (twice)  
 cho esfandar khun-e del ravān bashad ze cheshmanam  
 to jamshid <sup>c</sup>ajam-i dar hosn o khuban bar darat darban  
 to-i afrasiyab o man siyavosh-am begiri jan  
 man-am nuri ka she<sup>c</sup>ram shohra shod dar keshvar-e iran  
 [unintelligible] ay shah-e khuban  
 makosh dar khanat ay sang del man bar to mehman-am (twice)

I believe you are Giv son of Kudarz in Iran, in valor,  
 Or Hushang, or Tahmuras; you strangle the demons.  
 Or you are Kaykhosrow, or you are Kayqobad; you are  
 the order giver.  
 I do not know if you are the hero Faramarz or Rostam  
 son of Dastan.  
 Your all-encompassing generosity stretches out like  
 my king.  
 You are king of the land of goodness; Faridun is your  
 doorman.  
 Like Gurang, son of Balyan, I give up my life for you.  
 Turak fell into a trap of yours and still did not  
 give up your service.  
 You are Rostam's arrow; Ashkabus the hero was struck  
 by your lance (twice).  
 Like Esfandiyar may my heart's blood flow from my  
 eyes.  
 You are Iran's Jamshid in beauty and the beauties  
 guard your door.  
 You are Afrasiyab, and I am Siyavash. Take my life.  
 I am Nuri, whose poetry is known in the land of Iran.  
 [unintelligible] O king of the beautiful.  
 Do not kill me in your house, o stone hearted. I am  
 your guest.

The poem is a mosammat, having the rhyme scheme a a a b c c c b d d d b  
 etc. The poem, like <sup>c</sup>Ali's, extolls God's virtues, expressing the  
 poet's love for God in terms of earthly love, and laments God's  
 unkindness. The people mentioned are all from the mythical and

legendary parts of the Shāhnāma, i.e. the parts of the Shāhnāma which the storyteller commonly tells. God is mighty and good like the heroes, Faramarz, Rostam, Gurang, Esfandiyār and Turak. He is also powerful like the rulers Kaykhosrow, Kayqobād and Jamshid. The great king Faridun only stands at His door. Yet God has also the vengeful, frightening side. He is like the enemy leader Afrāsiyāb who killed his own son-in-law, the beautiful Iranian youth Siyavosh, metaphorically the poet being killed willingly for God. The most striking thing about this poem is the use of Shāhnāma characters who are outside of the literary tradition, but common to the storytelling tradition. Turak, Balyān and Gurang are all absent from Ferdowsi's Shāhnāma. They do, however, figure prominently in the stories told today.

Not all storytellers use such lengthy or complex introductions as ʿAlī and Habib Allāh. Before passing on to other subjects, I will present a final introduction, this one recorded from ʿAlī Nāderi, a storyteller in Teheran, for the purposes of comparison. The full text of the poetic introduction is given here. It lasts about one minute, a normal length for this storyteller.

besmellāh al-rahmān al-rahīm  
 az nām-e khoshat adā konam besmellāh  
 porsand agar ze qovatat miguyam  
 lā howla va lā qovvatan elā bellāh  
 az khelqat-e mā khalaqa ʿamr-e azalist



maq̇sud-e khodā chārdah nur-e jalist  
 onka moḥammad [ṣalavāt] do ḥasan o yek musā  
 zahrā vo ḥosayn ja<sup>c</sup>far o char <sup>c</sup>alist

In the name of God the merciful, the compassionate!  
 In your name I utter the bismellāh.  
 You are <sup>c</sup>Ali and there are no others like you, by God.  
 They ask if I speak of your power;  
 There is no power or strength except in God.  
 From the creation of what He has created is the endless  
 life.  
 The purpose of God is the fourteen bright lights.<sup>9</sup>  
 That is, Mohammed, two Hasans and one Musā,  
 Zahrā, Hosayn, Ja<sup>c</sup>far, and four <sup>c</sup>Alis.

This introduction is little more than a mentioning of the Holy Family and the imams, and a call to God. The bismellāh, which the storyteller uses every day, is longer than the poetry. It will be remembered, however, that both <sup>c</sup>Ali and Habib Allāh cited the learning of lyric poetry and philosophical material other than Shāhnāma as necessary for their training whereas Nāderi was not formally trained in storytelling. It should also be noted, on the other hand, that all of the necessary elements are present in this introduction. The bismellāh is followed by a selection of religious poetry, a call for the ṣalavāt, and then the story begins.

The bismellāh and the introduction perform several services for the two storytellers. They attract the attention of the audience, giving them time to readjust themselves to hear the story coming. This service however does not account for the length of the poetic introductions. They must therefore have other meaning in the performance. Since the storyteller plays the part of a learned

man for his audience, the recitation of poetry is an opportunity for him to demonstrate his skill at reciting and his knowledge of the Persian poetic tradition. By demonstrating his erudition he proves himself a man of books and worthy of the attention of his audience. The use of poetry taken from religious and mystic traditions also underlines the position of the storyteller as a religious man and leader in his society. The poetry encourages the audience to look toward the storyteller, qua storyteller, but also as a skilled professional and fount of knowledge of this culture. The poetic sections not only attract the actual physical attention of the audience, but also assure their acceptance of what the storyteller will say.

#### The Story Lead-In

The storytellers discussed here open their stories with a lead-in which is either in rhymed prose or a combination of poetry and rhymed prose.<sup>10</sup> Each storyteller has one or more of these lead-ins which he uses. <sup>c</sup>Ali Sanākhān generally opens his story with part or all of the following:

konun āmadam bar sar-e dāstān  
hami guyam az gofta-e bāstān<sup>11</sup>  
ceqd-e javāher-e sokhan-e kohān dar maḥzar-e  
dustān ruz-e gozashta . . .

Now I have come to the beginning of the story.  
I shall tell some of what was told in ancient times.

The chain of the jewels of ancient speech in the presence of friends, yesterday . . .

Ḥabīb Allāh varied his lead-in somewhat more than <sup>c</sup>Ali. His lead-ins consisted of long passages of rhymed prose, such as:

sarmaṣdar-e dāstān dar maḥzar-e dustān be-hengāmi  
 bud ka diruz-e gozashta khedmat-e sarvarān-e garām  
 o barādarān-e a<sup>c</sup>zām <sup>c</sup>arż kardam va az shab-e  
 gozashta al-hāl barāy-e sā<sup>c</sup>ati sargarmi-e dustān  
 zerva-e <sup>c</sup>aql mirasanam be-sharṭ-e onka bāz ham  
 barādarhā barāy-e goshāyesh-e kār amorzesh-e anbāt  
 [unintelligible] be-niyat-e onka khodā enshallāh  
 emāneshun hefz konad ṣalavāt-e digari khatm konid  
 [ṣalavāt] reshta-e sokhan ruz-e gozashta . . .

The opening of the story in the presence of my friends arrived at the point which I presented yesterday before the esteemed leaders and great brothers. After last night, now, I shall bring it to the pinnacle of intellect for an hour's pleasure for my friends on the condition that again the brothers should send a ṣalavāt [ṣalavāt] for the beginning of our business; the forgiveness of the prophets, and [unintelligible] so that God, may He be willing, shall keep them safe. The chain of speech, yesterday . . .

The passage relates no information and is meant primarily for its sound.

Within the context of naqqāli, the story lead-in fills several functions. It provides a link in texture between the poetry of the introduction and the prose of the story by using chanted, rhymed prose. This way there is no abrupt break in continuity. It

sets the action of the story in unspecified olden times when things were not subject to the same rules they are today. The story lead-in provides rapport between the storyteller and his audience in addressing the audience as sharers with the storyteller in a common Iranian past of which he will speak. Both storytellers address their listeners as friends (dustān) or even in Habib Allāh's case as brothers (barādarān) and offer their story to them. Habib Allāh's lead-in also contains references to religion, underlining once again the religious rapport begun earlier.

The story lead-in thus announces the coming of the story, while furthering the identification between audience and storyteller which began with the first words of the performance. The storyteller affirms that he shares with them knowledge and belief, and captures the attention of the audience for the coming story.

#### The Prose Story

After the story lead-in, the prose story begins. The storyteller presents a short passage to recapitulate what was told the day before, bringing the audience up to date. The synopsis works right into the story which usually lasts about an hour. If the storyteller exceeds his time limit, his audience is likely to leave before he has reached a good cut-off point so that he usually keeps a close eye on his watch and begins to wind up the performance as he approaches the end of his allotted time.

As explained above, storytellers narrate material from

the national legend, taken largely from the Shāhnāma. They confine themselves to the parts of the Shāhnāma dealing with the origin of the world up to Alexander's conquest of Iran. They may include further stories of Shāhnāma heroes or Sasanian or Safavid kings and heroes in their repertoire. The stories are narrated serially, one installment told every day. Within each installment stories progress by episodes. Stories are embedded within stories to form a very complex narrative, often with the stories of two or more heroes being dealt with at one time, much like the American soap opera. Except for the final session, all stories do not end simultaneously at the conclusion of any one installment. One story may dominate the narration for a day or so but other stories will also begin and be developed at the same time. When the dominant story finishes, there will still be other stories to be taken up. The storyteller never finishes an installment without something remaining to draw the audience back the next day.

The prose used in the narration is clear and straightforward. If the storyteller fears his meaning is not understood, he stops to clarify any words he feels might be troublesome. The narration proceeds in the simple past with short grammatical units. The settings are formalized, usually depicting royal surroundings and lush backgrounds. Much of the story is contained in dialogs between actors, either summing up action which went before or else describing action which is to come. Occasionally, lyric passages are inserted.

An example of the story is given below. This selection is from a story by <sup>c</sup>Ali Sanākhan and serves as an illustration of the kind of prose presentation the storyteller makes.<sup>12</sup>

kava dar kenār-e manucehr parcham-e kāviyun bar  
 sar-e manucehr darafsh-e ṣaltanati chatr-e afsar  
 mavāzebat-e jān-e manucehr be-kāviyān-as be-l'-  
 akhera kava farmud delāvarān naqdan barāy-e mā  
 do chi doshman ijād karda mokhelli tarāshida harifi  
 yāfta hālā har ka mard-e maydān-e jang ast beravad  
 maydun bebinim cha mishavad injā maydān-e jang-ast  
 āmadim az barāy-e jang bezanim bekoshim koshta  
 beshim ta fath̄ nasib-e ya ṭaraf besha omidvār-im  
 un ṭaraf mā bashim ki mira maydān bāz az khod-e  
 pesarān-e kava dāvṭalab fedāyvār qadam pish nehād  
 gāvak farzand-e kava goft qorban man miram man  
 miravam bebinam har belā'i barāy-e mā basha jān  
 bar sar-e <sup>c</sup>alā ḥaṣrat-a gāvak ebn-e kava sevāra  
 bar markab gharq-e āhan o fulād az ṣaff-e sepāh-e  
 iran hay be-markab āmad maydān

Kāva on the side of Manucehr, the flag of the Kāviyans over Manucehr's head, the royal banner, the umbrella of state. The Kāviyans are responsible for protecting Manucehr's life. Finally Kāva said, "Heroes, at present the enemy has done two things to us. He has created a disturbance, and he has found a rival [for us]. Now whoever is a man of the battlefield, let him go to the field and let's see what will happen. This is a field of battle. We have come to fight. Let us strike.

Let us kill and be killed until victory goes to one side [or the other]. We hope that we will be that side." Then a self-sacrificing volunteer stood up from among Kāva's own sons. He stepped forward -- Gavak the son of Kāva. He said, "Your servant! I will go. I will go and see whatever fate may await me. My life is for his majesty." Gāvak b. Kāva, mounted on a horse, clad from head to toe in iron and steel came from the line of the Iranian army to the field, spurring on his horse.

In this example we see the basic elements of the narration: narration in the simple past, short sentences; dialog; and lush settings.

All storytellers insert short or long poetic passages into the body of the narrative, and, in fact, some storytellers present virtually a line-by-line rendering of the work they are performing, relying constantly on a printed or handwritten text before them.

If the story which the storyteller is performing is close to Ferdowsi's presentation, the storyteller may quote long passages from the literary source. The poetry has a more ornamental effect, however, than that of actually moving the story forward. In fact, the storyteller may recite a long passage from Ferdowsi and then restate the passage in prose. Since the stories told in the coffee house rarely follow Ferdowsi's work very closely, however, more often the storyteller adds one or two lines from the literary work to sum up an occurrence. <sup>c</sup>Ali adds one such line on Jamshid's death:

The saw cut him in two.  
It filled the nobles' hearts with terror.<sup>13</sup>

Some of these summary lines are popular couplets in the epic meter

which do not come from Ferdowsi's work and refer to events not in Ferdowsi at all. One of these lines is on the death of the king Bahman. The hero Āzarbarzin kills the dragon which has eaten the king. Āzarbarzin says of this act:

be-yek tigh kardam do došman tabāh  
 shāh az khun-e bāb azhdar az khun-e shāh

With one thrust I have destroyed two enemies.  
 The king in revenge for my father, the dragon  
 in revenge for the king.

The meter is motāqareb, but the line is not from Ferdowsi's Shāhnāma. The line appears in <sup>C</sup>Ali's tumār.

The poetry recited need not even be epic poetry. An example of lyric poetry in the meter hazaj (E-S 6.1.08) is given below. <sup>C</sup>Ali recites these lines when he is describing Jamshid's thoughts over his miserable fate.

cha sāl hā ka man hāl-e may o nadim dāshtam  
 cha sāl tāza mishodi may o nadim dāshtam  
 piyālāhā vo jāmhā ze zarr o sim dāshtam  
 del-e javād-e por honar kaf-e karim dāshtam  
 cha khosh be-nāz o ne<sup>C</sup>mat-am gozasht ruzegarhā (twice)

What years I spent with wine and friends.  
 When the year became new, I had wine and friends.  
 Wine cups and goblets I had of gold and silver.  
 A generous, good heart I had and a generous palm.  
 How well passed the times for me in graciousness  
 and ease (twice).

Habib Allāh also inserts lyric poetry to describe nature, particularly sunrises and sunsets, which in themselves usually mark the end of a



battle or other major segment of the narrative. On one occasion he describes the coming of night in this manner:

chun chatr-e shāh-e zang baramād ze kuhsār  
 tārīk gasht dida-e bināy-e ruzegār  
 parvin ravāna gasht bar āhuy-e qarāvoli  
 jāsus gasht zohra vo mah shod telāyadār  
 bar khandaq-e sepehr kashidand takht-e pol  
 tā shāh-e zangavar az unjā konad gozār

When the umbrella of the black king rose from the  
 mountain top,  
 The seeing eye of the times turned dark.  
 The Pleides set off on the sentinel deer.  
 Venus became a spy and the moon a guard.  
 A bridge was stretched over the moat of the sky,  
 So the black king might cross over it.

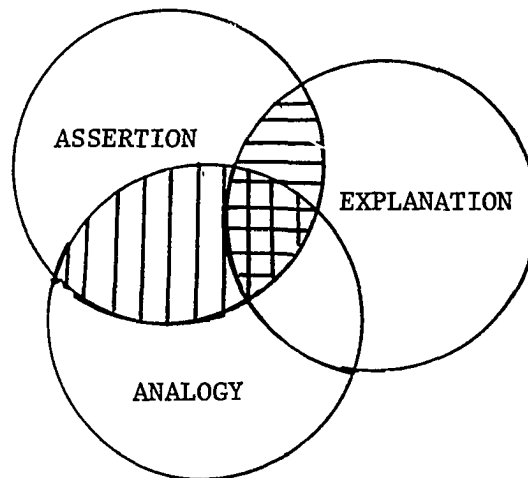
The meter of the selection is mozāre<sup>c</sup> (E-S 4.7.14), and it is a ghazal or at least part of a ghazal.

The inclusion of poetry in the prose story has both an ornamental effect, and, more important, demonstrates once again that the storyteller has command of his material and the techniques of proper presentation of it. He shows himself the master not only of the epic writers, but also able to draw upon the larger poetic tradition when it pertains to his story.

The real command that the storyteller has over his material is perhaps best seen in the digressions he makes from the narration to interpret the story which he is telling. In these digressions the storyteller intrudes material into the narration which breaks the continuity of the narrative, and does not further the action at all.

Most digressions involve a shift in time sequence from the legendary, unknown past of the stories to the present or more recent past. In digressions the storyteller interprets his material, by telling personal anecdotes, by explaining the story, or by drawing analogies between the stories and everyday life.

For the purposes of discussion I have divided the digressions examined into three types: assertion, explanation, and analogy. I will deal with the examples in the order listed. It should not be assumed, however, that the categories are absolute. Often <sup>c</sup>Ali or Habib Allāh will begin with one type of digression and move into another type. The three categories overlap as shown:



I have categorized the following examples according to the initial function of the digression.

### Assertion

Occasionally the storyteller may have to assert his position as the center of attention in order to combat inattentiveness or loud talking among the audience. He most often simply insists on attention, telling people to be quiet or asking them to leave if they are too noisy.

The storytellers may insist on silence by emphasizing the importance of the story. Many speeches for this purpose are uttered, often in real frustration, and may be understood to express some of the storyteller's personal feelings about the value of his story. Habib Allāh says such things as "Quiet down in here. I am telling a beautiful story as a model (namuna) for you to remember (yādegāri)."

In another such case, ʿAlī asked for attention while he was telling the story of Alexander's conquest of Iran. He said, "This story of Alexander is a sweet story. It is the very story of the Book of Kings -- the very story" (in dāstān-e eskandar dāstān-e shirin-a ʿayn-e dāstān-e shāhnāma -- ʿayn-e dāstān) and therefore worth telling and listening to.

### Explanation

The storyteller may have to insert short phrases or longer reminders in order to insure that the audience is able to follow the course of the narrative or is able to understand the point which he is trying to make. In the case of Sohrāb, for example, Habib Allāh explains to the audience that this hero's actions are due to his

youth and rashness. When Sohrāb kills a dragon, Ḥabīb Allāh reinforces the effect of this action by enumerating the dragon-killers who exist in the Shāhnāma. In this way Ḥabīb Allāh shows the audience the kind of hero Sohrāb is by placing him in perspective with the other dragon-killers of the world:

az azhdehā sa tā az delāvarān-e iran Calam dashtand  
 avval garshāsep ka sobh moqaddamash-o barat Carz  
 kardam dovvom sohrāb sayyom-am pesarash dar kharazm  
 unam kuh-e kharazm azhdehā khiz buda vaqti raft  
 mādar-e taymur-o begirad albata shenida'i

Three of the heroes of Iran had dragon-skin flags: first was Garshasp the beginning of whose story I told you this morning; second was Sohrāb; third was his son in Khwarazm, which was full of dragons, when he went to get Taymur [b. Garshasp]'s mother. Surely you have heard this.

Sohrāb's ancestor Garshasp, Sohrāb and Sohrāb's son are the only three heroes to have the dragon-skin flag to distinguish them as great heroes and dragon-killers.

If a minor character appears suddenly in the narrative, the storyteller may stop and explain this character's lineage so that the audience will be able to see him in perspective with other characters with whom they are better acquainted. If a point is to be made in this regard, even the background of major characters will be explained. For example, Ḥabīb Allāh once stopped and explained Rostam's lineage, despite the fact that Rostam is one of the major

heroes of the narrative. This explanation concerned the medallion which Rostam gave his wife, Tahmina, for their son. It is a Balyāni medallion, and Habib Allāh stopped to refresh his audience's memory about Balyān's relationship to Rostam.

The storyteller may simply announce that what he is saying is the kernel (aṣl) of the story and encourage proper attention from the audience. If the storyteller fears that the audience may miss an important connection, he will explain the connection. This explanation is more important than any tension which might result from anticipation of a mystery resolved. For example, in the story of Żahhāk, ʿAli reveals immediately the identity of the fortune teller (rammal) who helps Żahhāk, as Iblis, the devil. Now we no longer need to question the help of this man, or be astonished when he mysteriously appears and disappears at opportune moments. ʿAli tells this in a direct and undramatic manner. Although most people know the story already, by giving such an explanation ʿAli avoids losing those members of the audience who are unfamiliar with the story.

Explanations are given for such other things as Manucmehr's name, Afrāsiyāb's name, the word bessmellāh and Żahhāk's name. Sometimes the storyteller's explanations are the same ones given in Ferdowsi's work. For example, in the story of Żahhāk, a number of people who are secretly released from execution flee to the plains, and there form the Kurdish people. ʿAli recounts this legend as does Ferdowsi.<sup>14</sup>

The narrator's explanations may localize elements of the story and tie them to something familiar to the audience.<sup>15</sup> In <sup>C</sup>Ali's story, Jamshid holds court in Persepolis (Takht-e Jamshid or "The Throne of Jamshid" in Modern Persian) just outside Shiraz. In due course Ẓahhāk moves his court to Isfahan. When <sup>C</sup>Ali is trying to explain the hold that the devil (this time in the guise of a cook) has over Ẓahhāk, he explains how very little could be cooked at this time. The devil charms Ẓahhāk by the creation of such dishes as soltāni kebab (a popular Shirazi dish).

Occasionally the storyteller must explain the rules of the world described in his narrative. Thus <sup>C</sup>Ali explains that demons, having eaten, must sleep twenty-four, thirty-six or even forty-eight hours before fighting again. They sleep, he says, a full two days and two nights, and then he sums this up with the phrase in Arabic "eating, then snoring unawares" (aklan lamma khorran koffā).

The storyteller may begin with an explanation of the world of the story, move from there to an analogy of the heroic world with the modern day world, and from this draw a moral. Usually the modern world comes off looking very poor when compared with the heroic world. For example, Habib Allāh tells a story in which Rostam has gone to see the petty ruler Shabān Mazandarāni, with whom he has been quarrelling. Rostam attempts to get Shabān drunk, hoping he will then be more agreeable to Rostam's point of view. Unfortunately, the plan does not work. Not only does Shabān hold stubbornly to

his own idea, but Rostam himself becomes hopelessly inebriated. He rises to leave but Shabān insists he will see Rostam home, invoking the rules of proper treatment of guests.<sup>16</sup> Habib Allāh explains Shabān's chivalry this way:

in rasm-e qadimiya buda do tā ka bā ham  
 hampiyāla mishodand bādgosāri mikardand ākher-e  
 kār ya vaqt mididid tā ṣobḥ inā kashmakasheshun  
 bud ka in miraft un-rā berasunad un bar migasht  
 in-rā berasunad ya vaqt mididand hava rowshan  
 shod ḥālā-m rafiqesh mibarat mastash konad  
 velash konad kenār-e khiyābun be-qol-e khodadun  
 alesh mikonad tā mardom biyānd tofash biyandāzand  
 bezanandash inam besh bekhandad ya dastash-o  
 gir biyandāzad be-ya badbakhti

This is the way people did in the old days. Two people would become drinking companions and drink together. Finally you would see them fighting until morning so that one would accompany the other then the other would accompany the one. All of a sudden they would see that the sun was coming up. But now a fellow takes his friend and gets him drunk then leaves him on the street. You yourselves have said that he makes a fool of his friend so that the people come and spit at him and strike him. Even the friend laughs at him. He sets his own hand against the poor fellow.

### Analogy

The most complex kind of interpolation for the purpose of giving credibility to the story is analogy. In an analogy the storyteller presents an occurrence which has taken place in the recent

past or in believable (usually religious) past occasions, and which is similar to an occurrence in his narrative world. The storytellers often class these digressions as masal (comparison).<sup>17</sup> The analogy works by setting up the syllogism "If A is possible and B (the story) is the same as A, then B must also be possible." In this way the storyteller proves (however shaky the proof may seem) that the point presented in the story is plausible. This proof then adds weight to the storyteller's argument and makes his story more meaningful.

Often masals are very short, comprising only a phrase or a line of poetry used proverbially. When Habib Allāh wants to explain why Sohrāb finally accepted the command of Afrasiyāb's army, he says Sohrāb came from his tent and saw the army lined up, waiting for him to lead them. He had no choice for

Caqebat gorgzāda gorg shavad

garcha be-adami bozorg shavad

In the end a wolf cub will become a wolf,  
Even though it is raised to be human.<sup>18</sup>

This line is a popular proverb taken from a poem by Sa<sup>c</sup>di,<sup>19</sup> and is used in other similar circumstances.

The masal need not be only one line, however. An example of a masal is offered by Habib Allāh when he compares Rostam's position with regard to the kings of Iran to the Imam <sup>c</sup>Ali b. Abi Tāleb's position with regard to Islam. Rostam has gone to rescue Shah Kāvus who has gotten himself into trouble through his own foolishness. After Rostam has rescued Kāvus, he takes the deluded



king into the forest and thrashes him until the king loses consciousness. Rostam is willing to be killed for his actions, but he feels he must try to make the king realize how foolish he has been. When Kāvus comes to, he is a changed man. He feels no desire for revenge on Rostam, and from that time on he is a good king. Then the storyteller inserts his masal:

eslām āghā az sa chiz paydār mond kholq-e  
 payghambar servat-e khadija . . . khuy o ravash  
 o akhlāq-e payghambar o servat-e khadija vo  
 ākher-e kār-am be-khod-e qowl-e <sup>c</sup>arab sayf --  
 shamshir o bāzuy-e <sup>c</sup>ali

Sir, Islam is founded on three things: the character of the Prophet, the wealth of Khadija [Mohammed's wife] . . . the disposition and manner and character of the Prophet, and the wealth of Khadija, and finally, even the sayings of the Arabs themselves affirm, the sword -- the sword and strong arm of <sup>c</sup>Ali.

If the Imam <sup>c</sup>Ali was right and honorable in using his sword and power in the cause of Islam, similarly Rostam is right in using his strength in the service of Iran.

In another short passage, <sup>c</sup>Ali Sanākhan interjects a discussion of the orderly and law-abiding nature of the Swiss people into his story of Zahhāk. Zahhāk has two people killed every day and feeds their brains to the snakes which have grown from his shoulders. He begins by killing the criminals in his kingdom. Shortly the prisons are empty and no one is breaking the law. The storyteller compares this situation with the situation in modern Switzerland as

he sees it:

dar sovays modathā dādghāsh ta<sup>c</sup>til buda chand  
 sāl-a do nafar paydā nashodand biyānd dādghā  
 pish-e rayis-e dādghā mohākema beshand dar sovays

In Switzerland the courts have been closed for a long time. It has been several years since two people have appeared who have gone to the court before the judge to have a case settled. In Switzerland.

The orderliness of the Iranian people comes from fear of Žahhāk, which is a negative reaction. It is unlike the orderliness of the Swiss which is positive in cause. This example provides a similar case so that the audience can see that it is possible for laws to be adhered to, negatively in the case of Žahhāk and positively in the case of the Swiss.

<sup>c</sup>Ali also uses masals with religious themes. An example is when he compares the presence of the baby Feridun in Žahhāk's kingdom to the presence of Moses in the Pharaoh's kingdom. Both Žahhāk and the Pharaoh have tried to be rid of these potential enemies only to end up raising the children in their own kingdoms.

Anecdotes pointing up analogous situations may be quite long, and these are also identified as masals. Like the shorter passages, these digressions serve the same purpose -- to tie an unfamiliar element of the story to something which is familiar to the audience. Again these longer masals are often religious. A person need not be directly compared to another person. An action or quality

of action may be compared to another action or quality of action.

In the story of the death of Afrāsiyāb's father, Pashang, Habib Allāh uses an analogy to point out the villainy of Afrāsiyāb. Afrāsiyāb has usurped the power of kingship from his aged father. One day Pashang enters the court and collapses on the verge of death. He pleads for a number of last promises from his son, among which is the promise that Afrāsiyāb will order his body returned to Iran to be buried near the tomb of Pashang's grandfather Feridun. Afrāsiyāb agrees. When his father has died, Afrāsiyāb wants to go back on his promise, reasoning that it is really of no consequence where a man is buried. To throw into relief Afrāsiyāb's actions, Habib Allāh tells the following story:

farq namikonad āqā agar ya kasi-rā fi 'l-masal  
 masal <sup>c</sup>arz mikonim dar esfahān dafn konan yā  
 bebaran najaf farq namikonad <sup>c</sup>ajab mā shi<sup>c</sup>azāda  
 hastim chi towr momken-a jānam man hezarhā  
 dalil o borhān barā in kār dāram . . . na jānam  
 farq mikonad be-molā be-khodā farq mikonad  
 sadhā hadis dārim az emām-e sheshom ya ru diga  
 ya hadis barat goftam <sup>c</sup>ali ebn-e abi tāleb  
 . . . umad be-khāb-e khoddāmbāshish goft fardā  
 az folān darvāza ya jenāza-st qarār-a biyārand  
 vādi os-salām dafn konan boro māne<sup>c</sup>sh sho in  
 qadar in zendiq-a kāfer-a sherk āvorda o ma<sup>c</sup>siyat

karda ka agar biyād az ātashash digarān-am  
mo<sup>c</sup>azzab mishan ṣobḥ khoddāmbāshi as-sayyed al-jad  
ol-qaddi jam<sup>c</sup>iyat-rā bar dāsht o raftan darvāzahā-  
rā bastand ka jenāza nayād tā ghorub sabr kardand  
khabari nashod bar gasht shab khāb-e morteza  
<sup>c</sup>ali-rā did ḥazrat farmud fardā berid az hamun  
darvāza'i ka goftam un jenāza-rā miyarand bā  
<sup>c</sup>ezzat biyarid o biyarid tu sahn dafnash konid  
<sup>c</sup>arż kard yā <sup>c</sup>ali shomā dishab be-khāb-e man un  
ṭowr gofti mā harcha raftim az u khabari nashod  
ḥalā ḥarf <sup>c</sup>avaż shod farmud inā rāh-ro gom kardan  
mikhāstan biyarandash najaf be-suy-e karbalāy-e  
ḥosaynam bordan bādī vazid ghobārī az kuy-e ḥosayn  
ruy-e jenāza-e u neshast khodā bakhshidash farq  
namikonad . . .

Does it make no difference sir, if a person, for example -- I'll give you an example -- is buried in Isfahan or taken to Najaf? It doesn't make a difference? Strange. We are Shiites. How is it possible, my dear? I have thousands of examples and explanations of this. . . . No, my dear. It makes a difference. We have hundreds of traditions from the sixth imam [Ja<sup>c</sup>far al-Ṣādeq]. One day I related a tradition for you. <sup>c</sup>Ali b. Abī Tāleb . . . came in a dream to the leader of his worshippers. He said, "Tomorrow, it has been decided that a body will be brought through a certain gate to be buried in the [cemetery of] the Valley of Peace.<sup>20</sup> Go stop it. He is such a heretic, such an unbeliever, such a pagan and has sinned so that if he comes, the others there will be tormented in his flames."

In the morning the leader of the worshippers, the descendant of the Prophet, the great ancestor,

got a group together. They went and closed the gates so that the body couldn't come in. They waited until nightfall, but there was no sign of it. He went back.

That night he dreamed of Morteza <sup>c</sup>Ali. Hazrat <sup>c</sup>Ali said, "Go tomorrow. They will bring that body through the same gate I told you about yesterday. Bring it in with honor. Bring it in and bury it in the courtyard [of the cemetery of the Valley of Peace]."

He said, "O <sup>c</sup>Ali. Yesterday you said one thing in my dream. Even though we went, there was no sign of him. Now you are saying something else."

[<sup>c</sup>Ali] said, "They lost their way. They wanted to take him to Najaf. They went in the direction of Kerbela, my Hosayn's city. A wind blew. Some dust from Hosayn's street landed on his body. God forgave him."

Doesn't it make a difference?

Habib Allāh identifies this story from the outset as a story analogous to his own with the phrases "for example" (*fi 'l-masal*) and "we will give you an example" (*masal carz mikonim*). Habib Allāh likens Pashang to the dead unbeliever, having sinned against Iran which is again compared with Islam. By returning even after death to the land of Iran, Pashang can hope for forgiveness.<sup>21</sup> In refusing to grant his father's dying wish, Afrāsiyāb is shown to be a hard, selfish person. If Afrāsiyāb's cruelty was not apparent to the audience before the telling of this *masal*, it is apparent now in terms meaningful to the audience.

Not all of these stories are religious. <sup>c</sup>Ali draws a lengthy analogy to enhance his characterization of Sarand, Zāhhāk's son. He finds his material in something he has read. When Sarand abducts and rapes a young girl, <sup>c</sup>Ali likens him to a bear. This simile then reminds him of a story which he has read:

zan-e mohandes-e italiya'i dar jadda-e ahan mowqa'ci  
 ka jadda-e ahan mikashidand havali-e borujerd khers  
 madam-o bord zan-e mohandes-o bord baray-e maghar  
 mohandes ba'd-e sa ru ru parhay-e lebas-e zanash  
 ba mardom-e mahalli raftand dar ghari ka zan-o borda  
 bud khers borujerd khatt-e ahan dar mowqa'ci ka  
 shah-e faqid 'ala hazrat rezashah in jarayan oftad  
 ruznama neveshtand majellat-am neveshtan zan-ro  
 dar un maghar payda mikonand mardom-e mahalli ba  
 italiya'ish showharash vali khersa rafta buda az  
 baray-e talash o azuqa o khorak o chizi biyara  
 vali cha zani tan o badanash zakhmi majruh sina  
 vo ina jay-e nakhun-e khers miyarand zan-ra az  
 baray-e borujerd o mari'khuna amma mohandes tu  
 ghar tala mizarand khers ba'dan ba ghaza omad did  
 un zan nist miyofta tala mizarand cha khers arand  
 miyaradash khatt-e ahan mibandandash ba zanjir  
 migoftan omaray-e khatt ka mohandes migofta be-  
 khersa agar madam mord shoma mord agar madam  
 zenda salamat shoma-m salam be-khersa gofta madam  
 tu mari'khuna-s ba'd-e sa ruz mimira az bas ka  
 khers behash mojame'at karda bud o tan o badanash  
 majruh karda bud o naqes karda khub junevar buda  
 in zan-e badbakht-am zir-e changalash buda  
 ayman o jowd dava o darmun fayeda namibakhshad

zan mimira khabar-e margash-o be-mohandes miyārānd  
 khers-am migoftan ghorub tā ghorub hamin ka zanjirash  
 karda budan bā in dastāsh mizada tu sarash ohow  
 ohow ohow [laughter] gerya mikarda cha chi migofta  
 ohow mikarda vaqti be-mohandes migan mādam mord  
 un-am e<sup>c</sup>lām-e khers-rā emzā mikona dināmid unjā  
 barāy-e [unintelligible] kardan o khatt kashidan  
 faravān buda dināmid dināmid mikonan tu mā-taht-e  
 khers dināmid ka ziyād-a fetilash mizārānd o ba<sup>c</sup>d  
 zanjir-e gardanash vāz mikonand o fetil-rā ātash  
 mizandand mohandes miga shomā morakkhas-i shomā  
 morakkhas boro khers-am bā fetila'i ka be mā-taht  
 nasb-a tu shekamash-am dināmid chapundand chand qadam  
 ka mira fetila mirasa be-dināmid mipākad teka teka  
 mishad hālā i sarand-am az u khersa kamtar nist

The wife of an Italian engineer working on the  
 railroad when they laid the railroad near Boru-  
 jerd. A bear carried the woman off -- the wife  
 of the engineer. He took her to a cave. After  
 three days, the engineer, following pieces of his  
 wife's clothes, went with the local people into  
 the cave when the bear had taken the woman. In  
 Borujerd. The railroad. In the time of the late  
 Reza Shah. This happened then. The newspapers  
 wrote about it, so did the magazines. They find  
 the woman in that cave. The local people and  
 the Italian, her husband. But the bear had gone  
 to hunt, bring back provisions, food and things.  
 But as for the woman. Her body was torn up, her  
 chest and so forth from the bear's claws. They  
 bring the woman to Borujerd to the hospital. But

the engineer laid a trap. After a while the bear came with the food. He saw that the woman isn't there. He falls down. They trap him in order to bring him out. They bring him to the railroad tracks. They tie him up with chains. The railroad officials said that the engineer said to the bear, "If the woman dies, death for you. If the woman lives safely, you too are safe." They told the bear, "The woman is in the hospital." After three days she dies from the way this bear had raped her and wounded her body and mutilated her. Well, it was a wild animal! This unfortunate woman, then, was in its grasp. Safety, medicines and drugs won't help. The woman dies. They bring the news of her death to her husband. They said that the bear, too, even though he was chained, for days had struck his head with his hands, crying "O ho! O ho! O ho! [laughter]. What was he saying? He was crying, "O ho!" When they say to the engineer that the woman died, it signs the warrant on the bear. They had much dynamite for the [unintelligible] and laying the rails there. Dynamite! They stuck dynamite up the bear's behind. They had a lot of dynamite there. They they attached a fuse to it. They open the chains around his neck and light the fuse. The engineer says, "You're free! You! Free! Go!" The bear, then with the fuse stuck up his behind and also dynamite stuck to his stomach, went forward several steps. Then the fuse reached the dynamite. It exploded the dynamite. He was blown into little pieces. Now, this Sarand is no less than that bear.

Here we have a story which apparently asks for disbelief. The laughter and manner of the story indicate that it is not really to be accepted as absolute truth. This story demonstrates that it is not simply belief that the storyteller is working for, but rather, it is dramatic acceptance of his material. Even if the audience did not believe the story (and I do not think that they did), through it they become more involved in the storytelling session. For his part,



<sup>c</sup>Ali tried all kinds of things to make the story more acceptable. He said that it was in the magazines and newspapers, and that it took place in the past during the reign of Rezā Shah. It all came from the testimony of the railroad officials. His narration drifts from the past tense into the present tense. The present tense dominates, bringing the story closer to our own time, as if it were happening now. It is worth noting that it is not the fact that Sarand could abduct and rape a girl which motivates the analogy, but rather his brutishness. <sup>c</sup>Ali ends the digression with "Sarand is not less [a villain] than this bear." Despite its apparent unacceptability, the story does bring home Sarand's bestiality. If a bear could kill this poor woman, Sarand could certainly do the same. We are also reminded that the bear was killed horribly for his actions. Sarand will also be defeated eventually, for this and other sins.

The tendency of the storyteller to intrude non-narrative elements into his story is a phenomenon found in other traditions as well as Iran.<sup>22</sup> This tendency in fact has been said to be the cause of problems of textual analysis. Studying Beowulf, Michael Cherniss concludes that "inconsistence," "digression," and "interpolation" are characteristics of "oral poetry,"<sup>23</sup> even though he concedes that the literate poet has the same option for interpolation of outside material.<sup>24</sup>

The use of digression, however, need not be considered so much the result of fuzzy thinking on the part of an illiterate or

semi-literate raconteur as it is an essential technique and conscious effort on the part of the storyteller in creating his story. It provides a pause for both storyteller and audience to rest their attention momentarily from the heroic stories. The digression, if expanded on properly, may also increase the audience's understanding and acceptance of the story being told. In this way the use of digression underlines once again the relationship which has been built up between the storyteller and his audience.<sup>25</sup>

If we remember that the traditional relationship between the storyteller and his audience includes both aspects of entertainer and teacher, the use of digressions becomes more clear. As <sup>c</sup>Ali expressed his job as teacher in telling the story, he was to translate (tarjoma kardan) the material for his audience. In this way we might say that the storyteller uses his position as teacher/entertainer to "give such order to experience . . . that the audience will be drawn . . . into the performance."<sup>26</sup> The digressions help the storyteller to make his interpretation clear to the audience and to give order to the story.

#### The Rowza

The rowza is a prose story concerning the religious heroes of Iranian Shiism, centering particularly, but not exclusively, around the martyrdom of Hosayn, the third Shiite imam. The rowza stories revolve around a set of historical events which took place in the early days of Islam. The Prophet Mohammed led the Muslim community

until his death in A.D. 632. After his death, the faithful were led by the "Four Orthodox Caliphs," Abu Bakr, <sup>c</sup>Omar, <sup>c</sup>Osman and <sup>c</sup>Ali. Of these, only <sup>c</sup>Ali was of the Prophet's family, being the son of Abu Taleb, the Prophet's uncle. <sup>c</sup>Ali was raised by Mohammed and he married the Prophet's daughter, Fatema. <sup>c</sup>Ali and Fatema had two sons, Hasan and Hosayn. At <sup>c</sup>Ali's death Hasan tried to seize the lead of the Muslim community and in fact ruled as caliph for a short period until the Umayyad caliph Mo<sup>c</sup>aviya forced him from power. Hasan retired from public life and died in 669-70 A.D., perhaps of poisoning.<sup>27</sup>

After the death of the Caliph Mo<sup>c</sup>aviya in A.D. 680, Hosayn fled the Umayyad capital of Damascus for Mecca with his family.<sup>28</sup> In Mecca he was invited to come and lead the rebels against the Umayyads in Kufa, a city in Iraq. On his way to Kufa, Hosayn and his small band of followers were attacked by the Umayyads and on the 10th of Moharram 61/October 10,680 Hosayn and most of his group were killed on the plain of Kerbela. His head, and the surviving members of his family were taken to the caliph in Damascus. Among his survivors was his son Zayn al-<sup>c</sup>Abidin who became the fourth imam.

Although both Sunnis and Shiites profess great respect for the Family of the Prophet (ahl ol-bayt),<sup>29</sup> the Shiites derive the leaders of their community (the imams) only from the Family. All of the Shiite imams are descended from the Prophet through <sup>c</sup>Ali. Iran is a "Twelver Shiite" country which means that they accept only twelve imams, the last of which, the Mahdi, is in occultation and will reappear

at the end of time. The twelve imams are as follows:

ʿAli b. Abi Ṭāleb	(d. 40/661)
Ḥasan b. ʿAli	(d. 49/669)
Ḥosayn b. ʿAli	(d. 61/680)
ʿAli b. Ḥosayn (Zayn al-ʿĀbedin)	(d. 94/712)
Moḥammad b. ʿAli (al-Bāqer)	(d. 113/731)
Jaʿfar b. Moḥammad (al-Ṣādeq)	(d. 148/765)
Musā b. Jaʿfar (al-Kāzem)	(d. 183/799)
ʿAli b. Musā (al-Rezā)	(d. 203/818)
Moḥammad b. ʿAli (al-Javād)	(d. 220/835)
ʿAli b. Moḥammad (al-Hādī)	(d. 254/868)
Ḥasan b. ʿAli (al-ʿAskari)	(d. 260/874)
Moḥammad b. Ḥasan (al-Mahdi)	(disappeared 264/878)

The rowza stories are said to be taken from the 10th/16th century work Rowzat al-Shohadā by Mollā Ḥosayn Vāʿez Kashefi. The practice of reciting from this work began in early Safavid times:

At the same time as the Muharram ceremonies were flourishing and developing under the Safavid rule, a second important and popular form of religious expression came into being. This was the dramatic narration of the life, deeds, suffering and death of Shi'ite martyrs . . . these stories were taken from a book called "Rowzato'l Shohadah" or "The Garden of Martyrs." <sup>30</sup>

The Rowzat al-Shohadā became the main source for this kind of recitation along with other less well-known works.<sup>31</sup> According to Dehkhodā the practice was originally called Rowzat al-Shohadā-khāni (the reading of the Garden of Martyrs) and was eventually shortened to rowza-khāni

(reciting the Garden) for the act of reading, and the reader was called the rowza-khān (the reciter of the Garden).<sup>32</sup>

The rowza is a profoundly religious experience for all Shiites. Told on religious holidays, particularly the first ten days of Moharram, the rowza is meant to awaken feelings of pain and sympathy in the audience. Religious Shiites believe that they receive blessings for weeping for the imams and the Family:

gerya dar in matām mowjeb-e hoṣul-e reżāy-e rabbāni  
va sabab-e voṣul be-riyāz-e jāvedāni-st<sup>33</sup>

Crying during this mourning [for the martyrs] is a means of attaining divine satisfaction and a means of attaining the everlasting Gardens [of Paradise].

Habib Allāh and ʿAlī usually begin their rowzas immediately upon completing their normal storytelling session. The longest rowza is the one Habib Allāh presented on Shab-e Qatl. This rowza lasted just under twenty minutes. The shortest rowza is eight minutes long. Overall, the rowzas average about ten minutes. Both storytellers compose their rowzas by combining stories relating the sorrows or martyrdom of various people. Not all of the rowzas center directly on the battles in Kerbela. A rowza may continue beyond the events of Kerbela, or begin after these events. Very often the point of view is through the eyes of a witness to the tragic events recounted in the rowza. ʿAlī presents part of one of his rowzas through the eyes of Zayn ol-ʿAbidin. Habib Allāh presents one rowza in the words of the sixth imam Jaʿfar al-Ṣādeq. In another rowza he presents one of the stories through the eyes of Hoṣayn's sister, Zaynab.

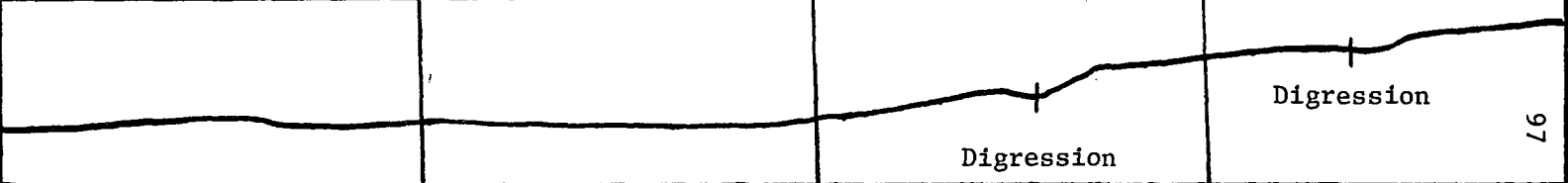
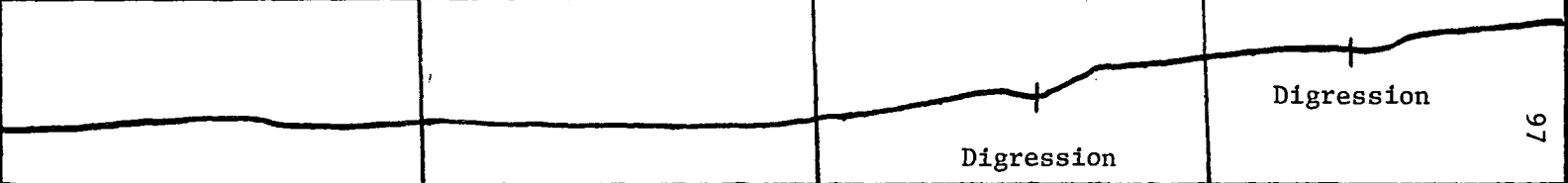
The style of presentation differs greatly between <sup>c</sup>Ali and Habib Allāh. <sup>c</sup>Ali tells his rowzas in a manner very much as he tells his Shahnāma stories except that as he becomes more involved in the material, and as tension mounts, he begins chanting the words. At some point his chanting stops and he returns to his normal mode of speech. Habib Allāh begins chanting from the very beginning. His tone of voice marks the fact that he has begun the rowza. His voice becomes very nasal, and the vowels are drawn out. Both <sup>c</sup>Ali and Habib Allāh divide their narration of these rowza stories into short phrases with a distinct pause between phrase. Habib Allāh generally ends a phrase with a rising pitch.

Outlines of three rowzas which will be considered in greater detail below are found in Chart I along with an approximate representation of the level of audience response, determined by the amount of weeping. The usual method of stringing stories together, concentrating first on one character and then on another, is apparent. Each brief story has its own climax and will provoke weeping in the audience. Although there is a general trend of increasing emotional involvement up to the end of the rowza, there are also smaller peaks of emotion within each story. The weeping builds up during each story, and drops off slightly as the story ends. The involvement is greatest during the final stories, however. There is no let-down from the last story; the storyteller ends his rowza and begins a prayer. The audience joins him, and the time for mourning is over.

CHART I  
 SUMMARY OF ROWZA STORIES  
 A - January 22, 1975

	1	2	3	4	5	6*	7
SUMMARY OF ACTION	Hosayn gathers his companions and advises them to leave him; they refuse. They bid farewell to their families and friends.	Hosayn goes to Zaynab gets an old shirt to wear in battle. [Narration in part through Zaynab.]	Hosayn takes Ali Asghar to the field; the baby is killed to prove Hosayn's innocence in this battle. <sup>34</sup>	Zaynab sees Shemr with drawn, bloody dagger. <sup>35</sup>	The Family bids farewell to the headless, handless body of Hosayn; the children cannot recognize their father.	Roqaya dreams of her father; to calm her Yazid sends her father's head; she departs this world. <sup>36</sup>	In burying Roqaya, the Family sees her beaten body, knows her suffering.
TIME	4'16"	1'19"	2'52"	19"	40"	3'50"	54"
RESPONSE			Digression		Digression Digression		

B - February 10, 1975

	1	2	3	4*
SUMMARY OF ACTION	<p>Introduction. Tāher b. ʿAbd Allāh says he used to tell stories to Yazid. If they were good, he would be rewarded the next night. [Narrated by Tāher b. ʿAbd Allāh.]</p>	<p>Last time he went to Yazid, Yazid was upset. A foreigner had attacked. The results were unknown. Tāher did not know who the foreigner was. Yazid offered him a reward for praying for his victory. [Narrated by Tāher.]</p>	<p>Next time Yazid was drinking, celebrating. The war was won. The foreigner was killed; the Family captive. Tāher told Yazid a story and put him to sleep. He awoke to hear a child crying very near, asking for its father. He saw a head on a silver tray crying for its family. He began to cry. Yazid awoke, said the foreigner was Hosayn. [Narrated by Tāher.]</p>	<p>A child came with news of the Family. Yazid sent the head. Roqaya sacrificed herself for love of her father.<sup>37</sup> [Narration begun by Tāher, changed to impersonal narration.]</p>
TIME	30"	40"	2'28"	2'41"
RESPONSE			 <p>Digression</p>	 <p>Digression</p>



C - March 9, 1975

	1	2	3	4	5*
SUMMARY OF ACTION	Poetic introduction. Story of Sajjād going to the mosque with Yazid in Damascus.	The caliph Yazid has repented of his massacre. Zayn al- <sup>c</sup> Ābedin tells the caliph to say prayers, ask for forgiveness, and he will be forgiven.	Zaynab castigates Zayn al- <sup>c</sup> Ābedin for helping Yazid obtain forgiveness. He explains forgiveness for her.	Zayn al- <sup>c</sup> Ābedin goes to mosque with Yazid. The prayer leader speaks for the Umayyads and against the Family. Sajjād shouts him down and takes the pulpit. He is recognized by the people of the city. They ask how to obtain forgiveness. He tells them.	Venerate Roqaya who was beaten and hurt and sacrificed herself for Hosayn. <sup>38</sup> [Narrated by Zayn al- <sup>c</sup> Ābedin.]
TIME	34"	29"	26"	6'47"	1'30"
RESPONSE					

Digression

In the discussion to follow I have examined one story of the three rowzas outlined in Table I. Two of these (examples A and B) are by Ḥabīb Allāh and one (example C) is from ʿAlī. First I will concentrate on a comparison of the structure of the three oral versions of the story in order to isolate some of the cultural values of rowza telling which are inherent in the texts. Then I will compare these texts with the literary tradition as represented by the Rowzat al-Shohada<sup>39</sup> to demonstrate the level of dependence of oral rowza-telling in the coffee house on the literary tradition.

I have chosen these three particular rowzas primarily because each contains a version of the story of Roqaya (indicated on Table I). This is a very popular story which also appears in the Rowzat al-Shohada.<sup>40</sup> In the renditions of both Ḥabīb Allāh and ʿAlī, Roqaya embodies the sacrifice of the Family and self-martyring innocence. Furthermore Ḥabīb Allāh manipulates the basic story in such a way as to expound clearly the basic meaning of the rowza, accounting in part, perhaps for its popularity among his audience.<sup>41</sup>

Because Ḥabīb Allāh has told the entire segment twice, examination of his handling of the episode will dominate the following discussion. ʿAlī's version will be called upon primarily to reaffirm points of value seen in Ḥabīb Allāh's versions. Ḥabīb Allāh's two versions of the Roqaya story are given below in transcription and translation to demonstrate the closeness of the two versions.

A - Transcription

diga in bachchahā az bābā joz yek sari gāhgāh chizi namididan tā  
 kharāba-e shām roqaya be-yād-e bābā oftād khayli garya kard khābash  
 bord did dar khāb roqaya ka be-dāman-e pedar karda jā az satem-e  
 kāmēl-e ḥamm benā kard bābā vo berā bābāsh dardodel konad bā bābāsh  
 shōbat dar khāb mikard ya vaqt bidār shod in kherāba hamun kherāb-a  
 na sham<sup>c</sup>i na cherāgh na farshi ya negāhi atrāf kard bā sedāy-e  
 zājja ḥammesh zaynab-o sedā zad hama ahl ol-bayt unam ka khāb  
 budand bidār shodand roqaya khodesh-o dar āghush-e zaynab andākht  
 ḥamma junam ḥalā saram be-dāman-e bābām ḥosayn bud ḥamma junam ḥalā  
 dāshtam bā bābām dardodel mikardam digar bābām koja raft namitunad  
 zaynab digar begad safar rafta kamkam hama zan o bachcha benā kardan  
 shivan konan khabar rasid be-yazid goft bachcha-e kuchek ḥayāt o  
 mamāt namidunad bebarid sar-o berāsh sar-rā bebarid tā taskin khatār  
 bāshad sar-rā avordand qondaq-e shir khāra o berāt goftam be-cha  
 ḥalati bud ḥalā in bachcha-rām bebin tā enshallāh pish-e nazar  
 mojassam beshad monqaleb beshi shab-e qatl-a be-khodā qasam hama  
 dardhāy-e bidarmon az har tarāf mirim yā mariḥ hast yā mariḥ ast be-  
 eltemās-e doḥā berā qarzdār bikhāna bi . . . har cha begi az har now<sup>c</sup>  
 parishāni hast zaynab dāsht bā roqaya navāzesh mikard mikhāst in  
 bachcha-ro dobāra sāket konad ya vaqt roqaya bar gasht tu dahna-e  
 kherāba gholāmi-rā did tabaq bar sar dārad khodash-o chaspānd be-  
 ḥammash goft ḥamma man ka ba gorosnegi ka dāram taḥam nakhāstam goft  
 ḥamma be-qorbanat taḥam nist ḥamma junam berāt uncha mikhāhi  
 avordand manzur-e to zir-e sar push-a vaqti gholām tabaq-o zemin

nehād umad in bachcha bā in dast-e kuchek sarpush-o bar dāsht chashmash  
oftād be-sar-e borida-e bābāsh ḥosayn sar-o bar dāsht be-sina chaspānd  
goft bābā cha ʿajab yād-e yatīmān kardi yād az in jamʿ-e delafkar-e  
parishān kardi ya robāʿi namidonam māl-e kiy-a khayli ʿali sākhta  
gush bēda goft bābā junam kharāba bāgh o sar-e to gol o man-am bolbol  
bābā junam man in kherāba be-bāgh-e behesht nafrusham az ān zamān  
ka az ān zamān ka to-rā buriyā kafan kardan be-jān-e to bābā digar  
kafan namipushan khayli bā bābāsh dardodel kard ya vaqt zan o  
bachchā didan dāra badanash-ro be-sar-e borida neshān mida miga bābā  
bebin cha qadar tāziyāna be-bāzum zadan bābā sili be-ṣuratam zadan  
bābā ru kharhā davidam bābā chonān rowzā khond ka in zan o bachchā-rā  
be-hayajān dar āvorda ya vaqt bolbol-e bāgh-e ḥosayn khāmush shod  
didan sar oftād ya ṭaraf roqaya ya ṭaraf harcha zaynab sedā zad  
rowzā-khān-e kherābneshin-o roqaya bent-e ḥosayn bolbol-e bāgh-e  
ḥosayn pāsokh nashnid zayn ol-ʿābedin sedā zad ʿamma junam digar  
u-rā sedā nazan be-khodā qasam roqaya az donyā raft

### Translation

Except for occasionally seeing the head, these children saw no more of their daddy, until the ruins of Damascus. Roqaya began thinking of her father. She wept a lot. She fell asleep. In her sleep Roqaya saw herself given a place on her daddy's lap. She began to complain, "Oh daddy," and of the complete tyranny of the people. She spoke with her daddy in her dream. Suddenly she woke up. This ruin is that same ruins. No candle or lamp or rugs. She looked around. She shouted for her aunt with a mournful voice.

All the Family, who had been asleep, woke up. Roqaya threw herself into Zaynab's arms. "Dear aunt, just now I was telling my daddy my troubles. Where did daddy go?" Zaynab could no longer say, "He went on a trip." Gradually all the women and children began to weep. The news reached Yazid. He said, "A little child does not know life from death. Take the head for her. Take the head so her mind will be at rest." They brought the head. A nursing baby, still in diapers!

[I told you how it was. Now see this child so that if God wills, she will be embodied before your eyes, so that you will be greatly moved. It is Shab-e Qatl. I promise, by God, that all insoluble troubles of whatever kind, whether one is sick, or whether he is sick, by the petition of prayer for the homeless debtor, without . . . whatever you say, of whatever affliction there is.]

Zaynab was comforting Roqaya. She wanted to quiet this child again. Suddenly Roqaya turned around and saw a servant in the entrance to the ruins, with a tray on his head. She grabbed her aunt. She said "Aunt. Even though I am hungry, I have not asked for food." Her aunt said, "May I be sacrificed for you! It is not food." "Dear aunt." "They have brought you what you want. Your desire is under the cover."

When the servant had put the tray on the ground, this child came and lifted the cover with this tiny hand. Her eyes fell upon the severed head of her daddy Hosayn. She lifted the head. She clasped it to her breast and said, "Daddy, what a surprise! You remembered the orphans. You remembered this distraught, downhearted group."

[A quatrain, I don't remember whose, very well-written.  
Listen.]

She said, "Daddy dear. The ruin is a garden and your head a flower and I am a nightingale. Daddy dear. I would not sell this ruin for the garden of Paradise. From the time when . . . from the time when they shrouded you in mats, on your life, they shall wear no other shroud." She poured out her problems for a long time to her father. Suddenly, the women and children saw, she is showing her body to the severed head. She is saying, "Daddy, see how the Arabs hit my arms. They struck me in the face. Daddy, I ran over thorns. Daddy!" She lamented so much that she made these women and children lament with her. Suddenly the nightingale of Hosayn's garden was silent. They saw that the head fell to one side and Roqaya to the other side. However much Zaynab called, "Rowza-khan of the ruin!" and "Roqaya daughter of Hosayn, nightingale of Hosayn's garden," she heard no answer. Zayn al-<sup>c</sup>Abedin called out, "Aunt dear, call her no more. By God, Roqaya has left this world."

B - Transcription

ya vaqt didam ya pesar bachcha umad be-yazid goft bābā kherāba ghoghā  
shoda ya dokhtar bachcha'i az hosayn khāb-e bābāsh hosayn-o dida  
ahl ol-bayt shivan mikonan mardom-e shām dasta dasta dāran miran barā  
tamāshā goft berid ya sar-e borida az bābāsh bebarid sar-e borida-e  
bābāsh-o bebarid ya dokhtar bachcha hayāt o mamāt namifahma sar-o  
gozārdan tu ṭabaq sarpushi ruy-e u āvordan dāsht roqaya barā <sup>c</sup>ammash

dardodel mikard <sup>c</sup>amma junam hālā khāb-e bābām ḥosayn-o didam bābā marā dar zānu neshānd navāzesh mikard pas kojā raft fahmidan khāb-e bābā dida dāshtan garya mikardan ya vaqt roqaya did ya gholām miyād ṭabaq ru sarash-a goft <sup>c</sup>amma man bā unka gorosna budam ghazā nakhāstam goft <sup>c</sup>amma junam manzur-e to zir-e sarpush-a vaqti gholām ṭabaq-o zamin nahād ḥosayniyā in nāznān raft jelo sarpush-o bar dāsht khodā nakhād ya pesar bachcha o dokhtar bachcha'i bābāsh-o az jush o khorush bebinad cha qaṣad be-in hāl ya vaqt did sar-e borida-e bābāsh ḥosayn-a bā in do tā dast-e kuchek sar-o var dāsht be-sina gozārd goft bābā cha <sup>c</sup>ajab yād-e yatimon kardi yād az in jam<sup>c</sup>-e delafkār-e parishān kardi bābā nabud in qadar shamr sili be-suratam zad bābā kerbelāy be-bāzum zadan hay bābā bābā kard o dārad sar-e borida dardodel minamud pā vo sar o gardan be-bābā neshun midād zan o bachcha shivan mikardan ya vaqt didan labā-ro gozārd ru labhāy-e bābā goft bābā junam ḥosaynam kharāba bāgh o sar-e to gol o man-am bolbol bābā junam man in kharāba be bāgh-e behesht nafrusham az an zamān ka to-rā buriyā kafan kardan be-jān-e to bābā kafan namipusham kamkam didan roqaya oftād sar ya ṭaraf har cha zaynab ṣedā zad bolbol-e bāgh-e ḥosayn roqaya jānam pāsokh nashnid zayn ol-<sup>c</sup>ābedin ṣedā zad <sup>c</sup>amma junam diga u-rā ṣedā nazan be-khodā qasam roqaya az donyā raft

### Translation

Then I saw a little boy who came and said to Yazid, "Daddy, the ruins are in a turmoil. A little girl of Hosayn's dreamed of her daddy Hosayn. The Family is wailing. The people of Damascus are going in groups to watch." He said, "Go take the head of her daddy.

Take the severed head of her daddy. A little girl does not understand about life and death." They put the head on a tray with a cover over it. They brought it.

Roqaya was telling her aunt her troubles. "Dear aunt, just now I dreamed of my daddy Hosayn. Daddy took me on his knee and comforted me. Where has he gone?" They understood that she had dreamed of her daddy. They were all crying. Suddenly Roqaya saw a servant coming with a tray on his head. She said, "Dear aunt, even though I was hungry, I didn't ask for food." The aunt said, "My dear, your wish is under the cover." When the servant had put the tray on the ground, [O followers of Hosayn!] this sweet child went up and took off the cover. [May God not allow a little boy or little girl to see their daddy in this horrible manner! What is the point in such a thing?] At once she saw it is the severed head of her daddy Hosayn. With these two little hands she picked up the head. She took it to her breast. She said, "Daddy, How wonderful! You remembered the orphans. You remembered this heart-broken, distressed group. Daddy, you weren't there. Oh how Shemr hit me in the face. Daddy, in Kerbela they hit my arms." Over and over she cried, "Daddy, daddy," and poured out her heart to the severed head. She was showing her feet and head and neck to her daddy. The women and children were wailing. All at once they saw that she pressed her lips to her daddy's lips. She said, "Daddy dear, my Hosayn. This ruin is a garden and your head is a flower and I am a nightingale. Daddy dear. I will not sell this ruin for the garden of Paradise. Ever since they shrouded you in mats,





B

A child came to Yazid to tell him of commotion among  
 the Family  
 A little girl dreamed of Ḥosayn  
 The Family is crying  
 The people of Damascus are coming to see what  
 has happened

Yazid sent the head

Roqaya was telling her dream to her aunt  
 The Family was crying  
 Roqaya saw the tray, said she did not want food  
 She lifted the cover  
 [Digression]  
 She found the head, told it her sorrows  
 The Family cried  
 Roqaya affirmed her loyalty to Ḥosayn  
 She fell

Zaynab could not rouse her  
 Zayn al-<sup>c</sup>Ābedin said Roqaya had departed the world

Aside from the similarity in plot of the two versions, certain other points should be stressed. The focus of the story shifts continually in both versions, these shifts being represented by breaks in the summaries. In A Roqaya is more specifically the focus of attention. In both versions, however, the Family's attention is strongly focused on Roqaya, and we see her through their eyes. Ḥabib Allāh often accounts for her actions by saying, "They saw that she . . ." rather than saying outright what she did. One thing Roqaya does is bring the Family to tears, an effect particularly apparent in B. The story begins with news of the Family's crying and attracting the attention of the people of Damascus. Ḥabib Allāh mentions the Family's crying again after Yazid has sent the head, and again when Roqaya finds the head and is overwhelmed. In both versions, it is

the crying of the Family which draws Yazid's attention to them, and is thus ultimately the cause of the head being taken to the Family. Roqaya's effect upon the Family is particularly significant because the telling of her tale is having the same effect upon the audience.

In both versions Habib Allāh digresses in the middle of the climax. Just as he is building the audience up to feeling the sorrows of this child, he turns away briefly to offer an explanation of the suffering. In the one case, he explains the importance of seeing the child embodied and feeling her sorrow. In the other case, he affirms the horrible nature of the shock Roqaya is about to suffer. These digressions provide a short pause on the way to the climax and make the climax therefore more dramatic.

There are several clearly marked opposiitons in both versions. Some of these are:

The Family		Yazid
Ruins		Garden
Earthy Garden	Roqaya	Paradise
Life		Death

Habib Allāh keeps Yazid carefully separate from the Family. He is brought the news of the Family's wailing and sends someone out to see to them. His only connection with them is the head of their leader Hosayn which he is keeping (hostage) as a symbol of the Family's defeat. It is this head which brings Roqaya to death and thus to Paradise, brings the Family to tears, and brings the audience to emotional participation in their sorrow. In keeping their imam

captive, Yazid is keeping a way of attainment of Paradise from the people. When Yazid sends the head, he releases Roqaya from the sorrows of the world.

Roqaya likens the ruined place where the Family is being held to a garden. Her first reaction to the ruins when she awakens from her dream however is despair. The place is nothing but ruins. With the introduction of Ḥosayn's head, she moves from the level of the real to the metaphorical. She is then able to envision the ruin as a garden in which she is a nightingale singing of her sorrows to a flower, the severed head of Ḥosayn.

At the end of the story she has another change of feeling. Here she moves from singing to Ḥosayn about her own physical sufferings, to a promise of loyalty to him. With all her sorrows, she would not sell these ruins for the Garden of Paradise. She affirms her choice of remaining in the ruins with Ḥosayn instead of renouncing him and his Family. In this way she is able to make the final transition, in which she indeed trades the ruins for the Garden of Paradise.

Life and death form the ultimate opposition. Yazid says Roqaya knows nothing of life and death, yet she consciously chooses life by identifying with Ḥosayn. In choosing life in the ruins, she wins for herself life in the Garden which paradoxically comes in death. It should be noted that in neither version does Ḥabib Allāh say literally that she died. He says rather that she has left this world. The story opens with the opposition between life and

death, but ends with Roqaya choosing a greater life outside this world.

Roqaya then stands between the oppositions of the story, resolving these oppositions and transcending them. Knowing nothing of life and death, she stands between them, and is able to make the ruins into a garden and then into Paradise. Her success in identifying with Hosayn and her subsequent martyrdom give the story its meaning.

The wording chosen for the story also expands the garden metaphor, often occurring in the two versions in exact repetition.<sup>42</sup>

A list of these phrases is given below:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. manzur-e to zir-e sar-<br>push-a<br>Your desire is under the<br>cover.   | manzur-e to zir-e sar-<br>push-a<br>Your desire is under the<br>cover.   |
| 2. kharāba bāgh o sar-e to<br>gol o man-am bolbol bāba<br>junam<br>The ruins are a garden<br>and your head is a flower<br>and I am a nightingale,<br>father dear. | kharāba bāgh o sar-e to<br>gol o man-am bolbol bāba<br>junam<br>The ruins are a garden<br>and your head is a flower<br>and I am a nightingale,<br>father dear. |
| 3. in kharāba be-bāgh-e<br>behesht nafrusham<br>I wouldn't sell these<br>ruins for the Garden of<br>Paradise.   | in kharāba be-bāgh-e<br>behesht nafrusham<br>I wouldn't sell these<br>ruins for the Garden of<br>Paradise.   |
| 4. bolbol-e bāgh-e hosayn<br>The nightingale of<br>Hosayn's garden.   | bolbol-e bāgh-e hosayn<br>The nightingale of<br>Hosayn's garden.   |
| 5. pasokh nashnid zayn ol-<br>Cābedin sedā zad Camma<br>junam digar u-rā sedā<br>nazan be-khodā qasam   | pasokh nashnid zayn ol-<br>Cābedin sedā zad Camma<br>junam digar u-rā sedā<br>nazan be-khodā qasam   |

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>roqaya az donyā raft<br/>She heard no answer. Zayn<br/>al-<sup>C</sup>Ābedin cried out,<br/>"Aunt, dear, don't call<br/>her any more. I swear by<br/>God Roqaya has left this<br/>world."</p> | <p>roqaya az donyā raft<br/>She heard no answer. Zayn<br/>al-<sup>C</sup>Ābedin cried out,<br/>"Aunt dear, don't call<br/>her any more. I swear by<br/>God Roqaya has left this<br/>world."</p> |
| <p>6. bachcha-e kuchek ḥayāt<br/>o mamāt namidunad<br/>A small child doesn't<br/>know about life and<br/>death.</p>  | <p>ya dokhtar bachcha ḥayāt<br/>o mamāt namifahma<br/>A little girl doesn't<br/>understand life and<br/>death.</p>  |
| <p>7. man ka bā gorosnegi ka<br/>daram ta<sup>C</sup>am nakhastam<br/>With all my hunger, I didn't<br/>ask for food.</p>   | <p>man bā unka gorosna<br/>budam ghazā nakhāstam<br/>Even though I was hungry,<br/>I didn't ask for food.</p>   |

Although these are not the only repeated phrases in the texts, these emphasize the oppositions of life versus death (5,6, and 7), the garden versus the ruins (2,3, and 4) and Ḥosayn as a means to attain Paradise (1).

It is not by coincidence that Ḥabib Allāh calls Roqaya the rowza-khān of Ḥosayn's garden. All the disparate meanings of rowza are inherent in his use of this term. The rowza is the story of suffering which she tells, as well as the metaphorical garden (the ruins) in which she tells the story. Finally the garden-ruins becomes the Garden of Paradise to which all martyrs are immediately admitted. Furthermore, Roqaya's story, told by Ḥabib Allāh, causes the audience in the coffee house to suffer for Ḥosayn in the same way that Roqaya's story has re-awakened the sorrows of the Family. The mourners in the audience may then approach Paradise themselves, by participation in this suffering.<sup>43</sup>

ʿAlī Ṣanākhan's Roqaya exists as a figure to whom the people of Damascus may turn for forgiveness for what they have done to the Family. Zayn al-ʿAbidin says Roqaya has been left in Damascus as a remembrance of the Family. If the people of the area will frequent her grave and do her homage, the Family will be satisfied with them. ʿAlī then explains in a digression at the very end how Roqaya's tomb in Damascus is covered with gifts. Her tomb is frequented and honored just as her father's tomb is honored. ʿAlī's Roqaya receives this honor because she has given her life as a sacrifice to the severed head of her father (janash-o qorban-e sar-e borida-e pedar kard).

The Rowzat al-Shohada gives a short straightforward account of Roqaya's death. Here is a sketch of the literary version:

The Family was being held in Damascus next to Yazid's  
palace  
Hosayn's four-year old daughter has been missing him  
She realized where she was, insisted on seeing her  
father  
The Family began crying  
Yazid received news of what happened  
He sent the head  
The daughter received the head  
She expressed affection for her father  
She gave up her life  
The Family renewed its mourning

Kāshefi presents Roqaya's story more as a tragedy of death through cruel surprise than as attainment of Paradise. The story in the literary text contains about four hundred words, but devotes most of those to a pure narration of the events. Unlike Ḥabīb Allāh's story, the child says nothing from the time she receives the head

until her death. Although the literary version is close to <sup>Ā</sup>Ali's interpretation in terms of the meaning of the sacrifice, <sup>Ā</sup>Ali has also added other aspects to the character of Roqaya and makes her the symbol of the Family's defeat and a means to attaining forgiveness for the people of Damascus.

An examination of the other rowzas by Ḥabīb Allāh and <sup>Ā</sup>Ali (although a small sample) confirms that the story of Roqaya is not unique. Of the seven rowzas that Ḥabīb Allāh told, none centers directly on the death of Ḥosayn. Neither do the two rowzas recorded from <sup>Ā</sup>Ali center directly on the death of Ḥosayn. All of the rowzas refer briefly to his death and focus mainly on other characters. The most common focal point in the rowzas that I collected was a person who chose to be martyred or to suffer for Ḥosayn. These people all consciously chose to identify themselves as followers of Ḥosayn, and all chose to be martyrs, as did Roqaya. In this respect, the three rowzas discussed are typical. Thus even though Ḥosayn's death may not be the central event of a rowza, it has a strong determining effect on the characters or actions of the story.

It is not surprising that storytellers' rowzas should often concern the followers of Ḥosayn rather than Ḥosayn himself. Ḥosayn was a unique person, one of the imams, and the great martyr for the Shiite cause. Although the audience may try to emulate him, they can never really attain his holiness. The audience members may, however, emulate his followers and even, in a distant fashion, be one of them. Whereas Ḥosayn's fate was chosen for him from birth,



those who died for him did so from personal choice. In many ways, this fact makes their deaths more immediate and touching for the audience.

It is apparent from this examination of a few rowzas that the set of historical events surrounding Hosayn's martyrdom and the persecution of his Family and followers have provided a great creative impulse in Iran. This creative impulse continues today in the re-working of rowza stories. Although literary texts exist and are known to the storytellers, they continue to reinterpret these stories, each storyteller presenting the events in a different manner. As in the case of the Roqaya story, the storyteller may rework the material so that it actually embodies the cultural values inherent in the telling of rowzas.

Finally, we can see how the telling of rowzas may be considered more than the outward display of belief in Shiism. The telling of the stories becomes a re-creation of the events with the storyteller mediating between the events and his audience. Through participation in the rowza, the audience members identify with the martyrs and bring themselves closer to Paradise.

### Conclusions

Two main points are evident from the examination of the constituent elements of the storytelling performance. First we see that the functions discussed in the previous chapter manifest themselves not only in how participants in the performance describe the

activity but also in the material performed. Second we see how an understanding of these functions can reveal unity between the constituent elements despite apparent lack of unity.

Besides the entertainment provided by storytelling, we have already seen that the storyteller acts as a teacher with regard to his audience. He interprets familiar material for his listeners in order to give it new meaning and to tie it to common experience. Even though they further the action of the story very little or not at all, such parts of the performance as digressions and insertion of poetry emphasize the storyteller's role as teacher in that he demonstrates both broad knowledge of literary traditions and the ability to see and express relationships between his material and the world at large. As we have also seen, the quasi-religious function of storytelling is also very important and manifests itself often in the kinds of digressions which the storyteller makes and in the fact that the rowża is a necessary element of naggāli. With regard to the rowża we have seen how a storyteller may use the skeleton of a story which may also be present in a literary work such as the Rowżat al-Shohadā to develop a personal interpretation which reveals much of the story's cultural significance.

If the storyteller's role as a teacher and furthermore as a religious teacher is kept in mind, a real unity begins to appear between the elements which make up the storytelling performance. The relationship of the storyteller and his audience as sharers in a common background and belief is affirmed constantly, in particular

their ties as Shiite Muslims and Iranians. The performance opens with God's name and Muslim themes run throughout. In this same way, we can see naqqāli as a kind of bridge between formal Islam as represented by prayers and rowzās and the various manifestations of informal Islam as represented by the notion of the storyteller as a religious teacher and the mystic poetry which is recited.

The material is given unity in several ways. The mystic poetry centers on a beloved God who is also sometimes cruel and tormenting to the poet who is willing to die for this love. Similarly in the rowza the heroes love God in his representative Hosayn and are willing to die for him in order to attain Paradise. The heroes of the Shāhnāma are also bound by honor, they love Iran, and are willing to die for their land. As we have already mentioned, the land of Iran is often compared to Islam and the heroes of Iran are compared to the heroes of Islam. The secular story is thus made Islamic and given greater unity with the religious rowza and the mystic poetry.

At the same time the religious rowza is also secularized and conforms greatly with the Shāhnāma.<sup>44</sup> As the Shāhnāma is made up of a number of stories strung together relating to the basic theme of the development of Iran, the rowza is made up of stories of the development of Shiism. The Shāhnāma tells of the exploits of the heroes of Iran while the rowza tells of the exploits of Shiite heroes. In fact, often the manner of presentation is very similar with heroes, whether Iranian or Shiite, riding out to do

single combat or to make a night raid.

The role which storytelling plays in society, then, gives storytelling its vitality, conferring upon the storyteller the right to reinterpret material for his audience and allowing for the combination of disparate kinds of material. There is another side to the question of storytelling, however, and that is the relationship of the stories told today to the Iranian national tradition as embodied in literary texts. The next chapter will concern itself with this problem.

## Notes

1. When the storyteller recites more than one line of poetry, he chants the lines. Although none of them claimed any knowledge of the Iranian musical modes, <sup>C</sup>Ali once said that he recognized the modes and occasionally would find himself chanting in one of them. He considered this occurrence to be purely accidental (tasādoḡan). There seems however to be no regular attempt by the storytellers to chant their poetry in the classical modal system.

2. The ruba<sup>C</sup>i (quatrain) is made up of four half-lines with specific meters. The rhyme scheme is a a a/b a. See L.P. Elwell-Sutton, The Persian Metres (New York: 1976), pp. 97, 110, 134-35 and 252-55. Elwell-Sutton would classify this meter as 3.3.11. Hereafter this book will be cited in notes as Persian Metres and the meter numbers will be cited in the text following the name of the meter.

3. The ghazal and the qasida have the same rhyme scheme: a a b a c a . . . See Persian Metres, pp. 245-46 for the ghazal and pp. 247-49 for the qasida. The qasida is a formal ode-like poem of fourteen lines or more while the ghazal is a shorter lyric poem, very often concerning love and was the common form used for Persian mystical poetry.

4. <sup>C</sup>Omar Khayyān, The Ruba<sup>C</sup>iyat of Omar Khayyām: The Chester Beatty MS, ed. A.J. Arberry, (London: 1949), p. 109.

5. The meter of the first is 3.3.13 and of the second is 5.1.12. Both of these are standard ruba<sup>C</sup>i meters.

6. The radif is a word or phrase repeated verbatim at the end of each line after the rhyme word.

7. Jāmi, Divan, ed. Hashem Rāzi ([Teheran]: 1341/1962), p. 149.

8. The ṡalavat is a prayer recited in unison by groups of Shiite Muslims. The words of the prayer are:

allāhomma ṡalla <sup>C</sup>alā moḡammad va āl-e moḡammad

May God bless Mohammed and his family.

9. By the "fourteen lights," <sup>C</sup>Ali Naderi means the twelve Shiite imams, the Prophet Mohammed and his daughter Fāṡema Zahrā. The poem only accounts for ten of the fourteen, however. See below, pages on the imams. Also see Moḡammad ḡosayn ṡabāṡabā'i,

Shiite Islam, ed. and trans. Sayyed Ḥosayn Naṣr (Albany, N.Y.: 1975), esp. pp. 190-211.

10. The story lead-in has been noticed by folklorists throughout the world. An example in English is "once upon a time . . ." See Stith Thompson, The Folktale (New York: 1946), pp. 457-58. Also see Dan Ben-Amos, Sweet Words/Storytelling Events in Benin (Philadelphia: 1975), p. 50, who discusses the openings of stories as means for establishing rapport between the audience and the storyteller.

11. This couplet is in motaqāreb meter (1.1.11), the meter of the Shāhnāma, but does not appear in the Moscow edition. There are a number of similar lines in the Shāhnāma, for example:

konun por shegefti yeki dāstān  
 bepavandam az gofta-e bāstān  
 Now a story full of wonder  
 I will relate from the telling of olden times.  
 (Shāhnāma 1:137, line 34)

za goftar-e dehqān yeki dāstān  
 bepavandam az gofta-e bāstān  
 A story told by the dehqāns  
 I will relate from the telling of olden days.  
 (Shāhnāma 2:170, line 15)

za gofta-e dehqān konun dāstān  
 to bar khān o bar guy bā rāstān  
 Now a story from the sayings of the dehqāns.  
 Read it and discuss it with the righteous.  
 (Shāhnāma 3:6, line 8)

12. Some story summaries are included in the Appendices along with a transcribed and translated text of one story session presented by Habib Allāh.

13. Shāhnāma 1:49, line 183 gives the line as:

be-arrash sarāsar be-do nim kard  
 jahān-rā az u pāk bi-bim kard  
 With a saw he cut him [Jamshid] in two from head to foot;  
 He made the world pure and safe from him.

14. Shāhnāma 1:53, lines 35-37.

15. On localization as a type of content change, see Tom Burns, "A Model for Textual Variation in Folksong," Folklore Forum 3 (1970), p. 54.

16. The motif of one drunken hero seeing another drunken hero home is fairly common. For example, Sohrāb has to see Fariborz b. Kāvus to his camp under the same conditions even though they are leaders of opposing armies and have come to fight one another.

17. In Mohammad Mo<sup>c</sup>in, Farhang-e Fārsi [Persian Dictionary], 6 vols. (Teheran: 1345/1966), 3:3857, masal is defined as a story (dāstān, afsāna) which is well-known to the people, or which makes its own meaning clear. E. W. Lane, Arabic-English Lexicon, 8 vols. (London: 1863-93) 8:3017 defines the Arabic equivalent as a "description by way of comparison." The storytellers use brief stories or anecdotes which set up comparisons, and these comparisons in turn serve to describe events, actions or characters.

18. For this proverb, see <sup>c</sup>Ali Akbar Dehkhodā, Amsāl va Hekam [Proverbs], 4 vols. (Teheran: 1338-9/1960-1), 2:1085.

19. Sa<sup>c</sup>di, Koliyyāt, ed. Mohammad Forughī (Teheran: 1320/1942), p. 19. This line appears in the Golestān, chapter 1, story 4.

20. See "Nadjaf," Encyclopaedia of Islam (First Edition) 3:815-16. The vādi al-salām (valley of peace) is located in Najaf and contains a famous cemetery. The whole of Najaf is holy to the Shiites.

21. The desire to return to hallowed ground is very important in Iran, and bodies are taken long distances to be buried in holyground. The dust of pilgrimage places is also commonly believed to be holy and to confer forgiveness on sinners, as it does in Habib Allāh's story. See Bess Allen Donaldson, The Wild Rue: A Study of Mohammadan Magic and Folklore in Iran (London: 1938; repr. New York: 1973), p. 62.

22. See for example Julia Haig Gaisser, "A Structural Analysis of the Digressions in the Iliad and the Odyssey," Harvard Studies in Classical Philology 73 (1969), pp. 1-43.

23. Michael Cherniss, "Beowulf: Oral Presentation and the Criterion of Immediate Rhetorical Effect," Genre 3 (1970), p. 217.

24. Ibid., p. 224.

25. See Roger Abrahams, "Folklore and Literature as Performance," Journal of the Folklore Institute 9 (1972), pp. 75-84 for a discussion of the "rhythms and expectancies" which a storyteller builds up between himself and his audience and how this may function in the folkloric performance. See also Charlotte F. Albright, "The

Azerbaijani <sup>Ā</sup>Ashiq and his Performance of a <sup>D</sup>Dastān," Iranian Studies 9 (1976), p. 242, where she briefly mentions interpolation of material into performance.

26. Roger Abrahams, op. cit., p. 78.

27. Encyclopaedia of Islam (Second Edition) 3:240-43.

28. Ibid., 3:610.

29. The Prophet's Family (ahl al-bayt) will be referred to as "the Family" hereafter. This will include his direct descendants in the line of <sup>Ā</sup>Ali b. Abi <sup>T</sup>Taleb.

30. Peter J. Chelkowski, Ta<sup>C</sup>ziyeh: Indigenous Avant-Garde Theater of Iran (Teheran: [1976]), pp. 7-8.

31. E.G. Browne, A Literary History of Persia, 4 vols. (London and Cambridge: 1902-24) 4:29, 182.

32. <sup>Ā</sup>Ali Akbar Dehkhodā, Loghat Nama [Dictionary], (Teheran: 1337/1958 - present), 12:175-76.

33. Mollā <sup>H</sup>Hosayn <sup>V</sup>Va<sup>C</sup>ez <sup>K</sup>Kāshefi, Rowżat al-Shohada (Teheran: 1349/1971), p. 12.

34. Ibid., pp. 342-44.

35. Ibid., pp. 344-53.

36. Ibid., pp. 389-90.

37. See above, note 36.

38. See above, note 36.

39. It should be remembered that at least Habib Allāh never used the Rowżat al-Shohada as a source for his stories.

40. In the Rowżat al-Shohada, Hosayn's child is not identified by name, but the story is certainly the same one which describes Roqaya in the oral version.

41. The second time Habib Allāh told this story, in fact, it was because an audience member had asked specifically for it.



42. I have avoided using the term "formula" here to describe these phrases. From an examination of the rowža transcriptions, however, it is apparent that the storyteller uses many repeated phrases to tell the story. Milman Parry tied his definition of formula to the metrical value of the phrase. See Albert Lord, The Singer of Tales (New York: 1974), p. 30. There have been successful attempts, on the other hand, to divide prose narration into segments in which "formulas" may be found. One such attempt is Bruce Rosenberg, The Art of the American Folk Preacher (New York: 1970).

43. The use of rowža to mean the Garden of Paradise is not purely Iranian nor tied only to these stories. The Koran uses the term in this context both times it appears. See Koran 30:14 and 42:21. Also see The Islamic Garden, eds. Elisabeth MacDougall and R. Ettinghausen (Washington, D.C.: 1976), in particular the articles by Annemarie Schimmel, "The Celestial Garden in Islam," pp. 11-39, and William L. Hanaway, Jr., "Paradise on Earth: The Terrestrial Garden in Persian Literature," pp. 41-67.

44. I do not mean to imply here that this secularization of Islamic heroes is something confined to or originated by the storytellers. That is not the case. Such tendencies have been apparent in literary works for some time. See M. Molé, "L'épopée iranienne après Firdōsī," La nouvelle Clio 5 (1953), pp. 391-92.

## Chapter V

### Relationships Between Oral and Written Materials

In this chapter I will examine the relationships between written and oral material, focussing on the Shāhnāma stories.<sup>1</sup> The discussion will have three parts. First the effects of the written sources, that is the Shāhnāma of Ferdowsi and the tumar, on the oral stories will be examined. The second consideration will be the difference in genre between the oral stories and the literary works which are told as stories. Third the medieval literary texts which document the Iranian national legend will be considered along with the relationship of these texts to the oral versions told today. Selected examples from historical and religious texts will be used to demonstrate how the national tradition has changed from earlier times to the present. The place of Ferdowsi's Shāhnāma and the later epics will also be discussed in light of the continuing tradition, including the oral material.

#### A

#### The Shāhnāma, the Tumar, and the Story

This section will deal with the effects of the written sources on the oral stories. A short background will be provided on the written sources. The tumar and its effect on the oral presentation will be discussed. An example will be given of one

storyteller's narration compared with the same sequence of events from the tumār of another storyteller. A second example will present the story told by one storyteller compared with the same story in the storyteller's own tumār. Then the effect of the Shāhnāma of Ferdowsi on the oral versions of the stories will be discussed. By drawing these comparisons I will try to show how the tradition of telling the national legend is similar from one storyteller to another, and how strongly the tumār affects the storyteller's rendition of the material.

The Shāhnāma of Abu 'l-Qasem Ferdowsi forms the basis of the story material. This verse Shāhnāma was completed at the end of the tenth century A.D. An earlier Shāhnāma was begun by the poet Daqiqi who left only about one thousand verses before he died. Ferdowsi then took the work upon himself and completed a massive epic, incorporating Daqiqi's one thousand lines. The recent critical edition of the Shāhnāma (published in Moscow in 1966-71) comprises about forty thousand couplets.

There are a number of antecedents to Ferdowsi's work, none of which survive now. A prose work, the Khodaynamak (Book of Rulers), was supposedly compiled in late Sasanian times in Middle Persian (Pahlavi). This text was translated into Arabic before 142 A.H./759-60 A.D. by <sup>c</sup>Abd Allāh b. al-Moqaffa<sup>c</sup>.<sup>2</sup>

Two or three prose Shāhnāmas in Persian were also composed in the tenth century A.D. First is the Shāhnāma of Abu Mo<sup>c</sup>ayyad Balkhi, known only through references in works of history. This

Shāhnāma was apparently an important and well-known text. The next prose Shāhnāma is that of Abu ʿAlī Moḥammad b. Aḥmad Balkhī, probably from the last decade of the tenth century.<sup>3</sup> Some scholars feel that this may be the same work as the third prose Shāhnāma, that of Abu Mansūr Moḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Razzāq.<sup>4</sup> At any rate, the latter is surely the work which was used by Daqiqī and Ferdowsi in composing their work.

The Introduction still remains of the prose Shāhnāma of Abu Mansūr.<sup>5</sup> According to this Introduction, Abu Mansūr ʿAbd al-Razzāq ordered his minister (dastur) to gather together the owners of books (khodavandān-e kotob), that is the petty landholders (dehqāns) and people who knew of the older days,<sup>6</sup> and to compose from their knowledge a compendium of the history of Iran from the beginning of its history to the conquest of the Arabs.

Ferdowsi says in the beginning of his Shāhnāma that he worked from a written source. In fact, he discusses how he came to write his work. He tells how the young Daqiqī began a Shāhnāma then was killed, leaving only about one thousand lines, and how a friend then brought him a prose work in Pahlavi which he used as his source.<sup>7</sup> This source is assumed to be the Shāhnāma of Abu Mansūr.

A great deal has been made of the fact that Ferdowsi was a dehqān, one of the class of petty landholders, for the most part Muslims, often referred to as the repository of the Iranian national tradition.<sup>8</sup> Ferdowsi includes much Islamic material which is laid

over a substratum of pre-Islamic beliefs.<sup>9</sup> It is worth noting here, too, that the material which Ferdowsi used as the basis for his work, besides the one written prose text, included material which was, if not oral, at least derived from oral sources.<sup>10</sup>

A number of other works expand upon parts of the national legend which Ferdowsi did not include in his Shāhnāma, some of these later works describing the adventures of heroes who do not appear in the Shāhnāma. These later epics were written in the same form as Ferdowsi's work and in the same meter, but their style tends to more hyperbole and their content is more stylized.<sup>11</sup>

Most of these later epics appeared shortly after Ferdowsi's work, from the late fifth/eleventh century to the early sixth/twelfth century. Those which have survived are:

1. Garshāspnāma [The Story of Garshāsp] by Asadi Tusi which deals with the ancestor of the Sistan house of heroes;<sup>12</sup>
2. Faramarznāma [The Story of Faramarz] dealing with the son of Rostam;<sup>13</sup>
3. Borzunāma [The Story of Borzu] by Ḥamid Ḥatā'i which deals with the son of Sohrāb;<sup>14</sup>
4. Bahmannāma [The Story of Bahman] by Iranshāh b. Abi 'l-Khayr<sup>15</sup> which deals with the exploits of the king Bahman and his vengeance on the Sistan house;<sup>16</sup>
5. Shahriyarnāma [The Story of Shahriyar] by ḤOsman

Mokhtāri which deals with the son of Borzu,<sup>17</sup>  
and

6. Banugoshāspnāma [The Story of Banugoshāsp] which  
deals with the daughter of Faramarz.<sup>18</sup>

Also from this early period is the Kushnāma [The Story of Kush] by Irānshāh b. Abi 'l-Khayr, the only epic which does not deal with the heroes of Zabol. The Kushnāma has for its subject Kush, the brother of the evil king Żahhāk and his descendents and their battles to unseat the Iranian king Jamshid.<sup>19</sup>

Of a somewhat later date is the Jahāngirnāma [The Story of Jahāngir] by Qāsem Mādeh<sup>20</sup> which has very Islamic overtones and deals with another of Rostam's sons.<sup>21</sup> The most recent of these epics, the Sāmnāma [The Story of Sām], dates from the early fifteenth century, and deals with the exploits of one of the ancestors of the Zabol house.<sup>22</sup>

After the Sāmnāma the tendency is for epic writing to center around religious and historical themes rather than the legendary tradition of Iran's past. Epic writing continued up to the modern period but eventually reached absurd lengths with such works as the Mikadunāma written in India on the occasion of the victory of the Japanese over the Russians in the wars of 1905.<sup>23</sup>

Storytellers use only material of the sort found in the earlier epics, and not all of the epics mentioned above are performed. The metaphor which Molé cites of Ferdowsi's work being the

trunk of a tree and other epics being branches of that tree is to a certain extent apt here as well.<sup>24</sup> Ferdowsi's story line forms the basis of the storytellers' works. Other traditions serve to fill out the story line where Ferdowsi's version gives scanty or no detail. Where a story presented in other sources does not agree with Ferdowsi, the oral tradition has often readily adopted the alternate version. Much story material has also appeared in the oral tradition which is not found in any of the epics so far known. An example of this material is an account of Sohrāb's adventures (described in part on pages 135-39 below) which is found in no literary text. It seems that the material told by storytellers includes parts found in Ferdowsi, parts found in the later epics and much more material found only in the oral tradition.

Much of the material found in the later epics appears as an integral part of the storytellers' Shāhnāma narratives. For example Garshāsp's story, including his travels to India, appear in the Garshāspnāma but not in Ferdowsi's Shāhnāma. The storytellers include these adventures in their Shāhnāma story line where they would normally appear in the chronological sequence. The story line presented by the storyteller, then, is far more complex and elaborate than the line presented by Ferdowsi or any of the other epic writers. The literary epic is pared down and simplified much more than the oral version. The later epics which are told separately are by and large those which contain story material which would appear chronologically after the end of Ferdowsi's narrative. These include

such epics as Borzunāma and Jahāngirnāma, plus a popular story of Alexander's conquest of Iran.

Each storyteller who studies under a master receives a tumār from his teacher. This is a prompt book, which he copies and keeps. The storytellers guard their tumars carefully. <sup>c</sup>Ali said his tumār, actually a collection of small handwritten books, filled an entire suitcase. For every separate story they learn, they have a tumār. <sup>c</sup>Ali gave me only a very small part of his tumār to copy and that came to some two hundred pages.

In order to show the style of the tumār I give here a short example from <sup>c</sup>Ali's tumār.<sup>25</sup> The selection given is from the end of the presentation of the Shāhnāma told by the storytellers, and describes the death of the king Bahman. This selection will also be considered below while discussing the relationships between the written and oral material.

#### Tumār of <sup>c</sup>Ali Sanākhan - Transcription

bahman ham gāhgāhi [be-qal<sup>c</sup>a-e dokhtar-e khod] sarkeshi mikard tā  
 inka āzarbarzin bā rostam [-e tur-e māzandarāni] va bozorgān-e zābol  
 be-fārs be-didan-e shā[h] āmadand shāh bā ānhā raftand be-tāmashāy-e  
 qal<sup>c</sup>a-e dokhtar-e vay qolla-e kuhsār dar in bayn khabar āvordand ka  
 dar tang-e qombadān dez̄h ka tang-e zanjir bāshad azhdehā'i padid  
 āmada sar-e rāh bar qāfelahā va kāravanhā basta-ast shāh khandid be-  
 āzarbarzin farmud beravim be-tāmashā[y-e] in jānevar az ānja savāra  
 bā jam<sup>c</sup>i az bozorgān ka be-hamrah-e shāh budand āmadand be-makān-e



ān jānevar shāh pishāpish miyāmad edde<sup>c</sup>āy-e natarsi mikard jānevar-rā  
 hich mipandāsht tā inka jānevar-rā didand ka yek [. . .] kolofti-e  
 chenāri dāsht bolandi-e u dar hodud-e bist zar<sup>c</sup> bud az kām-e u  
 birun miyāmad cheshmānash meṣl-e [. . .] ātash midarakhshid rostam-e  
 tur āhasta az markab-e khod be-zir āmad rokhsat gereft ka azhdehā-rā  
 bezanad vali āzarbarzin bā eshāra-e sar eshāra kard be-rostam ka  
 naravad chun rostam ejāza gerefta-bud natavānest raft be-ṭaraf-e  
 azhdehā vaqti nazdik shod vānamud kard ka az <sup>c</sup>ohda-e jang bā u  
 bar namiyāyad az barābar-e ham azhdehā ḥamla kard be-ṭaraf-e rostam  
 rostam ru be-goriz nehād parid bālāy-e darakht az darakht ham be-  
 kamar-e kuh bālā shāh bahman be-āzarbarzin goft in pahlavān rafiqt  
 ka <sup>c</sup>ohda nayāmad va gorikht āzarbarzin goft qorbān magar na niyāy-e  
 shomā goshtāsp dar rum azhdehāy-e kuh-e saqilā-rā kos[h]t pedar-e  
 shomā yal esfandiyār ham shenidam azhdehā koshta shomā dast va panja  
 va qodrat-e khod-rā neshān bedahid shāh bahman az goftār-e āzarbarzin  
 maghrur gardid khaṣuṣan ka rostam-e tur ham gorikhta-bud [. . .]  
 be-jāneb-e markab zad barābar-e [bozor]gān-e irān va āzarbarzin raft  
 be-ṭaraf-e azhdehā markab-e shāh az jānevar ram mikard bahman  
 molaqqab be-ardā[shir-e darāz dast] ka qāmat-e boland va dasthāy-e  
 kashida dā[sht] pāy-e khod-rā az rekāb-e markab khāli kard be-zamin  
 [. . .] dast be-shamshir raft be-ṭaraf-e azhdehā ka ghaflatan  
 azhdehā bā dom bahman-rā gereft pish kashid va pichid be-qā[mat-e]  
 shāh bahman dahan bāz kard va nima-e badan ka qesmat-e pāy-e shāh  
 bāshad azhdehā be-kām-e khod foru bord bahman be-jāy [. . .] ka  
 azhdehā tā kamar-e bahman-rā zir-e dandānhāy-e tiz-e khod foru borda

ba<sup>c</sup>id na<sup>c</sup>ra-e bahman be-eltemās be-āzar[barzi]n boland gardid ka jahānpahlavān azhdehā-rā bezan āzarbarzin dast negahdāsht hich kas rāzi nabud ka [ba]hman az chang-e azhdehā najāt paydā konad be-vāseta-e koshtan-e zakariyā mardom az u nafrat paydā karda-budand faryād-e zājja [. . .bah]man be-<sup>c</sup>ajz-e lāba be-āzarbarzin boland bud ka azhdehā sar o kalla-e bahman-rā ham be-kām kashid jahāni-rā az lows [. . .] bidādgar rāhat namud āzarbarzin dar lāsha-e azhdehā barāmadagi-e ān qesmat-rā ka bahman dar shekam-e u bud [. . .] ba<sup>c</sup>d az inka khavātar jam<sup>c</sup> gardid kār-e bahman-rā jānevar sākht ānvaqt pur-e jahānpahlavān falāmarz [. . .] garshāsp be-taraf-e azhdehā pish āmad avval [dom-e] azhdehā-rā bā yek zārbat qat<sup>c</sup> kard dovvom [. . .an]dākht barāy-e ān qesmat ka bahman bu[d] azhdehā-rā bā bahman chahār pāra namud ka ān noqta tā emruz [ma<sup>c</sup>ruf] be-gur-e bahman ast avval tangzanjir[iy]ān har vaqt chahār-pāyān va dovāb-e makāriyān be-ān noqta [. . .] miyandāzand ya<sup>c</sup>ni yād az bahman va bidādgari-e u minamayand ba<sup>c</sup>d az koshta shodan-e bahman va azhdehā [. . .] ma<sup>c</sup>ruf [. . .] ast ka āzarbarzin farmud be-yek tigh kardam do doshman tabāh shāh az khun-e bāb azhdar az khun-e shāh agarcha na<sup>c</sup>sh-e bahman-rā az lāsha-e azhdehā jodā kardand va be-dakhma bordand va ān [. . .] gel ruy-e lāsha-e azhdehā rikhtand ka zir-e khāk [o] sang nāpaydā gardid vali bāz ham ān noqta be-gur-bahman shāye<sup>c</sup> a[st]

### Translation

Bahman would also inspect his daughter's castle from time to time until Āzarbarzin along with Rostam Tur Mazandarāni and the

leaders of Zabol came to Fars to see the king. The king went with them to see his daughter's castle on the top of the mountain. Just then news came that a dragon had appeared in the pass of Gombadān Castle, the Zanjir Pass, and closed off the road to travellers and caravans. The king smiled and said to Āzarbarzin, "Let's go see this creature."

Riding out from there with a group of leaders who were with the king, they came to that creature's area. The king came along first acting as if he was not afraid and considered the beast nothing until they saw the creature. He had a [. . .] thickness of a plane-tree. His height was about twenty zar<sup>c</sup>s [about seventy feet]. A river was coming out of his mouth. His eyes were like [. . .] fire flashed.

Rostam Tur dismounted from his horse, and asked for permission to kill the dragon, but Āzarbarzin signalled with his head to Rostam not to go forward. Until Rostam had permission, he could not go towards the dragon. When Rostam got close, he shouted that he was not capable of handling the responsibility of fighting the dragon. Just then the dragon attacked Rostam. Rostam fled and climbed up a tree and from the tree farther up the mountain.

King Bahman said to Āzarbarzin, "This hero, your friend, did not measure up to the responsibility and fled." Āzarbarzin said, "Your servant! Didn't your grandfather, Goshtāsp, kill the dragon of Saqilā mountain in Rum? I have also heard that your father, the hero Esfandiyār, killed a dragon. Show your hand,

and grip, and power."

King Bahman was taken in by Āzarbarzin's words, particularly since Rostam Tur had fled [. . .] he struck the horse's side in front of Iran's great men and Āzarbarzin. He went toward the dragon. The king's horse shied away from the creature. Bahman, known as Ardashir the Long-Armed, because he had a tall stature and long arms, pulled his feet out of the horse's stirrups [. . .] to the ground with his sword at hand. He went toward the dragon. Suddenly the dragon grabbed Bahman with his tail, drew him forward and coiled around Bahman's frame. He opened his mouth and put half of his body, beginning with Bahman's feet, into his mouth [. . .] and swallowed.

Bahman's shouts rose crying out to Āzarbarzin, "Oh, hero of the world, kill the dragon." Āzarbarzin stilled his hand. No one wanted Bahman to escape from the dragon's clutches. Because he had killed Zakariyā, the people had grown to hate him. The mournful cries [. . .] Bahman were loud in helpless entreaty to Āzarbarzin as the dragon drew Bahman's head into his mouth and saved the world from defilement of a [. . .] tyrant. Āzarbarzin [. . .] the swelling in the dragon's body where Bahman was in its stomach. [. . .] After he collected his thoughts, the dragon had already finished off Bahman. Then the son of Falāmarz [sic] the world hero [. . .] Garshāsp came up to the dragon. First he cut off the dragon's tail with one blow. Second he thrust a [. . .] for that part where Bahman was. He cut up the dragon with Bahman into four pieces

and up to today that spot is known as Bahman's Grave.

At first whenever animals and beasts of burden belonging to animal drivers [. . .] to that place, the people of Zanjir Pass would throw [. . .] that is, they commemorate Bahman and his tyranny. After Bahman and the dragon were killed [. . .] known [. . .] it is, that Azarbarzin said:

With one sword I destroyed two enemies:  
The king as revenge for my father, the dragon for  
the king.

Even though they separated Bahman's body from the dragon's carcass and carried it to the dakhma, and [. . .] threw mud over the dragon's carcass so that it was covered by dirt and stone, that place is still known as Bahman's Grave.

As I have said, when telling the Shahnama the storytellers with whom I worked did not generally consult their tumars.<sup>26</sup> Judging from the small sample that I have, they were still able to follow the story line of their tumars closely. Therefore, it would seem that they have learned their material very thoroughly.

In order to determine the degree of stability in the national tradition, I will compare part of the story of Rostam and Sohrab in Habib Allāh's oral version and in the version presented in the tumar of Ibrāhim Khoshmu.<sup>27</sup> Habib Allāh's story was recorded over a period of three weeks.<sup>28</sup> The tumar of Khoshmu, a storyteller I have never heard perform, devotes about fifty pages to the same material.

The events of both versions of the story to be examined here comprise Sohrāb's birth and youth, concluding with his acceptance of the command of Afrāsiyāb's army, and taking the army to war against Iran. The same sequence of events as presented in Ferdowsi's work will be examined later. The story and the tumar text are given below side by side in summary form.

Oral Story of  
Habib Allāh

After his baby son was born, Rostam could not hold him or the baby would cry. Rostam was afraid he would kill the baby from anger. He told his wife Tahmina he was leaving, and gave her an identifying medallion for the child.

Men came to Afrāsiyāb and told him what had happened in Tahmina's city of Samangan. Afrāsiyāb sent an army to the city. Although the people sent a message to Rostam, he never received it. The armies prepared for war; Tahmina escaped with her baby.

Pursued by the Turanian army, Tahmina threw herself and her baby into the sea.

Samangan was destroyed.

Tumar of  
Ibrāhim Khoshmu

Before the baby was named, the child was brought to Rostam. Although the child cried with no one else, he would not tolerate his father's presence, crying whenever Rostam tried to hold him. Rostam became angry and left with his army, leaving an identifying medallion for the child.

Afrāsiyāb learned what had happened in Samangan. He sent an army to destroy the city. The people sent a message to Rostam for help, but the message never reached Rostam. Tahmina fled with her baby.

Pursued by the Turanian army, Tahmina threw herself and her baby into the sea.

Samangan was destroyed.

Tahmina's father, Sohram, the ruler of Samangan was ordered executed, but Afrāsiyāb's vizier Pirān Vaysa stopped the execution out of fear of Rostam.

Tahmina and the baby Sohrāb came to an island where Sohrāb was raised by lions for several years.

Sohram and his son Zhandarazm were to be executed. The death of Pashang stopped the execution. They took Pashang's body to Iran to be buried.

The Iranian nobleman and hero Tus b. Nowzar entertained the Turanians and was deceived by them into thinking Afrasiyāb would make him king of Iran.

Rostam learned of this and vowed to teach Tus a lesson. He refused ever to serve in Tus' army.

A ship arrived and saved Tahmina and Sohrāb.

They joined a caravan which met traders who were unable to get camphor from an island due to the ferocious animals there. Tahmina and Sohrāb killed the animals, and made the island safe for the traders. Tahmina stayed with these traders and their leader Toghrol.

One day Sohrab and Toghrol went hunting. Sohrāb chased a deer, met a girl whom he fought. She was Shohra. They fell in love and were married.

Tahmina and Sohrāb came to rest on an island where Sohrāb was fed and cared for by a mother lion for several days.

Tahmina fled on foot with her baby, found a road and was rescued by merchants who agreed to take her to the capital with their caravan.

On the road Tahmina outwitted a robber and saved the caravan. She stayed as a guest for three years with their leader Toghrol.

Tahmina and an army of Toghrol's men went to the capital and rescued Sohrām and another ally, Eskandar.

Pashang died and was taken to be

buried in Iran. In Iran, the Iranians entertained the Turanians; Tus b. Nowzar reviled Rostam at the banquet.

Rostam learned of Tus' actions and refused ever to serve in an army led by Tus.

Afrāsiyāb heard this news and prepared for war with Iran.

Sohrāb felt he must go to the aid of Samangan. Afrāsiyāb was preparing for war.

Tahmina, Sohrāb, and the army recaptured Samangan. There Toghrol spent several years teaching Sohrāb the manly arts. Sohrāb was under the impression that Toghrol was his father at this time.

One day on a hunt, Sohrāb killed the wild animals on an island of camphor and made the island safe for traders. One of the animal skins got back to Afrāsiyāb who learned of Sohrāb and Samangan and sent another army to defeat Samangan.

During the war Sohrāb and Tahmina were wounded and became separated. Tahmina thought Sohrāb was dead.

Sohrāb found himself in the garden of one of Afrāsiyāb's governors. The governor's daughter, Shohra, found him and treated his wounds. They fell in love.

Shohra's father learned of this and was angry. Finally he allowed them to be married. Borzu was conceived. After a period of time Shohra's father became afraid that Afrāsiyāb would learn of the match. He had



Sohrāb drugged and sent as a prisoner to the capital.

Tahmina came to the domain of the evil Bahrām, whom she killed when he made advances toward her. The people, relieved of his rule over them, agreed to help her fight the Turanians. On their way to the capital, they ran upon Sohrāb being taken prisoner to Afrāsiyāb. Tahmina released her son from his captors.

Together with their helpers, they captured the treasure of a nearby castle and prepared to retake Samangan. They conquered Samangan and prepared for war with Afrāsiyāb.

Afrāsiyāb destroyed Shohra's village. She fled pregnant.

Afrāsiyāb heard of what had happened. He destroyed Shohra's village. She fled pregnant and had her son in a small village nearby.

During the war Sohrāb stole the Pashangi (Turanian) war drums with the help of Afrāsiyāb's brother Garsivaz.

Sohrāb made friends with Tufān, the Turanian hero, and brought him over to the side of Samangan.

Sohrāb made friends with Tufān, the Turanian hero, and brought him over to the side of Samangan.

Sohrāb stole the Turanian war drums by forcing Garsivaz to help him.

Afrāsiyāb sent Tufān to kill a dragon as a trap for Sohrāb. Sohrāb went with Tufān. Tufān was eaten and Sohrāb then killed the dragon. Afrāsiyāb and his men were watching.

Because of Tufān's friendship with Sohrāb, Afrāsiyāb sent Tufān to fight a dragon in the area. Tufān was killed. Sohrāb had followed Tufān to help him. When he discovered that

Ṭufān had been killed, Sohrāb killed the dragon. Afrāsiyāb and his men were watching.

Before Sohrāb could return, the Turanians defeated Samangan. Sohram was forced to help Afrāsiyāb win over Sohrāb. Sohrāb is led into being the commander of Afrāsiyāb's army.

Before Sohrāb could return, the Turanians defeated Samangan. Sohram assured Afrāsiyāb that Sohrāb did not know who his father really was. Afrāsiyāb won Sohram's help in making Sohrāb the commander of the Turanian army so that he could be forced to kill Rostam.

Sohrāb accepted the leadership of the army.

Sohrāb accepted the leadership of the army.

They took Sohrāb to Balkh. Sohram assured Pirān that Sohrāb did not know who his father was. They plotted to bring Sohrāb to battle with Rostam.

Sohrāb met Afrāsiyāb's daughter, Aspanuy (or Asbahu) and fell in love with her. As bride price, Afrāsiyāb demanded Rostam's head. They prepared for war with Iran.

Before going to Iran to fight, Sohrāb insisted on seeing his mother. When he saw her, he threatened to kill her if she did not tell him who his real father was. She told him of his parentage. She gave him the medallion which Rostam had left with her. All this was kept secret from the Turanians.

Meanwhile Sohrāb heard rumors that he was not the son of Sohram but rather his grandson. Thinking that he was a bastard, he went to Samangan to kill his mother. Threatened with death, Tahmina told him the truth of his parentage. Sohram gave him the medallion. All this was kept secret from the Turanians.

They continued on to Iran and war.

They returned to the capital to prepare for war.

Despite minor variations, the story lines are remarkably similar. The greatest divergence comes in the pattern of battles. The tumar presents three battles and destructions of Samangan. The first comes when Afrāsiyāb learns of Tahmina's being given in

marriage to Rostam and her having the baby Sohrāb. The second is after Sohrāb and Tahmina have recaptured Samangan. The third comes after the conception of Borzu and is the battle that finally decides Sohrāb's fate. Only two battles are present in Habib Allāh's story, one after Afrāsiyāb learns of Rostam's child and the other ending the segment. These two battles with city destructions in the oral story and in the tumar are reflections of one another. Sohrāb is the cause of the first and Borzu is the cause of the second. Although the cycles in the oral story are longer, both versions are cyclical, moving from peace to war, back to peace, then again to war. The two cycles of the oral version absorb almost all of the action of the three cycles in the tumar.

An example of this absorbing of motifs is the death of Pashang. In the tumar Pashang dies "offstage" and we hear only of his funeral. Sohrām and Eskandar are saved from execution by Pirān who fears Rostam's wrath if Rostam should ever hear of the executions. In the oral story it is the dramatic death of Pashang at the scene of the execution which saves Sohrām and Zhandarāzm. Pirān has been trying to stop the execution, but his motives are less clear in the oral story.

For the most part other variations between the tumar and the oral story are minor. In the tumar the baby is unnamed when Tahmina flees. When she brings the child from the ocean, she names him sur-ab<sup>29</sup> which becomes Sohrāb.

Shohra's father is Khosrowshāh in Habib Allāh's version.

In the tumār her father is Nowzarshāh, and Khosrowshāh is the ruler of a nearby fortress, an ally of Afrāsiyāb, who reports the marriage of Rostam and Tahmina to Afrāsiyāb. The confusion is easy to understand, however, when one recalls that both Khosrow and Nowzar were Iranian kings. Both tumār and oral stories continually use the same names over and over for unimportant characters.

The storyteller elaborates greatly on the framework provided in the tumār. For example when Sohrāb steals the Turanian drums, the tumār says:

kholāṣa bā komak-e garsivaz ṭabl-e pashangi-rā  
āvordand

Finally they [Sohrāb and Zhandarazm] brought out the Pashangi drums with the help of Garsivaz.

It is hard to imagine why Garsivaz, Afrāsiyāb's own brother, would help Sohrāb (one of the archenemies of the Turanians at this point) to steal the drums so highly prized by the Turanians. On the other hand, Ḥabīb Allāh describes at length how Sohrāb forces Garsivaz to point out where the drums are kept and approve the young hero's entry into the drum house. While the tumār must then describe how Afrāsiyāb punishes his own brother for his collaboration, the oral story has provided an explanation for Garsivaz' actions and can drop the punishment sequence. Ḥabīb Allāh also includes long descriptive passages and digressions to explain and elaborate on the actions taking place.

In short, the correlations of motifs between the oral and

tumār versions is fairly high, not only in these stories but also in other sections which I have examined, comparing also <sup>c</sup>Ali's stories with the Khoshmu tumār. The storyteller lengthens and fills out some material which exists in outline in the tumār. He explains and rationalizes, or exchanges motifs from one part of the story to another, but the story remains essentially the same.

It is not the intent of this discussion to assert absolutely that the tumārs of all storytellers are alike. Such an assertion would be impossible since we do not have Ḥabīb Allāh's tumār, nor the full tumārs of <sup>c</sup>Ali Sanākhan or Ibrāhīm Khoshmu. Rather I want to point out that there is a great deal of similarity between the stories which various storytellers relate. This similarity indicates a stability within the tradition of telling the national legend, at least with regards to the motifs used. This stability would seem to lie in the tumār which is handed down, in a written form, from one storyteller to another and forms the skeletal basis for the narrations.

In order to determine if the correlation between a storyteller's narration and the same story in his own tumār is greater than that seen in the example above, a comparison will be made next of one story told by <sup>c</sup>Ali Sanākhan and the same story in his own tumār. The example given here is the last section of the telling of the Shāhnama, the killing of King Bahman and Alexander the Great's conquest of Iran. I will deal only with the material leading up to the death of Bahman, and the death scene itself.

This is the example given in transcription from the tumar on pages 129-34 above. As an indication of the magnitude of the difference, I might mention that the whole reign of Bahman takes about two hundred lines in the Shahnama,<sup>30</sup> forty-eight pages in the storyteller's tumar and roughly a month in the telling. The example presented here is a much shorter segment than that presented above for Ḥabīb Allāh, so I will examine the material more closely for similarities and divergences.

ᶜAli begins by saying that he has come to the end of his story. Bahman has defeated the house of Zabol and brought one of the Zaboli descendents, Āzarbarzin, back into his service. All of Bahman's people are afraid of him. He has, moreover, killed the prophet Zakariyā because of the prophet's opposition to Bahman's marriage to his own daughter Homā. Then ᶜAli begins the day's segment proper. Again the tumar text and the oral story are summarized side by side.

Oral Story

Tumar

Bahman invited one thousand of Iran's nobles as guests to see the castle he was building for his daughter/wife Homa.

Leaders of Zabol came to Fars to see the king. Together they went to see the castle Bahman was building for his daughter/wife Homā.

Merchants came to tell Bahman of a dragon closing off the road. Bahman promised them the area would be made safe.

News came that a dragon had closed off the road.

Bahman suggested they all go see the dragon.

The guests arrived and stayed in tents set up near the castle.

At a banquet talk turned to the dragon. Āzarbarzin may have wounded this very dragon. Bahman remarked on how his father Esfandiyār and his grandfather Goshtāsp had both defeated dragons. He would defeat this dragon himself.

Āzarbarzin tried to dissuade the king, offending Bahman's pride.

After the banquet they all went to their quarters to sleep.

In the morning Bahman and his guests went looking for the dragon.

The dragon appeared.

A young hero, Rostam Tur Māzandarāni, went out to kill the dragon against Bahman's orders. He could not face the danger and hid himself in a tree.

Bahman attacked the dragon. The dragon began sucking the king into his mouth.

Bahman called to Āzarbarzin for help.

The dragon lifted the king into his mouth and began swallowing him.

Bahman called for help. Although Āzarbarzin called back that he was coming, he hesitated while

They all went toward the dragon's domain.

The dragon appeared.

Rostam wanted to fight the dragon. Bahman denied him permission, and the dragon forced him to flee.

Āzarbarzin reminded Bahman that his father and grandfather had both killed dragons. Āzarbarzin challenged Bahman to do the same.

The king was deluded by the challenge.

Bahman attacked the dragon. The dragon began sucking the king into his mouth.

The dragon lifted the king into his mouth and began swallowing him.

Bahman called for help to Āzarbarzin. Āzarbarzin recalled all Bahman's evil deeds and did not

he thought about how Bahman was an evil king. want to help him.

By the time Āzarbarzin came forward, it was too late. With one thrust of his sword, Āzarbarzin struck both the dragon and Bahman, thereby ridding himself of two enemies. By the time Āzarbarzin came forward, it was too late. With one thrust of his sword, Āzarbarzin struck both Bahman and the dragon.

Āzarbarzin cut up the dragon and Bahman with it.

Homa took up the rule of Iran.

What was left of Bahman's body was salvaged and properly buried. The rest was buried on the spot with the dragon's body. This spot became known as Gur-e Bahman ("Bahman's Grave"). Even though they separated Bahman's body from the dragon's carcass, this spot is still known as Gur-e Bahman.

Azarbarzin remarked that he had killed two enemies with one thrust of his sword. Āzarbarzin remarked that he had killed two enemies with one thrust of his sword.

One can see how the tumar is an outline of the story, although the storyteller has changed some elements. For example, Āzarbarzin's part in the tumar story is much more active. In the oral story, it is Bahman's own proud decision which leads to his death. In the tumar, he is urged on by Āzarbarzin who then will not help him. One can also see how non-essential elements may be added to fill up time and embellish the story. The banquet is a perfect example of how a scene can be added which does very little to further the action. Once again it should be mentioned that only a page and a half of tumar text makes up the forty-five minutes of storytelling.



Furthermore, one may see here that ʿAli's oral version is no more similar to his own tumār than Ḥabīb Allāh's version of the Sohrāb story is to the Khoshmu tumār. Both ʿAli's version and Ḥabīb Allāh's version add material, expand on material and leave out material found in the tumār. The storyteller seems to have some latitude even in the motives which he provides for the action of the story.

Next I will examine Ferdowsi's version of the same two examples, in order to determine to what extent the naqqālī tradition depends on the literary tradition which is well known to the storyteller.

The Rostam and Sohrāb segment takes up about eleven hundred lines (about ninety pages) in Ferdowsi's work,<sup>31</sup> comprising a fairly large proportion of the reign of Kāvus. The same time sequence examined above is summarized below. These events center around Sohrāb's youth until he takes the reins of the Turanian army and goes to war with Iran.

Rostam left Samangan after the child was conceived. He gave Tahmina an identifying armband for the child. When the child was born, Tahmina named him Sohrāb.

Sohrāb grew rapidly. By the age of ten he was a hero. He asked his mother to tell him who his father was. She told him the story of his birth, cautioning him to keep his parentage secret from Afrāsiyāb lest the king demand Sohrāb's presence in the capital.

Sohrāb said he would gather an army of Turks and depose Kāvus. Then he would make Rostam king and

attack Turan to depose Afrāsiyāb. Father and son would rule all.

An army began to rally round Sohrāb, ready for war with Iran.

Afrāsiyāb heard all this and was delighted. He sent commanders with an army and gifts to Sohrāb. He told his men to keep Sohrāb's parentage from the boy so that father and son could be brought together in battle.

Sohrāb was presented with the gifts and honors. They went on to war with Iran.<sup>32</sup>

One difference between Ferdowsi's version and the versions presented earlier is in bulk of detail. This segment runs to about one hundred and seventy lines. In both earlier versions, Sohrāb's youth is greatly expanded. The tumar and the oral version both spend a great deal of time adding adventures in Sohrāb's early life which demonstrate his potential as a hero. His growth is summed up by Ferdowsi in three lines:

cho yek māh shod hamcho yek sāl bud  
                   barash chun bar-e rostam-e zāl bud  
 cho sah sāla shod zakhm-e chugān gereft  
                   be-panjom del-e tir o paykān gereft  
 cho dah sāla shod zān zamin kas nabud  
                   ka yārast bā u nabard āzmud<sup>33</sup>

When he was one month old it was as if he was a year.  
 His breast was like that of Rostam, son of Zāl.

When he was three years old he went to the polo field.  
 In his fifth year he took up arrows and lances.

When he was ten years old there was no one in that land  
 Who dared to try and show him how to battle.

Sohrāb's youth is of major concern in the tumār and the oral versions, comprising a much longer section of the Rostam and Sohrāb story.

The motives presented for Sohrāb's attacking Iran are different in Ferdowsi's version than in the tumār and the oral versions considered above. Ferdowsi's Sohrāb promises to depose Kāvus and give the rule to Rostam. In Ḥabīb Allāh's version and the Khoshmu tumār, Sohrāb is (at least initially) spurred on by a desire for revenge against Rostam for his abandoning Tahmina and the city of Samangan. In the tumār, Tahmina first exhibits these feelings of revenge from the first time she hears that Rostam has left her and their child. She is only dissuaded from taking revenge on Rostam herself by the fact that she has her child to care for. She hopes to direct her child's energy against Rostam in the future.

Later Sohrāb announces that his intention in fighting the battles with Iran is to seat himself and his father on the throne:

sohrāb migoft bāyad az in jā ka raftam afrāsiyāb  
va kāvus-rā nabud konam khodam va pedaram hokmrān  
bāshim

Sohrāb said, "When I leave this place, I must destroy Afrāsiyāb and Kāvus so that my father and I may rule."

This same suggestion of revenge also appears in the oral version. First Sohrāb tells his mother that he will depose Kāvus and Afrāsiyāb and give all the rule to Rostam. She laughs at him and says that Rostam will not allow the king of Iran to be deposed. Then Sohrāb says something more appealing to Tahmina:

miram agar khodā khāst movaffaq shodam sar-e chang  
 ʿalamash mikonam gushmālash midam ka barāy-e yek  
 shab-e ʿaysh digar narad ʿayāl begirad

"I am going. If God wills that I be victorious, I will pick [Rostam] up and teach him never again to go and take a wife for one night's pleasure."

Numerous other small differences appear between the literary version by Ferdowsi, and the oral version and the tumar, but it is already apparent that the major divergence is in the elaboration of detail. The oral story and its source, the tumar, are far more complex in use and arrangement of motifs. They are also much more regular, generally using much the same motifs for the development of each hero. Ferdowsi, on the other hand, presents a much contracted version of the material centering on high points of action.

The other example quoted above from ʿAli is even more dramatically at variance with Ferdowsi's Shāhnāma. ʿAli and the tumar devote much more time to the whole reign of Bahman than Ferdowsi does. Some of this greater concentration on Bahman might be explained by the fact that his reign brings the storytelling cycle to a close. Ferdowsi presents Bahman's reign as a transition between the great heroic period and the conquest of Alexander, which in turn paves the way for the Sasanians.

The most striking feature of the oral material is that it does not coincide at all with the Shāhnāma of Ferdowsi. Bahman does fall in love with his own daughter by whom he has a son Darāb. The prophet Zakariyā, who plays an important part in the oral

story and tumār, does not appear in Ferdowsi's work. Neither is Bahman eaten by a dragon.<sup>34</sup> In fact Bahman's death is summed up in one line:

be-bimārī andar bemord ardashir  
 hamī bud bi-kār taj o sarir<sup>35</sup>

Ardashir [Bahman] died from an illness,  
 The crown and throne were left idle.

Several conclusions may be drawn from the comparisons of written and oral texts above. First, there is a unity within the storytelling tradition. This is apparent from the comparison of the oral version with an unrelated tumār. Although there is a range of variation, the range does not appear to be any greater than in the variation of a storyteller's version with his own tumār. It is easy to envision the tumār as a stabilizing force at work in the storytelling tradition. Second, we can see that even within the unity of the texts performed by today's storytellers, there is still a great deal of room for individual variation. It is in the ability to embellish and expand upon themes that storytellers prove their worth. Third, we can see that what unity there is within the tradition is not dictated by Ferdowsi's written text. The literary work is known and revered by storytellers and audiences but does not dominate the tradition of telling the national legend. Instead the literary and oral versions exist equally side by side.<sup>36</sup> One might say that the Shāhnāma of Ferdowsi is only one rescension of a work which continues being told today by such men as ʿAli and Habib Allāh. Rather than codifying the national legend, Ferdowsi has

added one version, a literary one, to the continuing tradition represented in other works and oral production still today.

## B

Genre

In assigning a generic designation to these stories, we are confronted with two opposing criteria. First, we must try to be faithful to the cultural significance of the material to the participants in the performance. Second, we wish to provide a term which accounts for the distinctions between the oral and written versions and places the stories in a context of world literature.<sup>37</sup>

If we consider the response of those involved in the storytelling to be of paramount concern,<sup>38</sup> we will consider the stories to be Shāhnāma.<sup>39</sup> Neither audience members nor storytellers differentiate in terminology between the oral and written versions. Both versions are reworkings of the Iranian national tradition, telling stories of particular heroes and kings. Furthermore, a character presented in oral and written versions appears to be of essentially the same nature in both versions.<sup>40</sup> There is no doubt that the two versions are in the same ethnic category -- Shāhnāma.

Neither the addition of stories nor the mere fact of the orality of one version versus the literary mode of the other warrants assigning the oral and written versions to distinct genres. At the same time, to consider these versions as being of the same genre (whatever that genre might be) is to ignore the differences in their make-up. The criterion for genre designation "is surely not the stories people tell, but the way they tell them."<sup>41</sup>

A generic designation should explain both texts of the stories and their cultural meaning. Eugéne Vinaver has suggested such a definition for medieval European literature which is remarkably apt for the Iranian material as well. Comparing such epics as The Song of Roland with Le Morte d'Arthur, Vinaver explains the differences he sees between epic and romance in terms of the manner of moving the narration forward and the author's visible involvement in the narration. He characterizes epic as made up of separate and distinct scenes which are only loosely related to the main train of narration<sup>42</sup> and as a narrative "concerned exclusively with action and statement, not with motives . . . ."43

On the other hand, Vinaver characterizes romance as being a "poetry of interlace." The stories, he says,

have to alternate like threads in a woven fabric, one theme interrupting another and again another, and yet all remaining constantly present in the author's and the reader's mind.<sup>44</sup>

Each departure to another story must be dependent upon the direction of the entire narrative, so that no story could be removed without altering the entire structure of the narrative. The creator of such a narration, "has the entire development in mind, knows where the point of departure is for each ramification -- or digression -- and how to take us back, if necessary, to the line or curve we previously followed."<sup>45</sup>

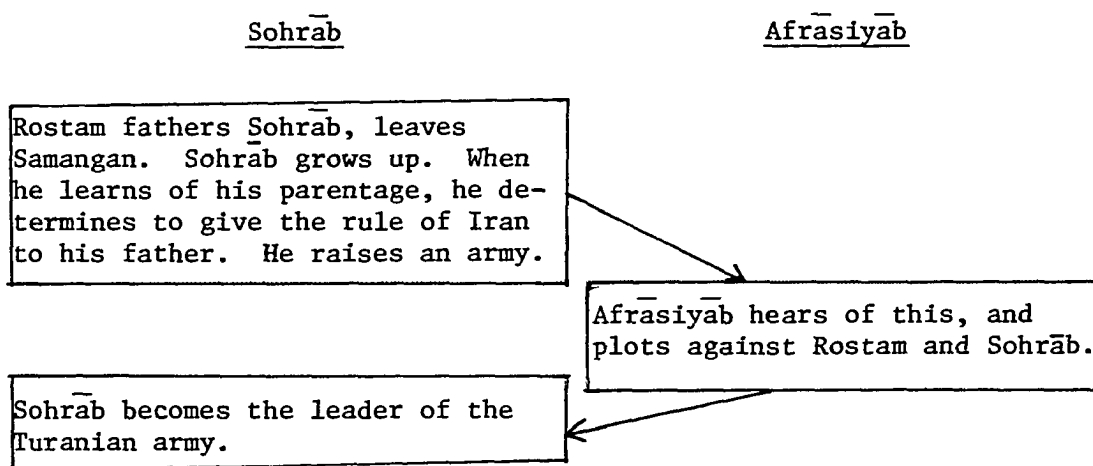
In general Ferdowsi's work conforms to Vinaver's description of European epic, being primarily concerned with action, narrating



events beginning at one point in time, and, by and large, continuing to the end of a story before taking up a new story. The stories are themselves basically independent units, most of which could be removed as a unit without drastically altering the movement of the narration of the Shāhnāma.

Like the Shāhnāma of Ferdowsi, the oral stories concentrate on relating a series of actions, but do not do so in a linear fashion. Rather the oral stories are much like the romances discussed by Vinaver. The storyteller does not develop and conclude one story before beginning another. If we reconsider the early part of the Rostam and Sohrāb story examined above (pp. 135-39), we can see the difference in presentation. A scheme is given according to the focus of the narration.

We will begin with Ferdowsi's version:



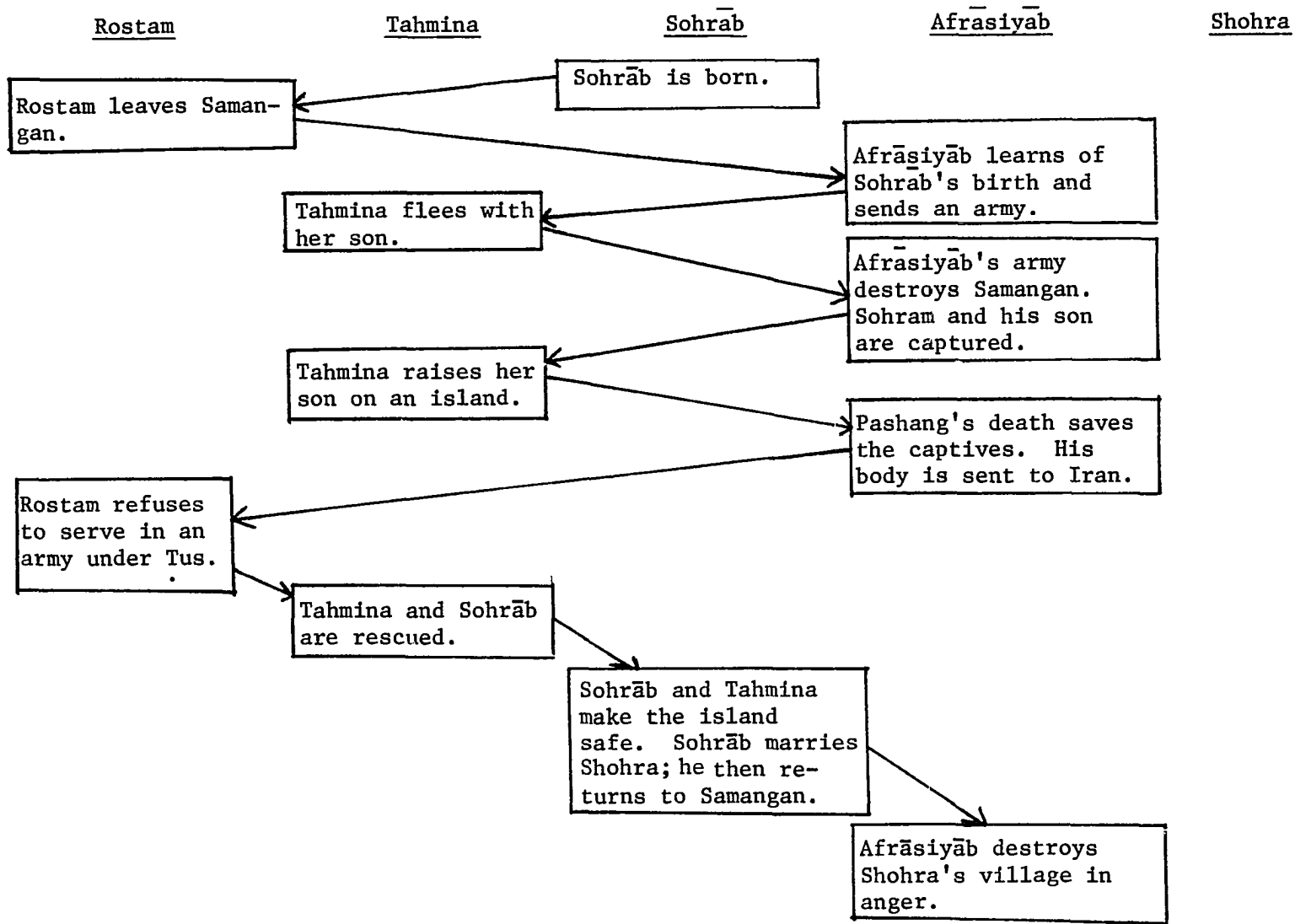
Once Ferdowsi begins the Sohrāb story, he deviates only once from the straight narrative leading to Sohrāb's death in order to explain

Afrasiyāb's part in the affair.

As we can see, Ferdowsi's plot is straightforward and uncluttered, dispensing with story lines not directly related to Sohrāb's progression toward the battle between him and his father. We know nothing of Rostam or the wars between Iran and Turan, which must still be waging, since they have no immediate bearing on the story under consideration. Furthermore, the entire Rostam and Sohrāb story could be lifted from the epic without significantly altering it.

The oral version, as I mentioned earlier, is much fuller in detail and description. More important to our discussion here, the material is arranged in a different manner than the written work.

Habib Allāh told the story as follows:



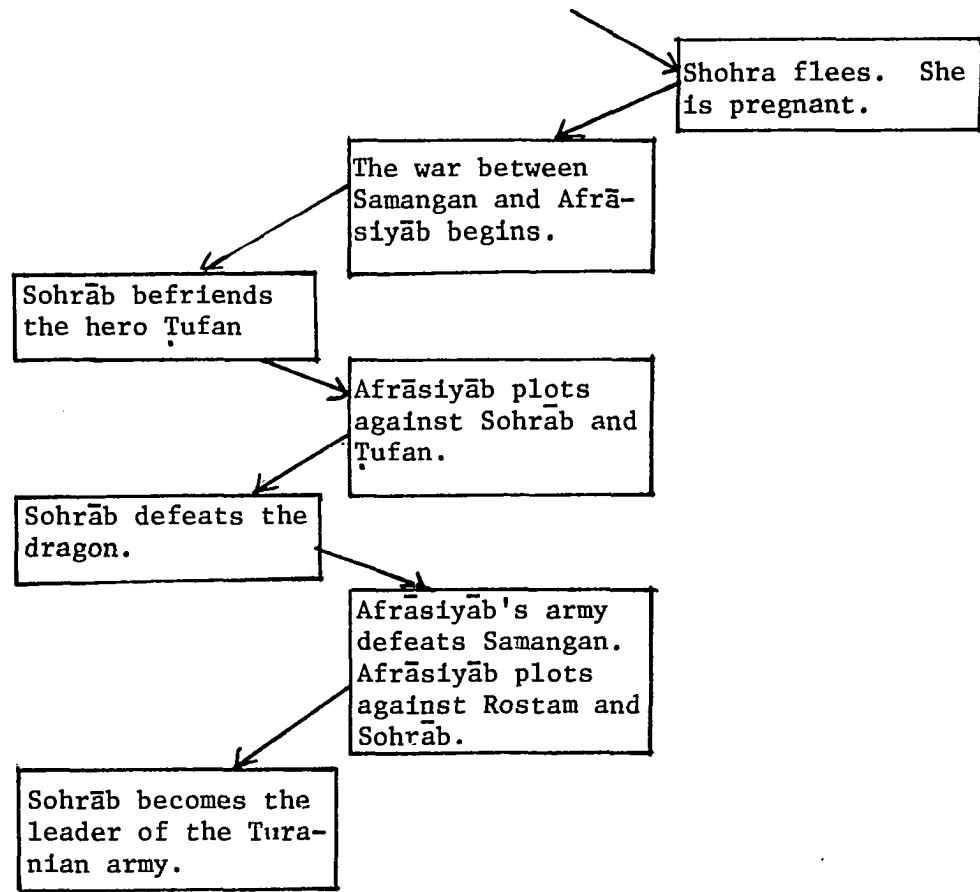
Rostam

Tahmina

Sohrāb

Afrāsiyāb

Shohra



We can see from this example that the storyteller not only presents greater detail but also arranges the detail in a different way than Ferdowsi did. At any point in the narrative there are three distinct, but related, sequences of actions being described, and at one point in the narrative, there are five sequences of action being presented.

While all the levels of action center around the youth and development of Sohrāb, their immediate relationship to Sohrāb is not always apparent. They are however all integrated parts of the Sohrāb story, none of which may be deleted without radically altering the story. For example, the relationship of the episode concerning Tus' offending Rostam to the Sohrāb story is only made clear much later. When Tus offends Rostam, the hero leaves, refusing ever to serve in an army commanded by Tus. This means that Rostam is not an active member of the Iranian army when Sohrāb attacks Iran at the head of the Turanians. Knowing nothing of Rostam's temporary retirement, Sohrāb becomes confused as to who Rostam is and why he does not come to the field. In the mounting confusion Rostam eventually kills his own son. At the time Rostam actually leaves the Iranian army, Sohrāb is still a baby being raised by lions on a strange island, and the link between this episode and the Sohrāb story is not clear.

In addition, many of the critical elements of the Rostam and Sohrāb story are extensions of past stories or carry the seeds of future stories. An example of the former is the feud which arises

between Rostam and Tus. This feud involves Rostam's actions against Tus' father, King Nowzar. When the Turanians are in Iran for Pashang's burial, they try try to turn Tus against the Iranians, offering to make him king of Iran if he will ally with them. At this point, Tus, having been foolishly flattered by the Turanians' words, reviles Rostam as the cause of Iran's kingship having left Nowzar's line, implying that Rostam is less than honorable in his service to Iran.

An example of an element which will affect later stories is Sohrāb's marriage to Shohra who bears their child Borzu. Later in the Shāhnāma narration, Borzu becomes a great hero and challenges Rostam hoping to take revenge for Sohrāb's death.

Within the text of the narration the critical factor in defining differences between the oral and written versions of the Shāhnāma is not the material presented but rather the arrangement of the story material must be considered. The example above illustrates well the differences which Vinaver sees as generic between epic and romance. The epic (Ferdowsi's work) describes the action linearly, proceeding from one action to another in a more or less direct line. The romance (the oral stories) moves continually from descriptions of one set of actions and characters to another and back again.

If we continue our examination of the relationships between the medieval European epics and romances as they apply to the Iranian case, another fact emerges. As we have seen, the storyteller

regards himself as a teacher and designs his story in such a way as to impress his personal interpretation of the traditional material on his audience. While Ferdowsi is never very far from his narration, most of his digressions are laments for his condition or comments on the sources of his work. The storytellers, on the other hand, comment at length on what they consider to be the meaning of the story. Relying on Vinaver's exposition of commentaries on medieval romances, we find that the storyteller's job

is to reveal the meaning of the story (its meine), adding to it such embellishing thoughts as he considers appropriate; by doing this he would raise his work to a level of distinction which no straightforward narration could ever reach.<sup>46</sup>

He expands on this saying,

And so it came about that when a 'literate' writer set himself the task of making a traditional or classical story into a romance nothing seemed more important to him than the process of interpreting his material in the way he had been taught to do. In practice this meant either commenting on the narrative or letting the characters themselves explain their feelings and their behaviour.<sup>47</sup>

The creator of a romance found his achievement "to be measured not in terms of the invention of new material, but in terms of a new meaning, 'creatively conceived.'"<sup>48</sup> All of this conforms with what we have seen regarding the storytellers' relationship to their narrations.

There are two drawbacks to the complete acceptance of Vinaver's exposition, however. First, Vinaver sees epic as being primarily meant to be recited aloud if not orally composed while

romance is primarily a literary genre.<sup>49</sup> In the case of the Shāhnāmā, the opposite is true. The epic is the literary work, and the romance is orally composed. Second, much of Vinaver's discussion rests on the presumption that there is an historical relationship between the two genres, with epic necessarily preceding romance. I do not wish to imply any such historical or evolutionary relationship between the two genres in Iranian literature. Both epic and romance have existed side by side in Iran from ancient times, and there is no reason to assume that the one grew out of the other.

We can still view the written text of Ferdowsi's Shāhnāmā as an epic rendition of the Iranian national legend and the oral stories as romantic renditions of the same material, within the confines discussed above. If we do, we provide generic designations which resolve the two opposing criteria with which we began this discussion. We place the two versions in a category of world literature. At the same time, we account for at least some of the cultural significance of the storyteller's role in performing his stories.



## C

## The Sources of the Iranian National Legend

In this section I will consider other texts which provide sources for the national tradition. I will be primarily concerned with examining the way in which the texts present the blood relationships between characters, wherever the text makes these relationships clear enough to plot. I have chosen to examine geneological relationships because geneologies provide an easily seen form for pointing out the discrepancies, similarities, and trends toward change.

It should not be forgotten that much of the story material presented in the oral versions is to be found in sources for the national tradition other than Ferdowsi. For example, the story of Bahman's death discussed earlier is very similar in the oral version of <sup>c</sup>Ali Sanākhan and the written version of Ehya al-Moluk, a history written by Malek Shāh Hosayn Sistani in the sixteenth century. In this version Bahman is on his way to Sistan with Āzarbarzin and Rostam Tur when they hear that a dragon is in the area. Āzarbarzin suggests to Bahman that his father Esfandiyār killed a dragon, and that it is now Bahman's turn. Rostam asks for permission to kill the dragon and rushes forward, but his horse falters. Rostam is forced to seek refuge in a tree. Then Bahman goes forward and is pulled in by the dragon's breath. Āzarbarzin kills the dragon with Bahman inside, saying:

koshtam azhdehā-rā be-khun-e bahman va bahman-rā  
 be-khun-e faramarz

I killed the dragon in revenge for Bahman and  
 Bahman in revenge for [my father] Farāmarz.

This is virtually a prose restatement of the line of poetry used by  
 Ali and cited in the tumār.<sup>50</sup> There is also an implication that  
 Bahman killed the prophet Zakariyā.<sup>51</sup>

Geneology has been used by Edmund Leach in his "The  
 Legitimacy of Solomon" to plot change in story line.<sup>52</sup> As in his  
 analysis of the Israelites and their choosing of kings, the Iranian  
 material is quasi-historical (in that it documents a chronological  
 series of events) and is primarily concerned with the change and  
 maintenance of the right to rule in Iran. So we may assume, as does  
 Leach, that if "legitimacy of title depends exclusively on inheri-  
 tance then geneologies assume paramount importance."<sup>53</sup> Furthermore,  
 the background of the hero's birth has been long recognized as one  
 of the constituent elements creating the hero.<sup>54</sup>

I am not concerned, however, with examining these texts to  
 discover any "correct" version of the relationships of kings and  
 heroes.<sup>55</sup> Rather my concern is to compare several different versions  
 of the same relationships to see how stable the national tradition  
 is and, if it is not stable, to see how the material has been  
 changing through time. Again, too, I am trying to uncover the re-  
 lationships between the written traditon and the oral tradition.  
 I hope to discover how the geneology as found in the oral version  
 appeared out of trends apparent in the written sources.<sup>56</sup>

### Pre-Islamic Sources

Much still remains of the national legend in texts in Avestan and Pahlavi and, to a lesser degree, in Sogdian, although such texts do not often specify the relationships of characters clearly. The only texts of any value for geneological relationships are the two Pahlavi texts, the Bundahishn and the Denkard.

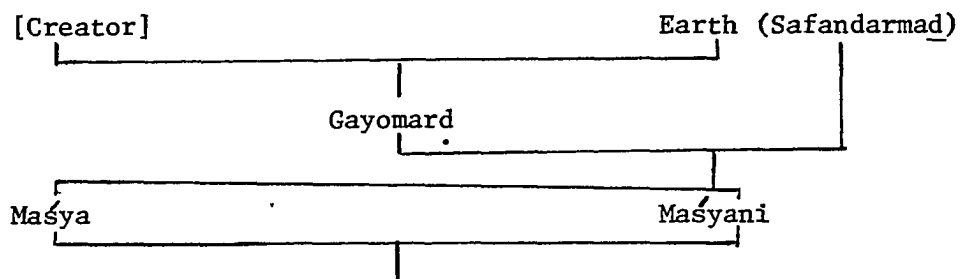
The Bundahishn is a Zoroastrian religious text compiled in the ninth century A.D. and therefore not strictly pre-Islamic. It does contain material taken from earlier periods and is written in Middle Iranian (Pahlavi), the predecessor of modern Persian and the court language of the Sasanians, the last pre-Islamic dynasty of Iran. The Bundahishn comprises religious and mythical stories and exists in two rescensions, the Indian Bundahishn and the Iranian (or Great) Bundahishn. I will be drawing on material from the latter rescension.

In the Bundahishn we see the geneology presented in Chart I (pp. 166-67).<sup>57</sup> The most obvious characteristic of this geneology is the number of brother-sister marriages. Virtually all the characters we find in this version of the national legend are related by blood. The characters who increase the glory of Iran are almost all the result of brother-sister unions. Part of this necessity for relating all people arises from the fact that this account purports to trace the rise of the human species. The brother-sister marriage of Mashyā to Mashyōī is quite natural in that they are born from the union of the first man and the Earth. These

are the first pair of humans and must populate the world. The succeeding number of brother-sister marriages is not so easily explained. Siyamak and Nasak produce two offspring who in turn marry one another. From these parents arise all the progenitors of the races of men. One of them, Taz, marries his sister. But the descendant of this union, the evil Dahak, is not only from the original family, but is also the produce of the original family plus a descendent of the family of the Evil Spirit.

On the other side of the family, however, the descendants who become the Iranians and their kings continue to intermarry. Yim (Jamshid) marries his sister Yimak and eventually Fredun (Feridun) is born. Airik's (Iraj's) revenger, the hero-king Manuskihar (Manuchehr), is once again the result of two brother-sister unions.

The Denkard, another of the ninth century Pahlavi books, provides very little information on the national legend, other than the Zoroastrian beliefs about the creation of man, a chart of which is given below:



Many couples who become husband and wife and from whom come the people of the world.<sup>58</sup>

CHART I

BUNDAHISHN

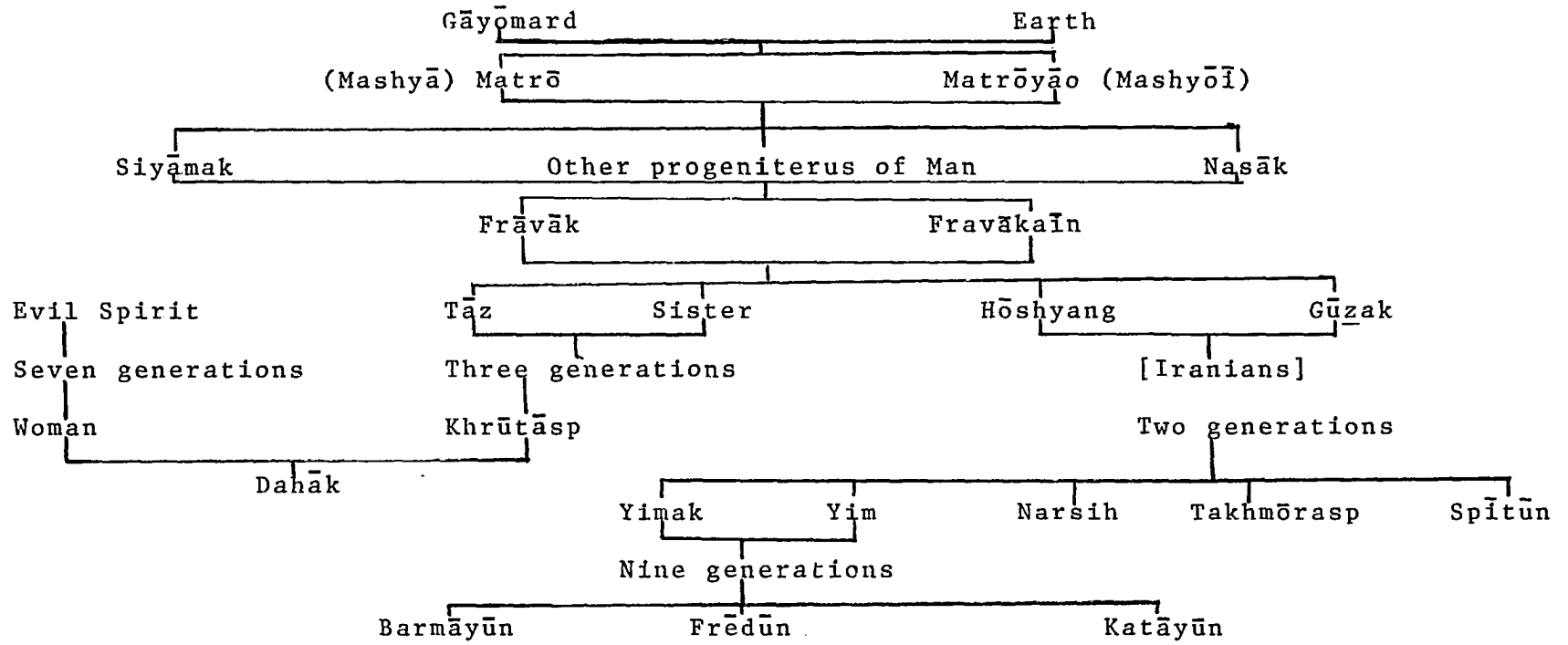
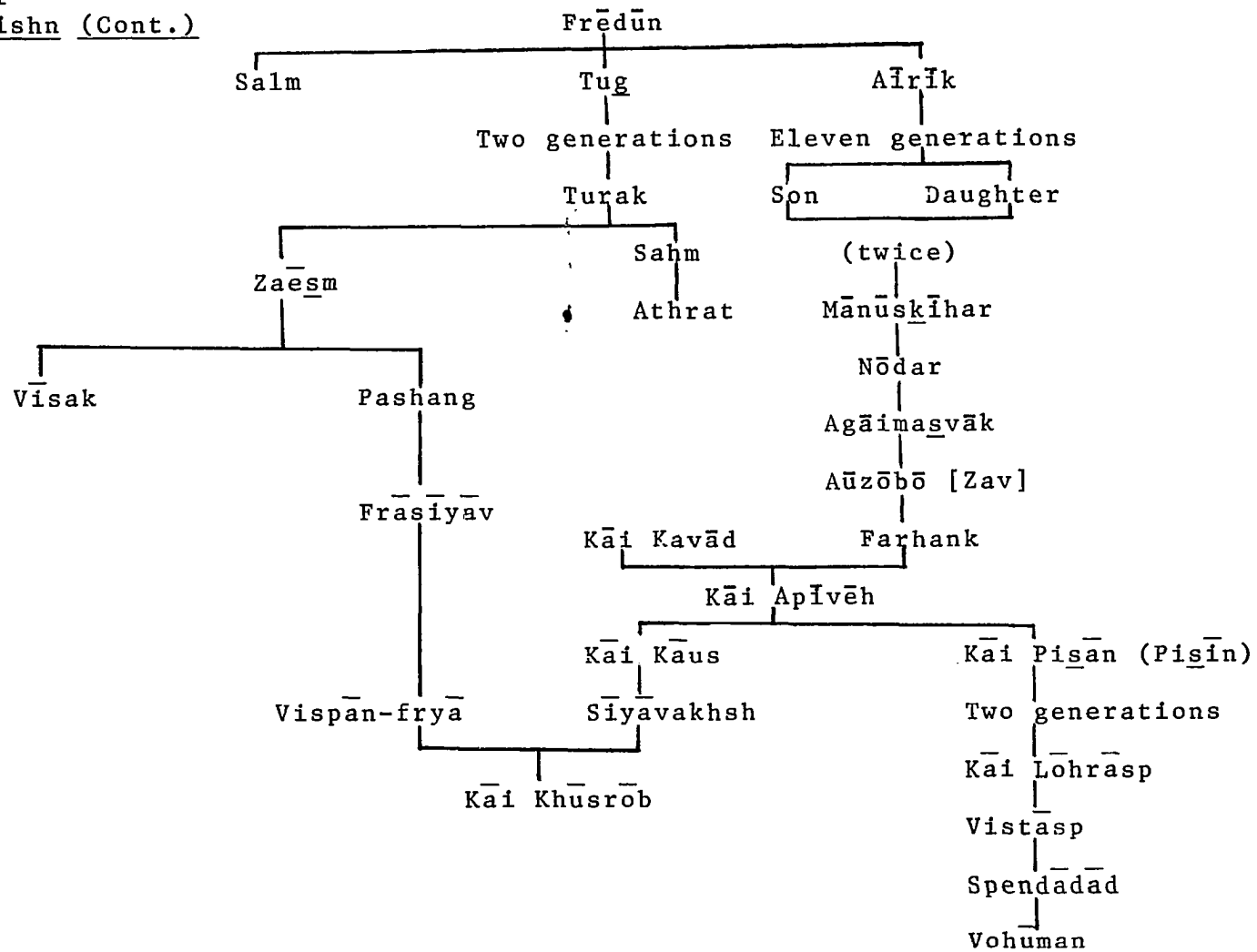


CHART I  
Bundahishn (Cont.)



This short segment of the geneology reaffirms the same sort of incestuous marriages creating the people of the world, and in particular of Iran, as did the Bundahishn. Gayomard incestuously marries his mother, the Earth in a type of parent-child marriage not found in the Bundahishn. The offspring of Maśya and Maśyana marry in brother-sister union as did Maśya and Maśyana.

In short what we see in the pre-Islamic texts is a tendency to marry continuously within blood lines. This internal marriage produces the great kings of Iran, as well as the evil agents who are part of the national legend.

#### Islamic Sources

The material from the Islamic period was drawn from ten historical texts plus the Shāhnāma of Ferdowsi and the oral stories. In choosing these texts, I have tried to achieve some spread in sources from the very early period up to later periods to see trends in change. I have also tried to include the major sources in Persian and Arabic from the early period, including such texts as Dinavari and Bal<sup>c</sup>ami. A cursory examination of other later Persian sources, such as Rowżat al-Safa [The Garden of Purity] suggests that some later sources relied heavily on earlier written sources. The sixteenth century Ehya' al-Moluk still reflects various strains of this material, not following the lines of prior major writers. To avoid repetition, I have not included later works which appeared to be based on one of the earlier sources. The

number of texts examined is not large, yet, compared with today's oral versions, they allow us to see a number of interesting trends. Some of these trends appear in the early works and continue in the later sources up to the oral stories. The survey is also large enough to demonstrate that there are various strains of the national legend which a writer or storyteller could use at any time.

The historical texts used are described in chronological order. They will be discussed and compared thematically as a group.

1. Abu Ḥanifa Aḥmad Dinavari's Al-Akhbar al-Teval from the ninth century. This Arabic text records much information about the Iranian national tradition. (See Chart II, page 171). 59
2. Abu 'l-Faḥl Bal<sup>c</sup>ami's Persian history, Tarikh-e Bal<sup>c</sup>ami, from the middle of the tenth century. (See Chart III, pages 172-74). 60
3. 'Alī b. Ḥosayn Mas<sup>c</sup>udi's Moruj al-Zahab, an Arabic history from the mid-tenth century. (See Chart IV, pages 175-76). 61
4. Ḥamza b. al-Ḥasan Eṣfahāni's Tarikh Senni Moluk al-Arż va 'l-Anbiyā, in Arabic, from the second half of the tenth century. (See Chart V, page 177 .) 62
5. Mojmal al-Tavarikh va 'l-Qeṣaṣ, an anonymous Persian work from the early eleventh century. (See



Chart VI, pages 178-80).<sup>63</sup>

6. Abu Mansur <sup>c</sup>Abd al-Malek b. Moḥammad b. Esma<sup>c</sup>il Sa<sup>c</sup>alebi's Ghorur Akhbar Moluk al-Fors va Siyarehem from the early eleventh century. (See Chart VII, pages 181-82.)<sup>64</sup>

7. Al-Asar al-Baqiya <sup>c</sup>an al-Qorun al-Khaliya by Abu al-Rayḥān Moḥammad b. Ḥamad al-Biruni, dating from the mid-eleventh century. (See Chart VIII, pages 183-84.)<sup>65</sup>

8. Zayn al-Akhbar in Persian by <sup>c</sup>Abd al-Ḥayy b. al-Ẓahhāk Gardizi, from the first half of the eleventh century. (See Chart IX, pages 185-86.)<sup>66</sup>

9. The anonymous Persian work, Tarikh-e Sistan from the eleventh century. (Chart X, pages 187-88.)<sup>67</sup>

10. Malek Shāh Ḥosayn Sistāni's Persian work, Ehya al-Moluk from the sixteenth century. (See Chart XI, pages 189-90.)<sup>68</sup>

In addition, the geneologies from the Shāhnāma of Ferdowsi, <sup>c</sup>Ali Ṣanākhān, and Ḥabib Allāh Izadkhāsti are presented for comparison in Charts XII, XIII, and XIV respectively (pages 191-97). Because the versions of <sup>c</sup>Ali and Ḥabib Allāh are incomplete, the geneologies are given only in part.

## CHART II

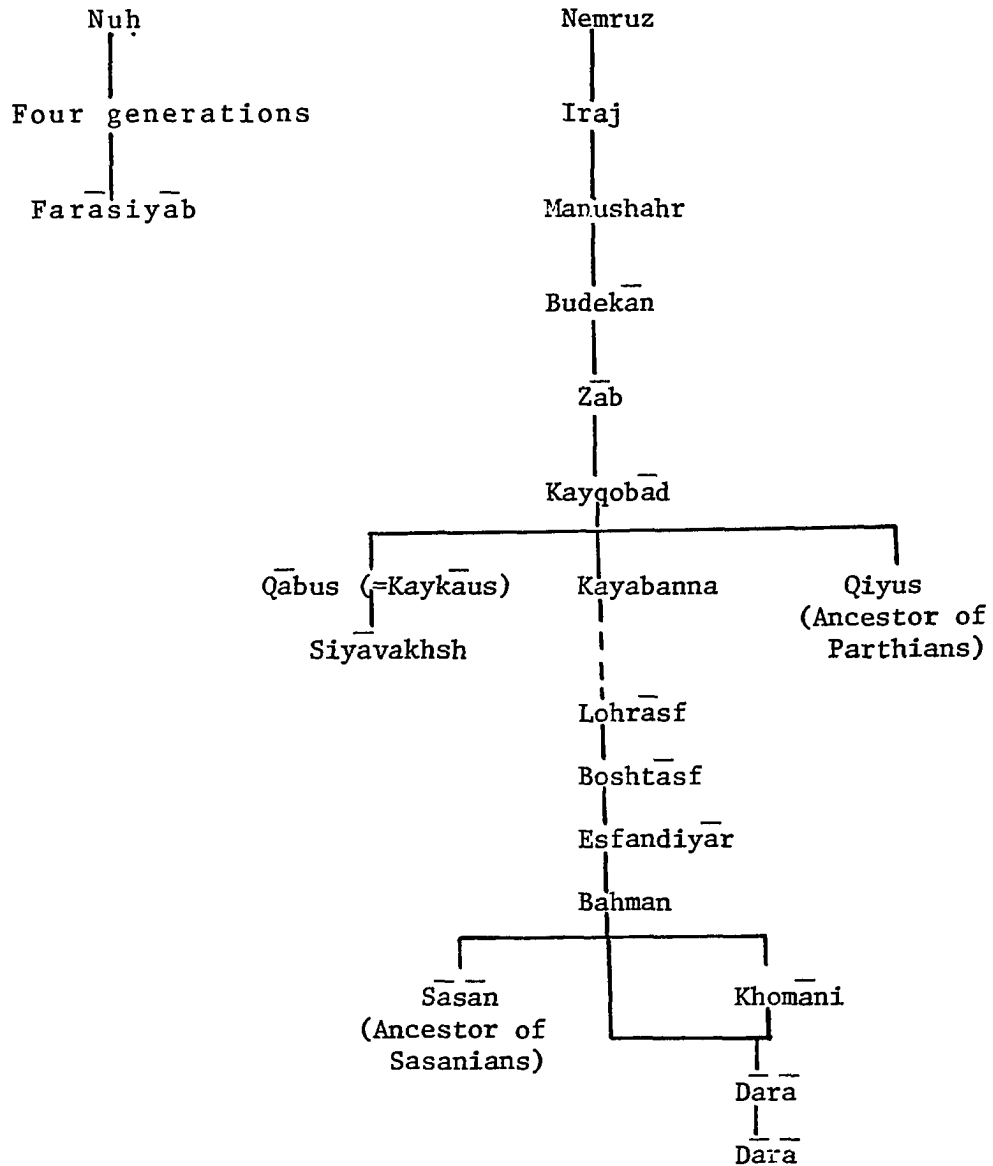
DINAVARI - AL-AKHBĀR AL-TEVĀL

CHART III  
TARIKH-E BAL<sup>C</sup>AMI

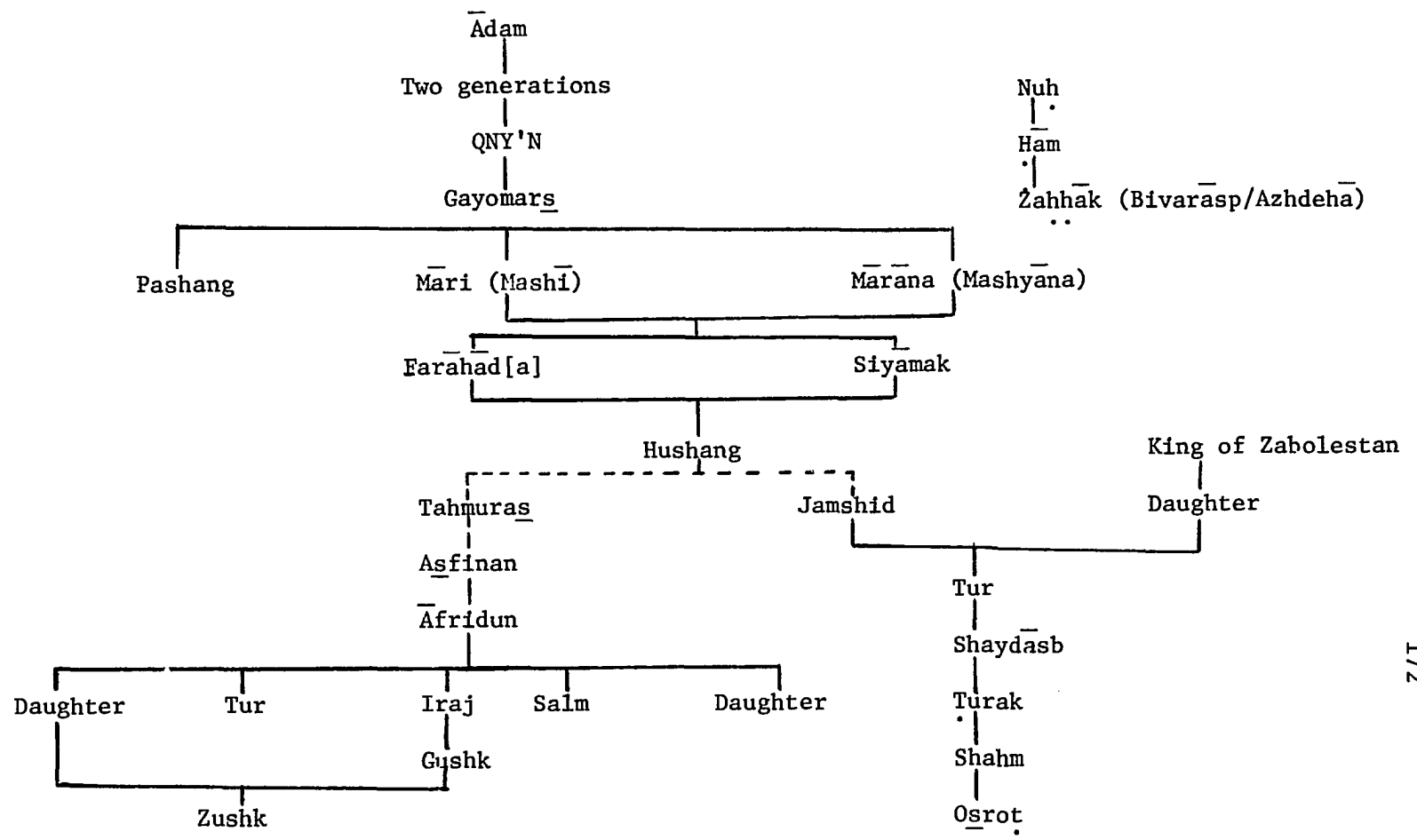
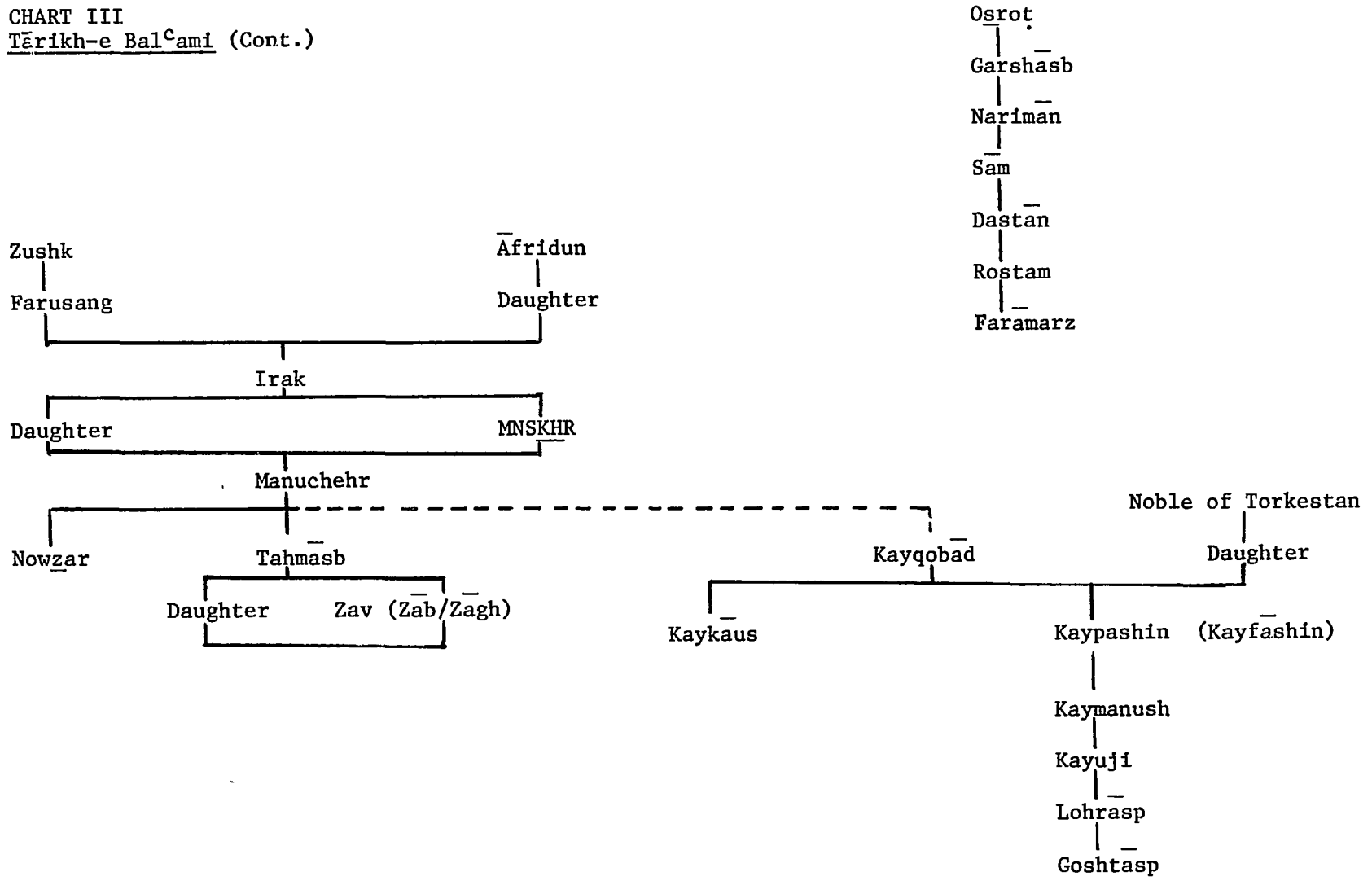


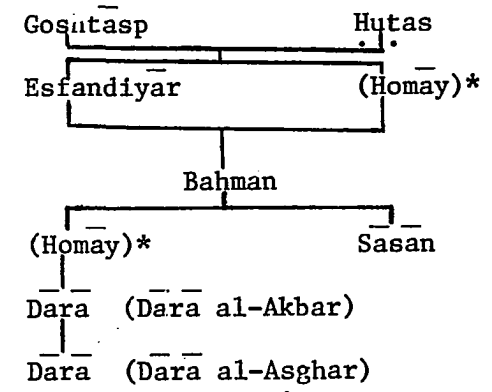
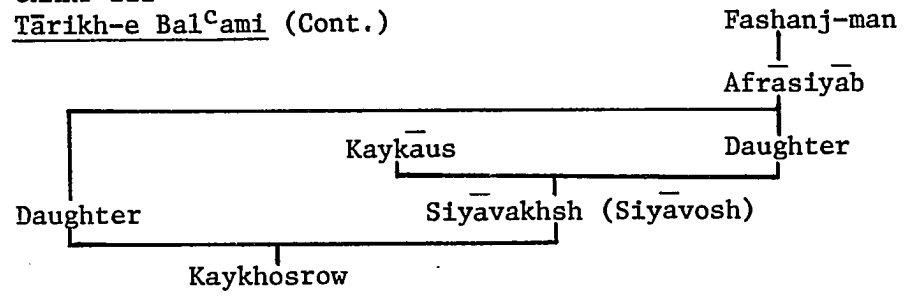
CHART III  
Tārīkh-e Balācāmī (Cont.)



Osrot  
 |  
 Garshasb  
 |  
 Nariman  
 |  
 Sam  
 |  
 Dastan  
 |  
 Rostam  
 |  
 Faramarz

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CHART III  
Tārikh-e Bal<sup>c</sup>ami (Cont.)



\* The position of Homay in the geneology is not certain.

CHART IV  
MAS'UDI - MORUJ AL-ZAHAB

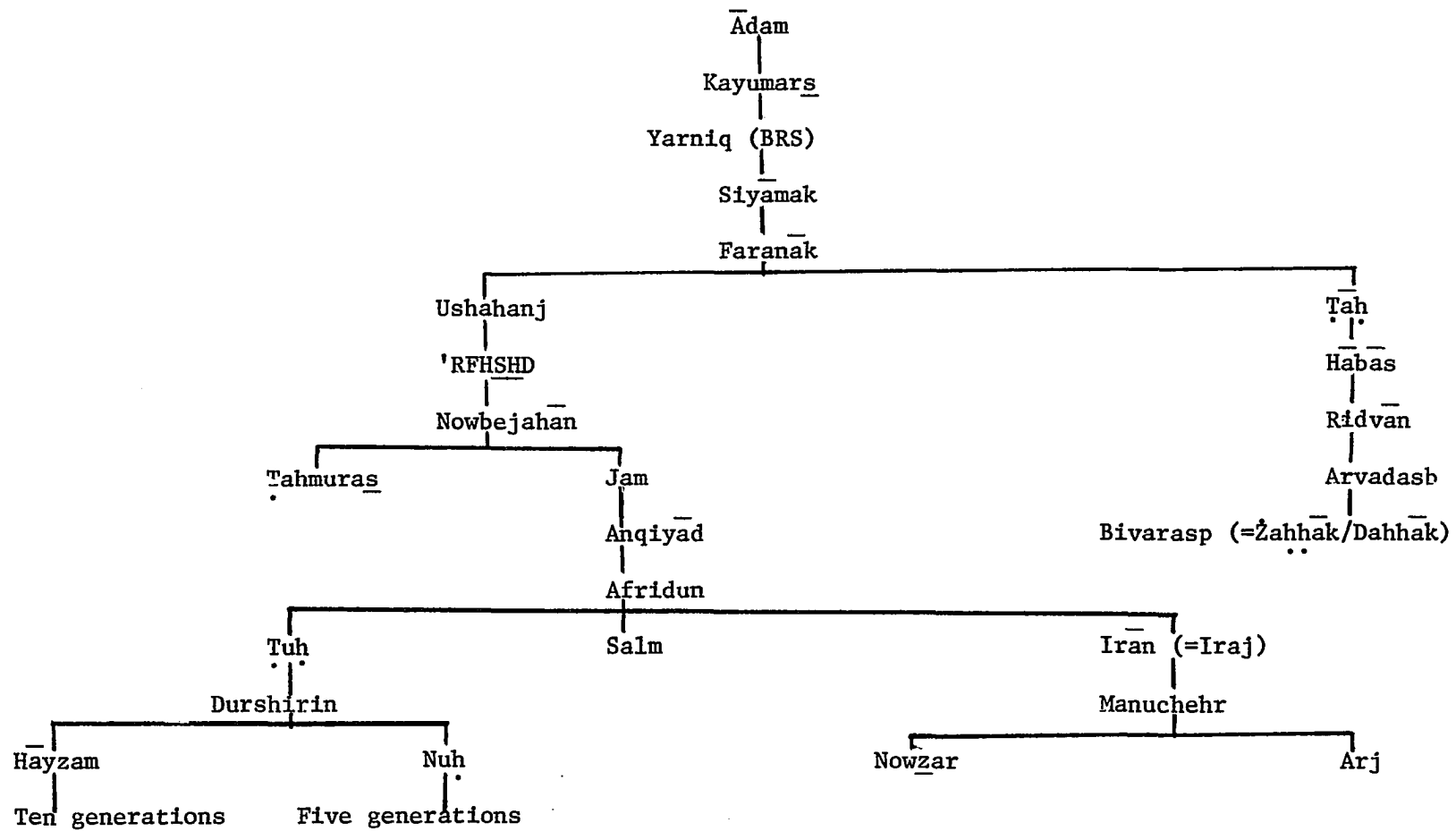
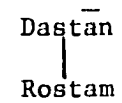
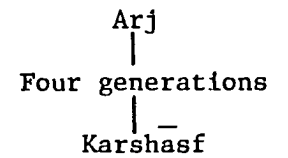
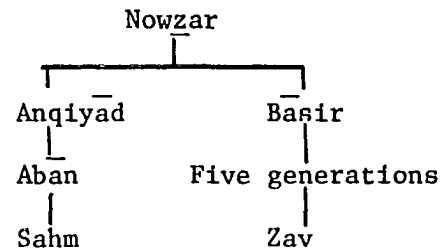
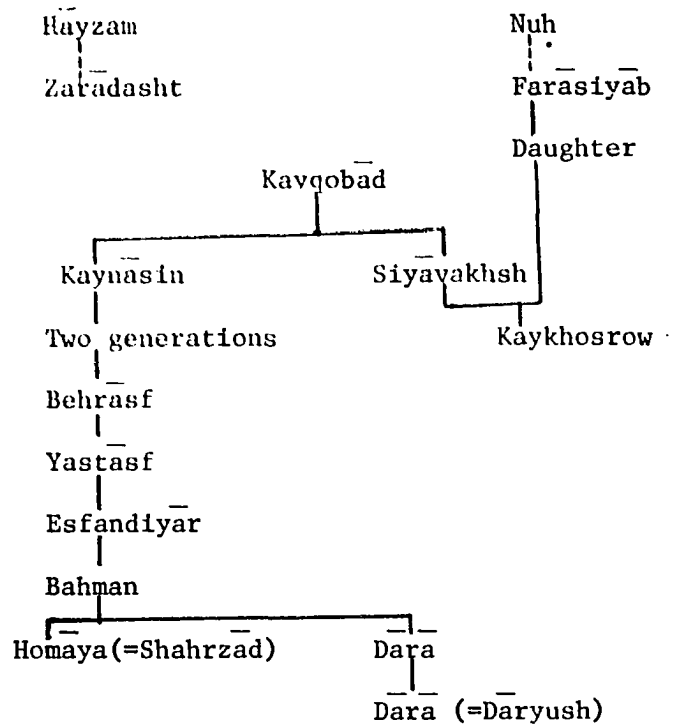
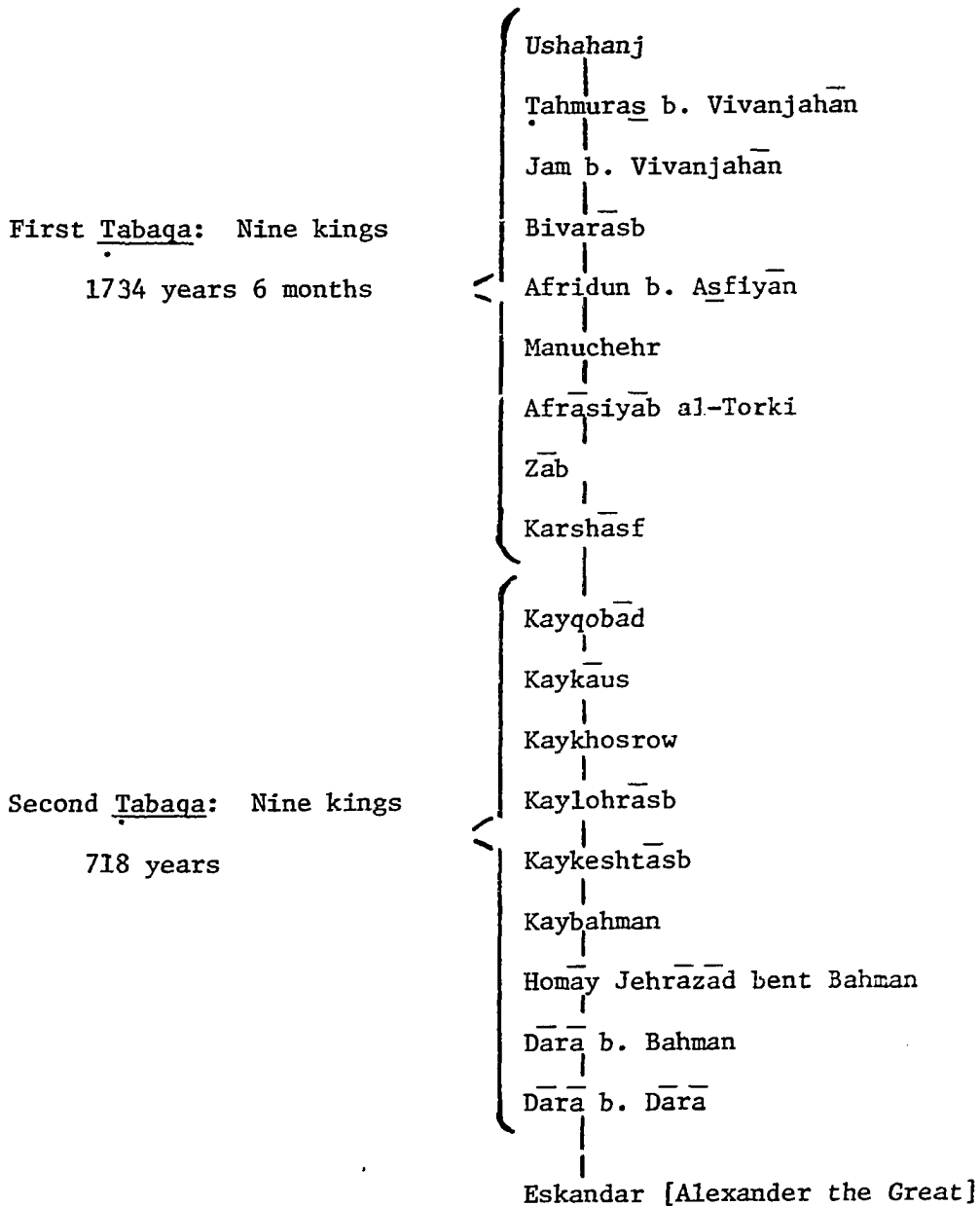


CHART IV  
 Mas'udi - Moruj al-Zahab (Cont.)



## CHART V

Hamza of Isfahan

T̄arikh Senni Moluk al-Arż va 'l-Anbiyā\*

\* Charts kingship not blood relationships.



CHART VI  
MOJMAL AL-TAVĀRIKH

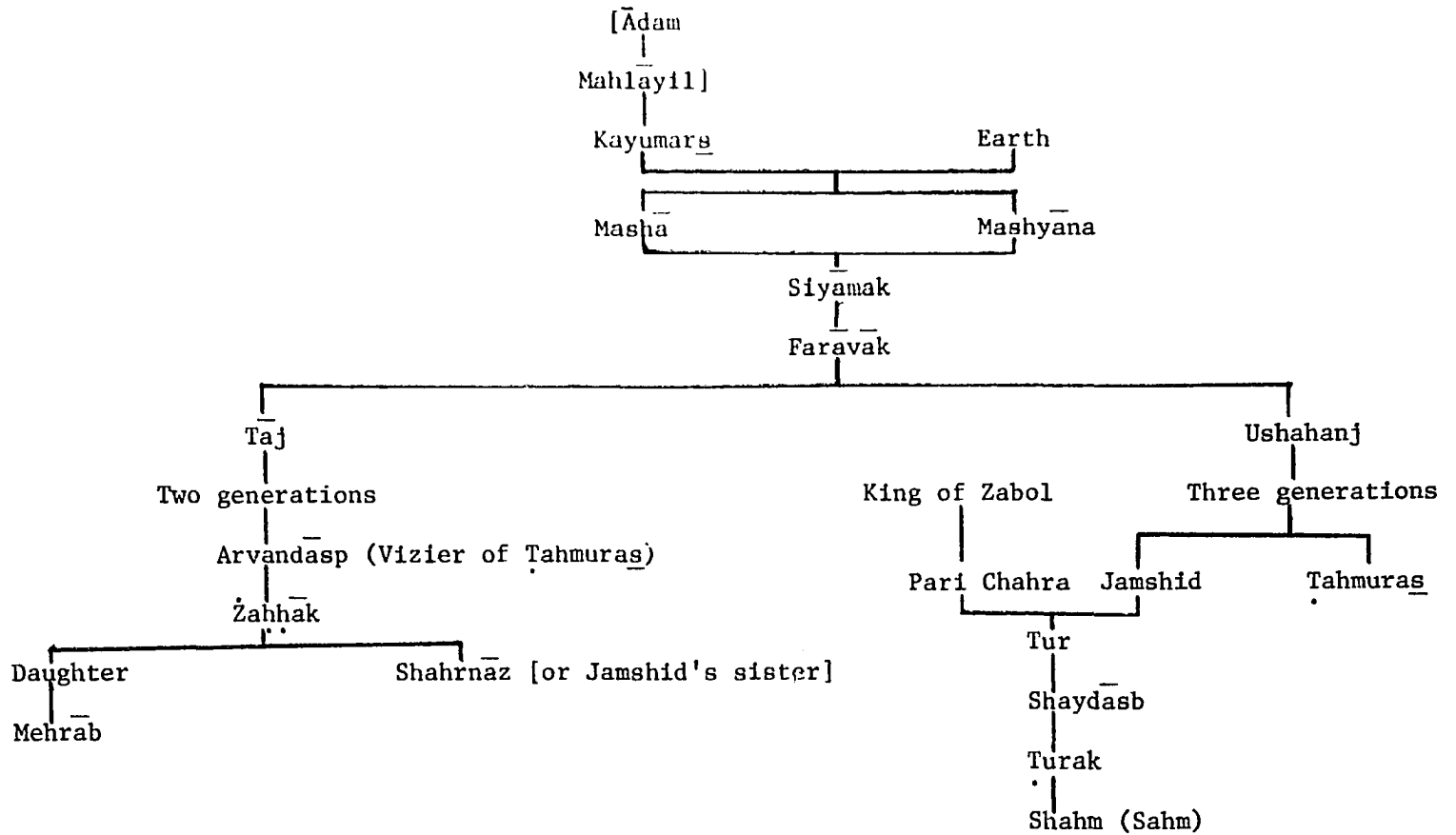
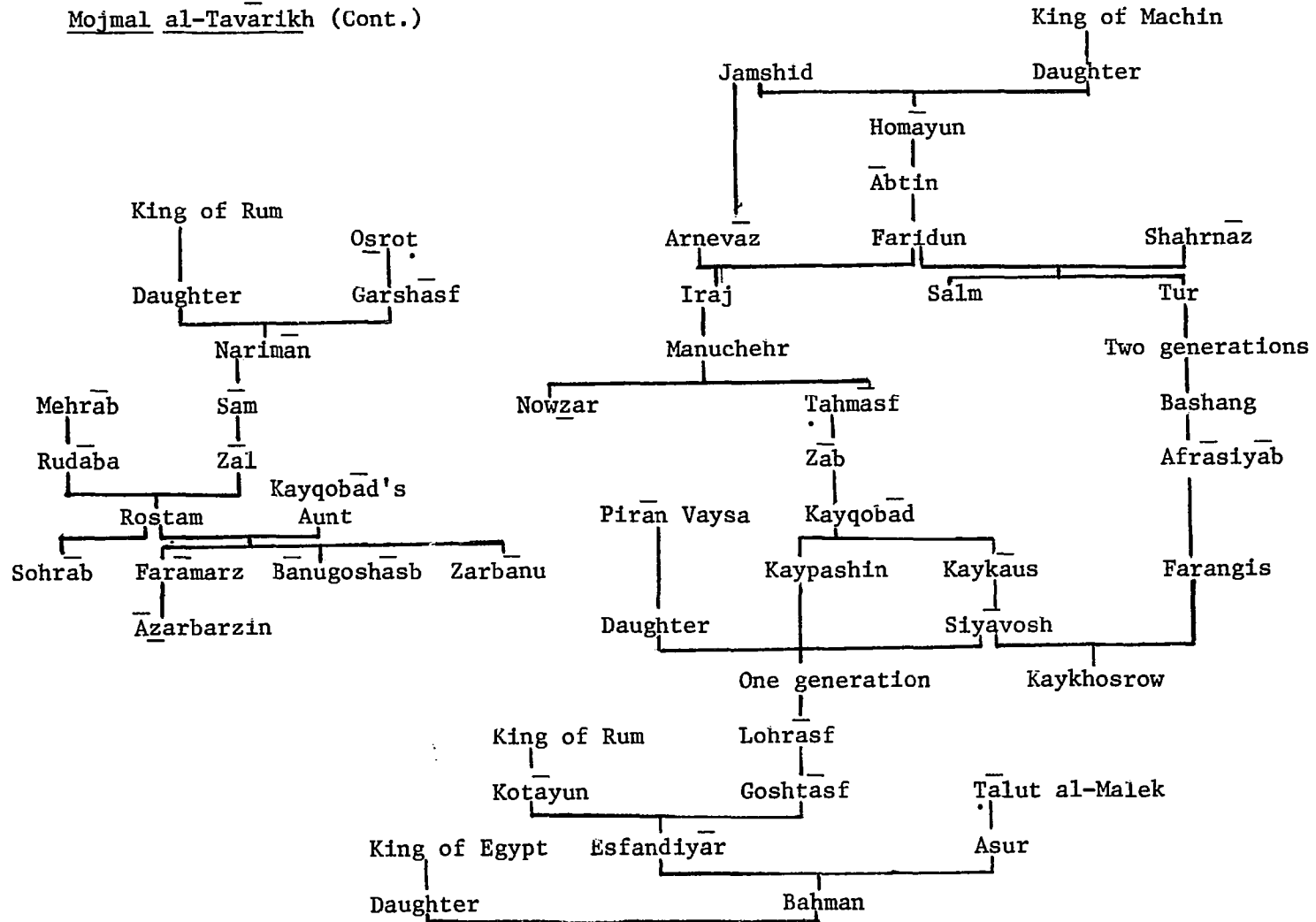


CHART VI  
Mojmal al-Tavarikh (Cont.)



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CHART VI  
Mojmal al-Tavarikh (Cont.)

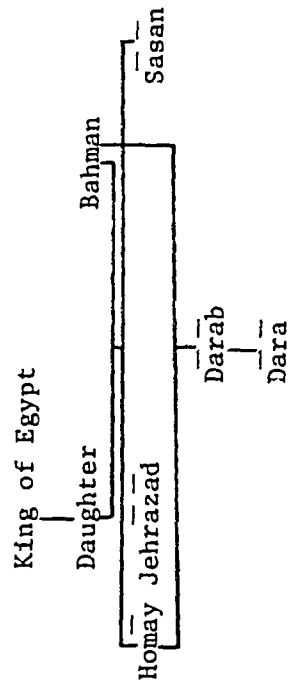


CHART VII

GHORUR AKHBAR MOLUK AL-FORS VA SIYAREHEM - SA<sup>C</sup>ALEBI

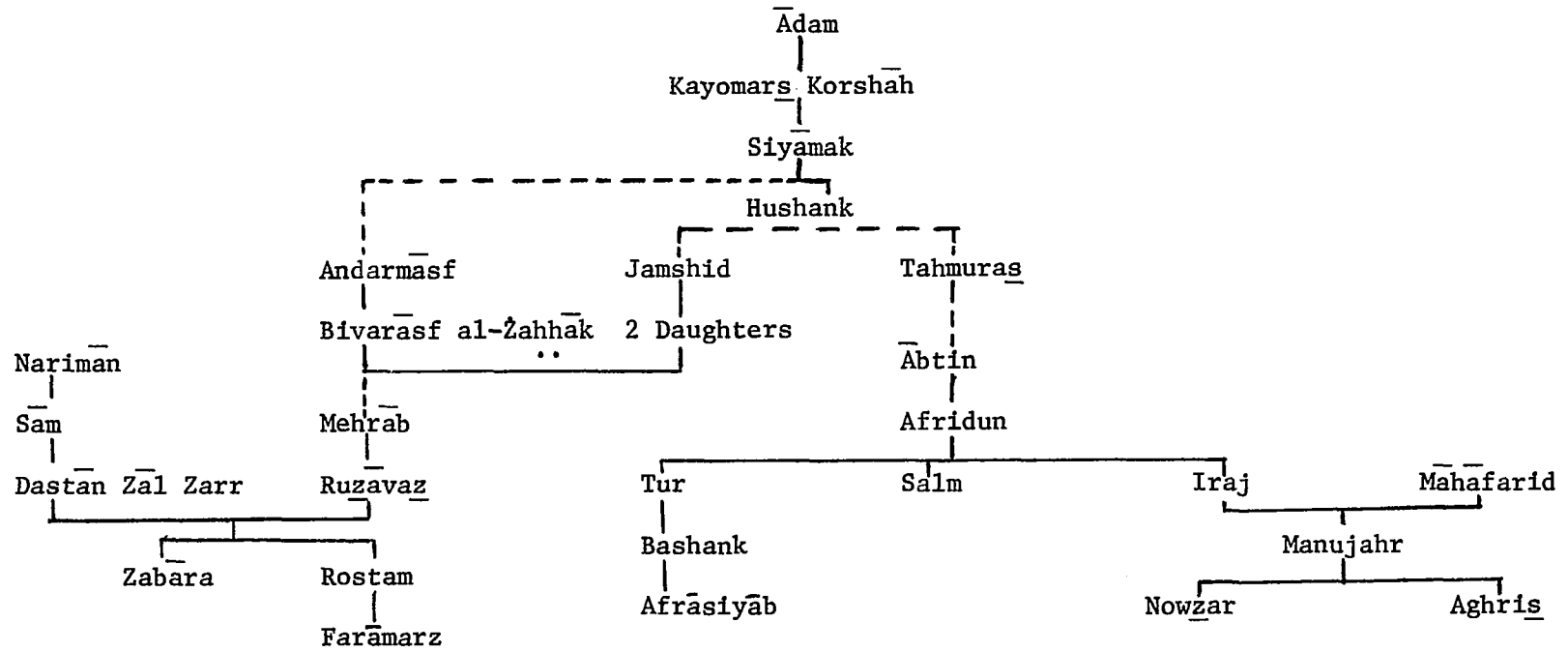
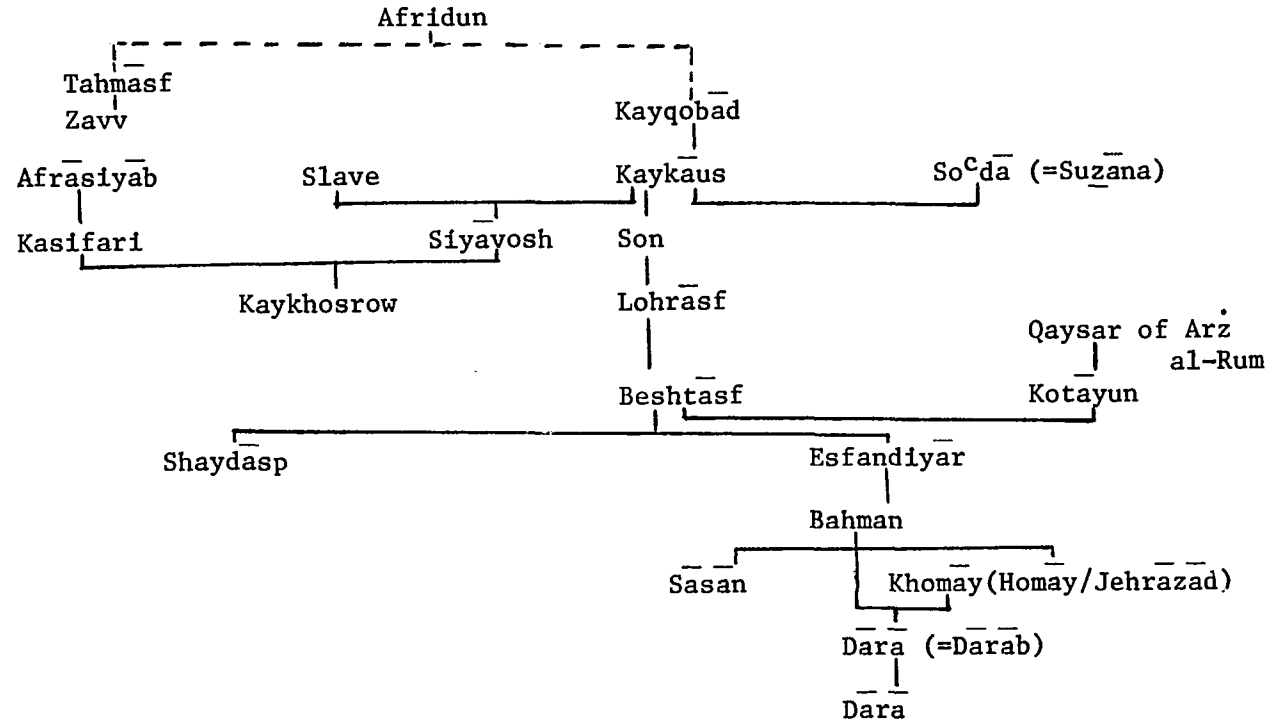


CHART VII  
Sa<sup>c</sup>alebi - Ghorur Akhbar Moluk al-Fors (Cont.)



## CHART VIII

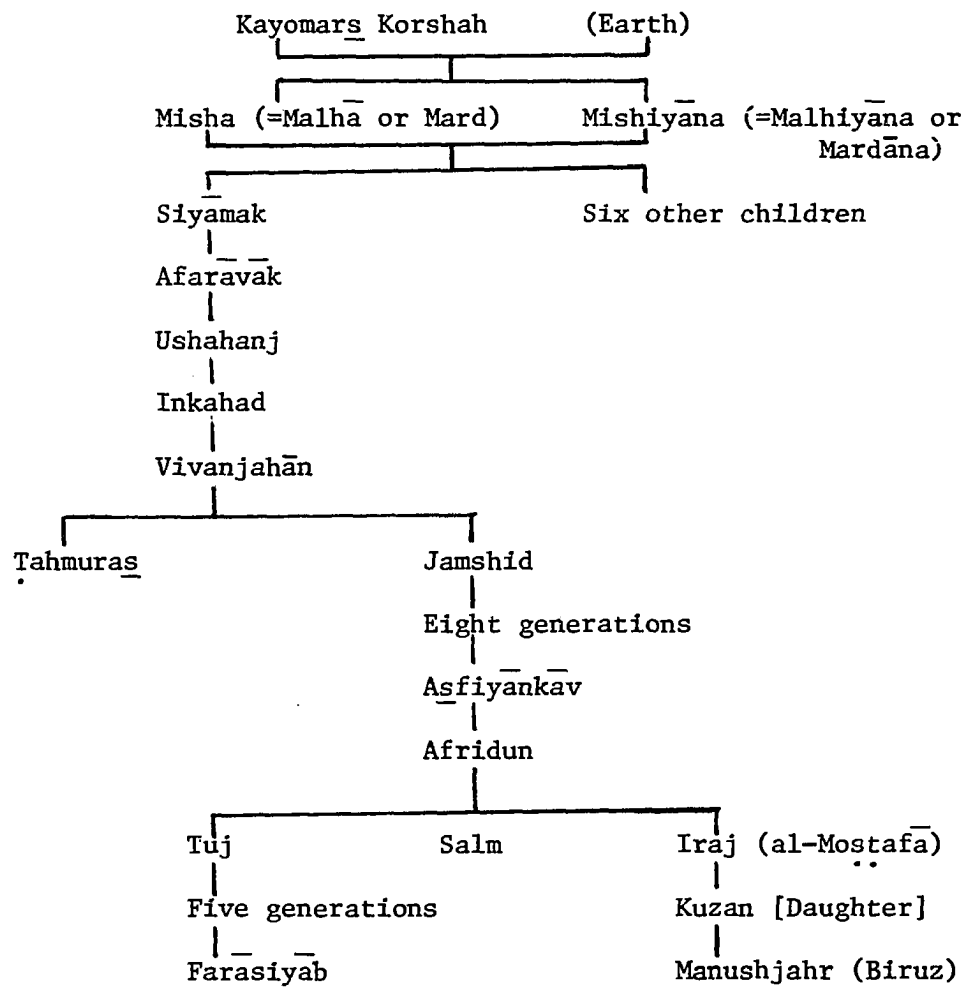
BIRUNI - AL-ĀSĀR AL-BĀQIYA

CHART VIII  
Biruni - Al-Asar al-Baqiya

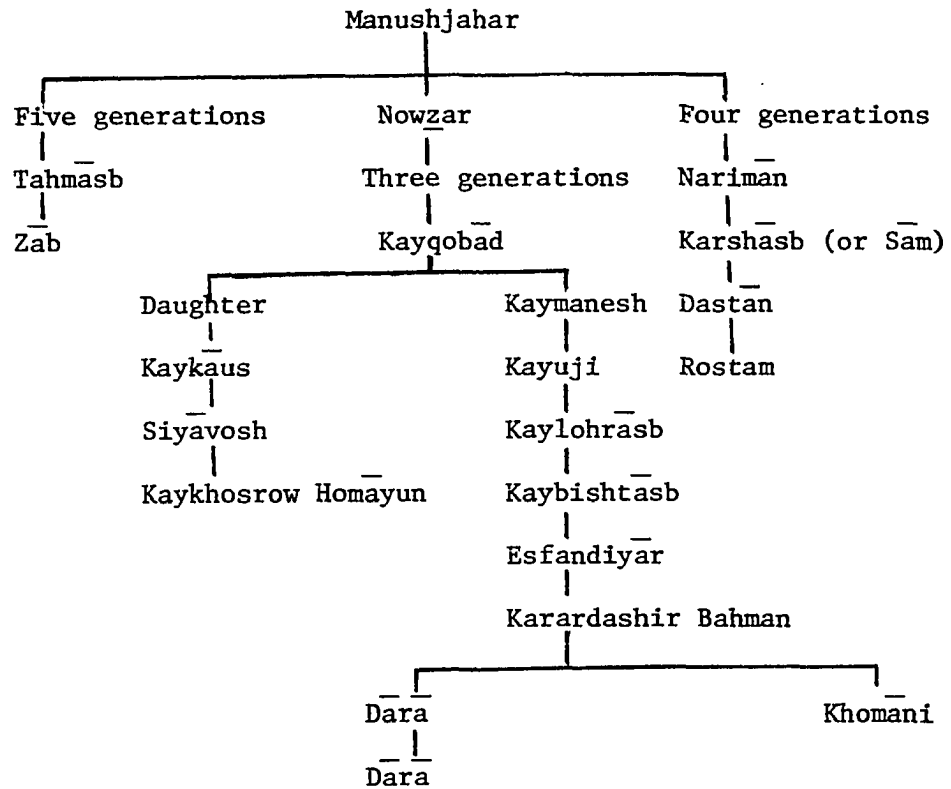


CHART IX

GARDIZI - ZAYN AL-AKHBAR

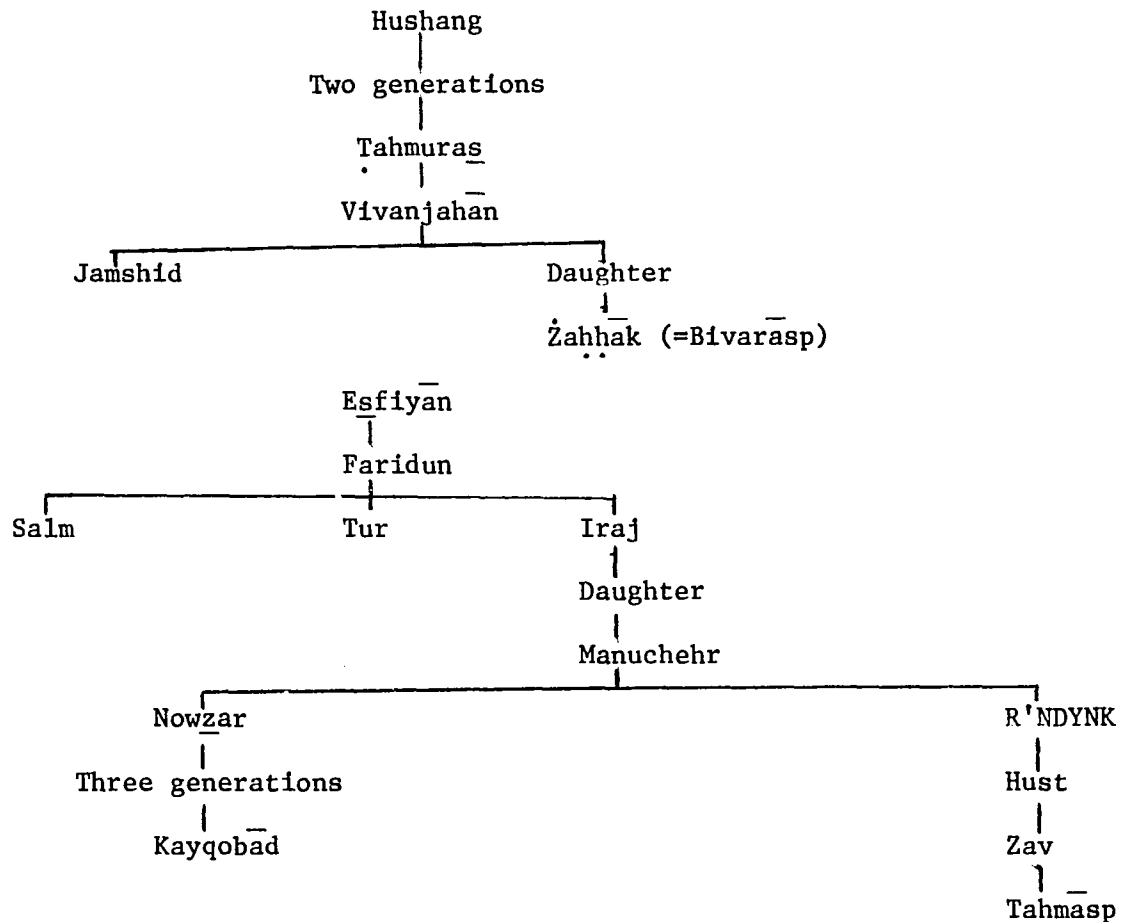
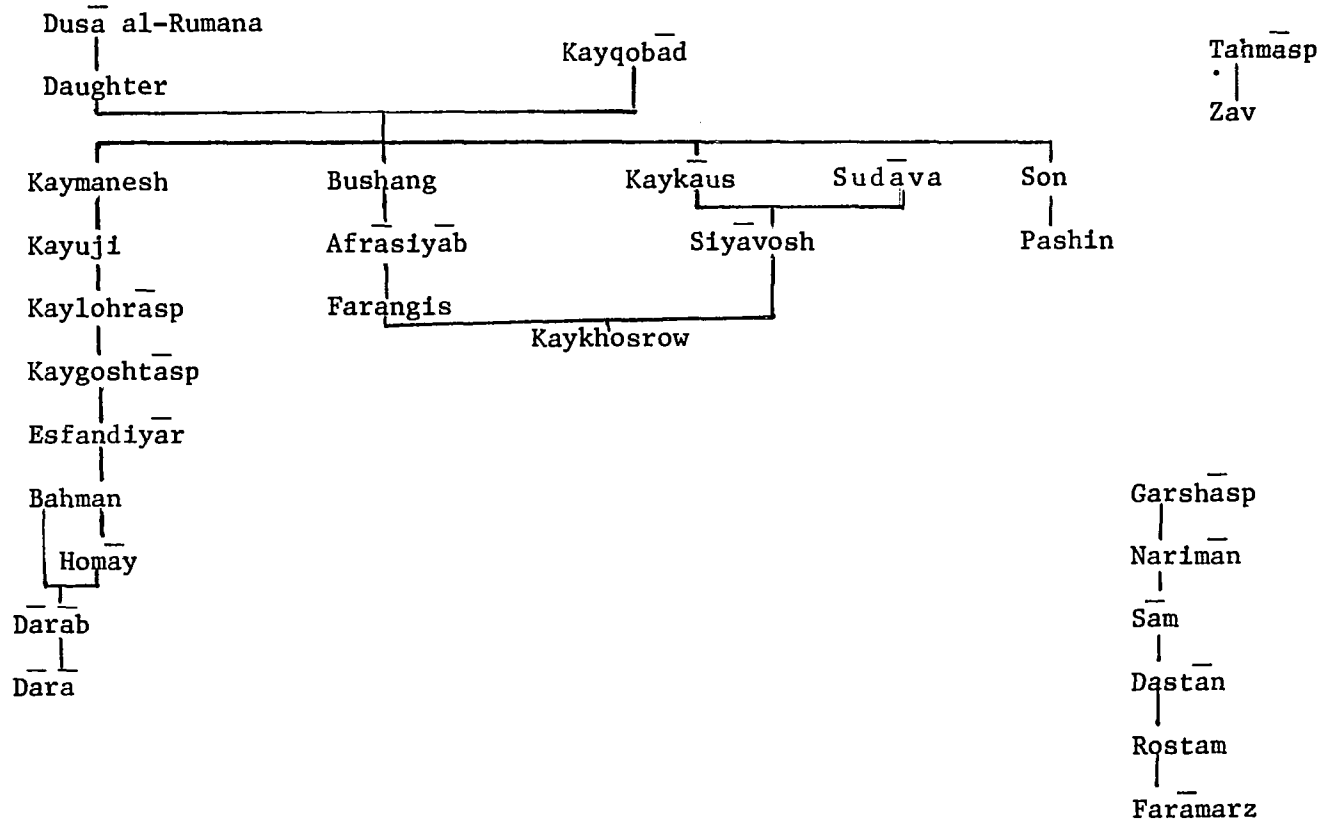




CHART IX  
 Gardizi - Zayn al-Akhbar (Cont.)



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CHART X  
Tārikh-e Sīstān

Kayomars (=Ādam)

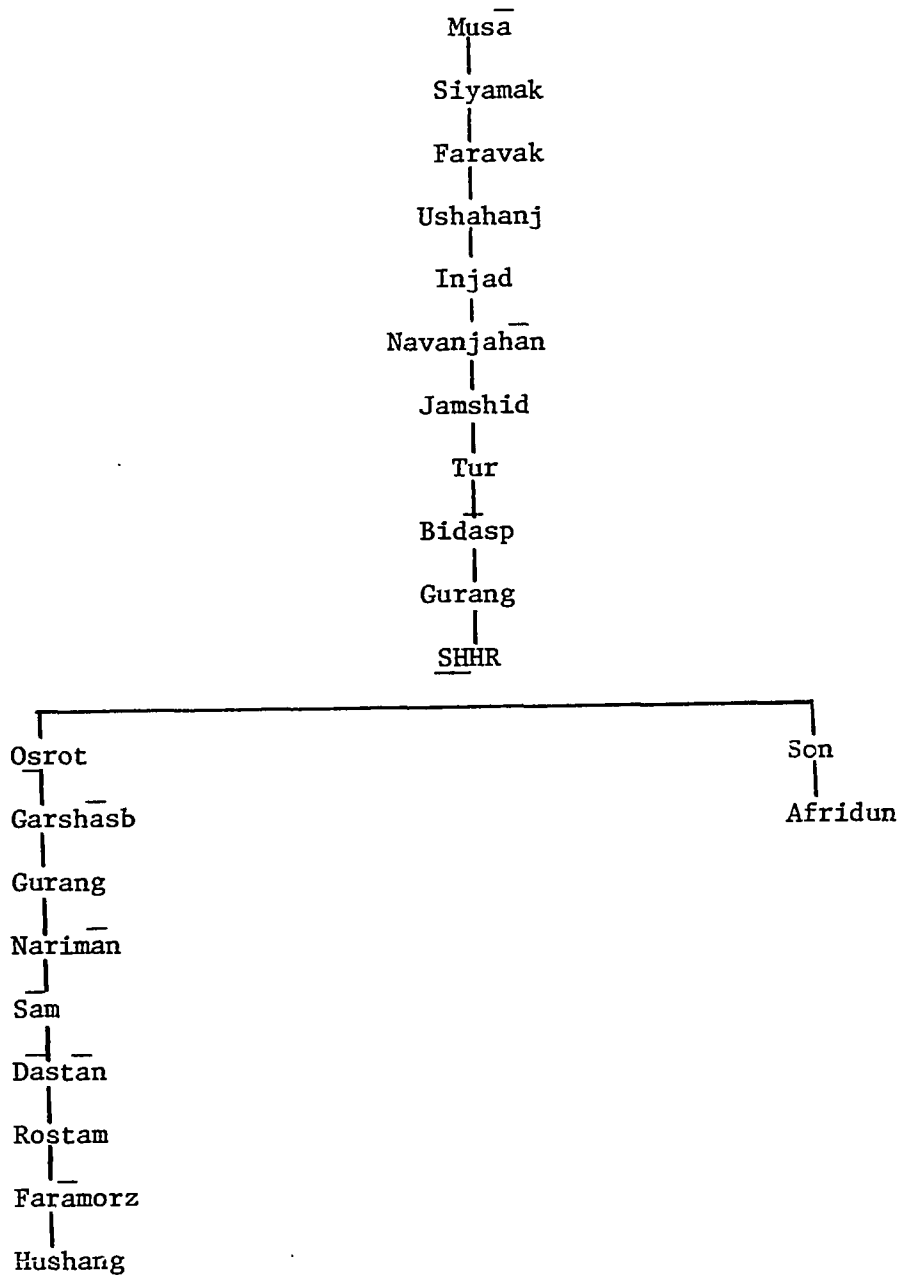


CHART X  
Tārikh-e Sīstān (Cont.)

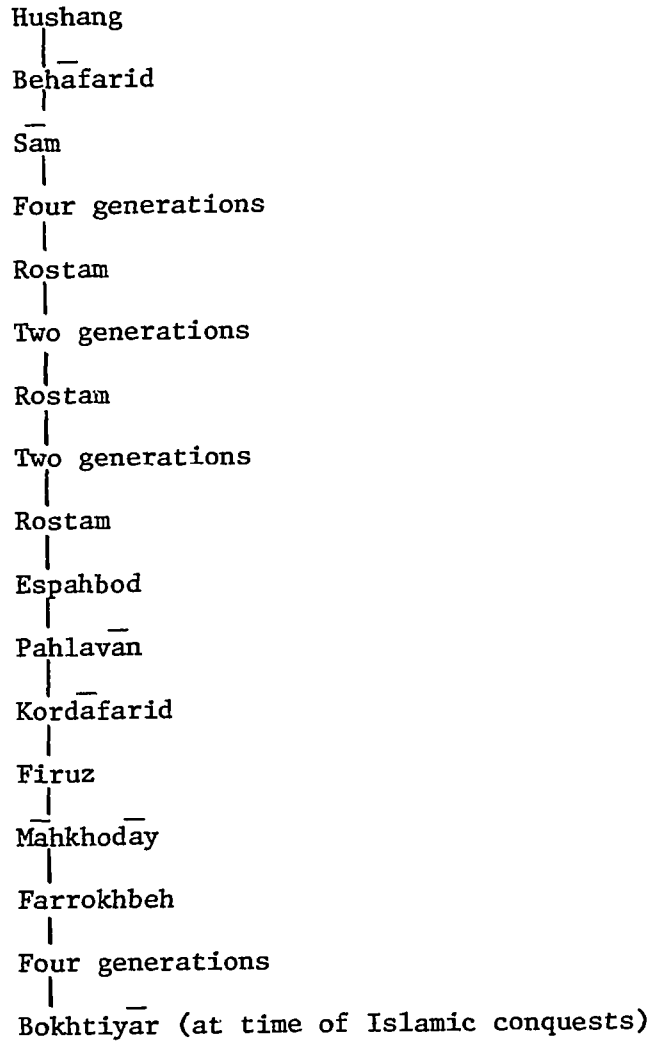


CHART XI

SISTANI - EHYA AL-MOLUK

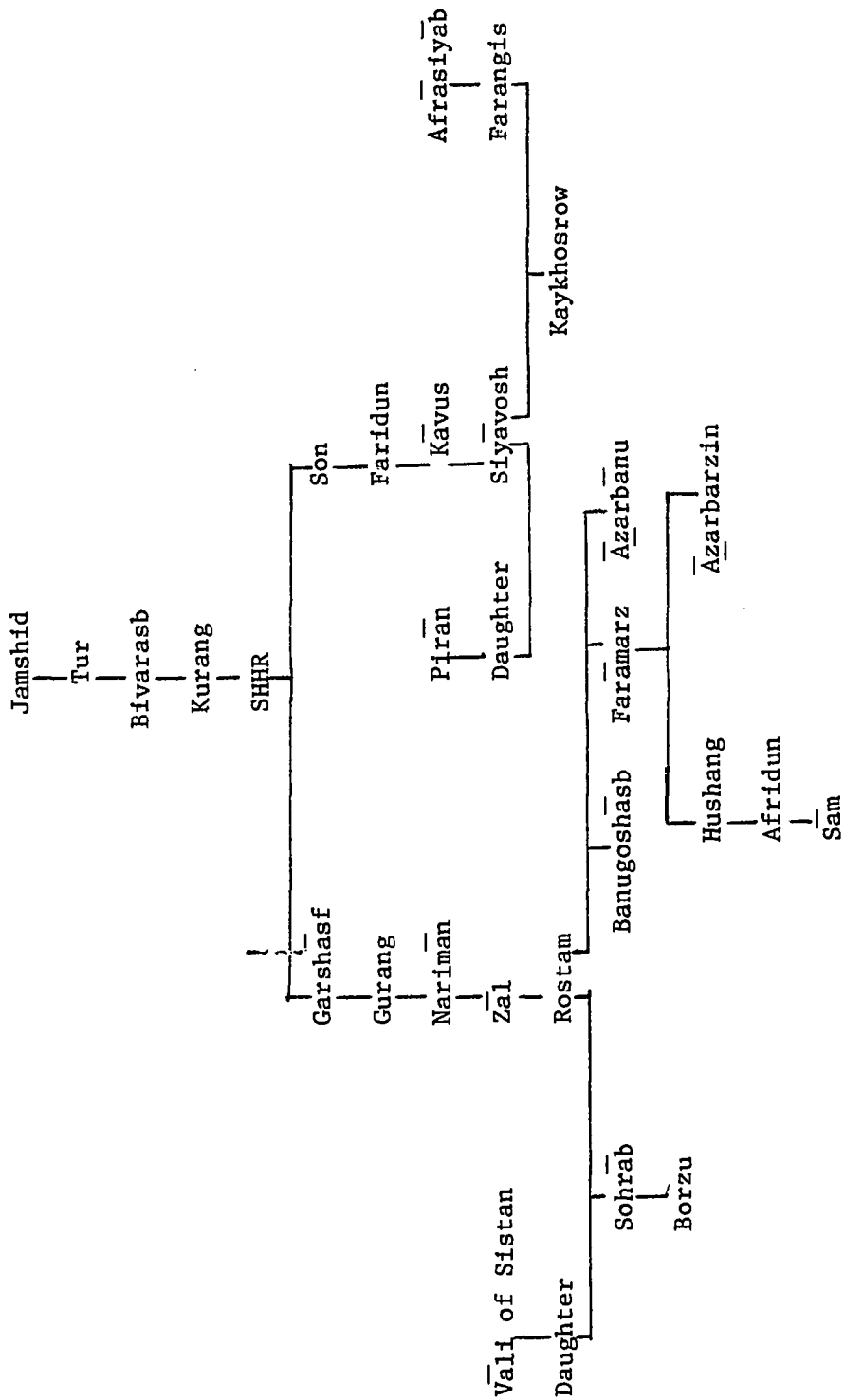


CHART XI  
Sistani - Ehya al-Moluk (Cont.)

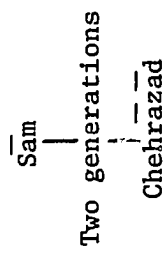


CHART XII

FERDOWSI - SHAHNAMA

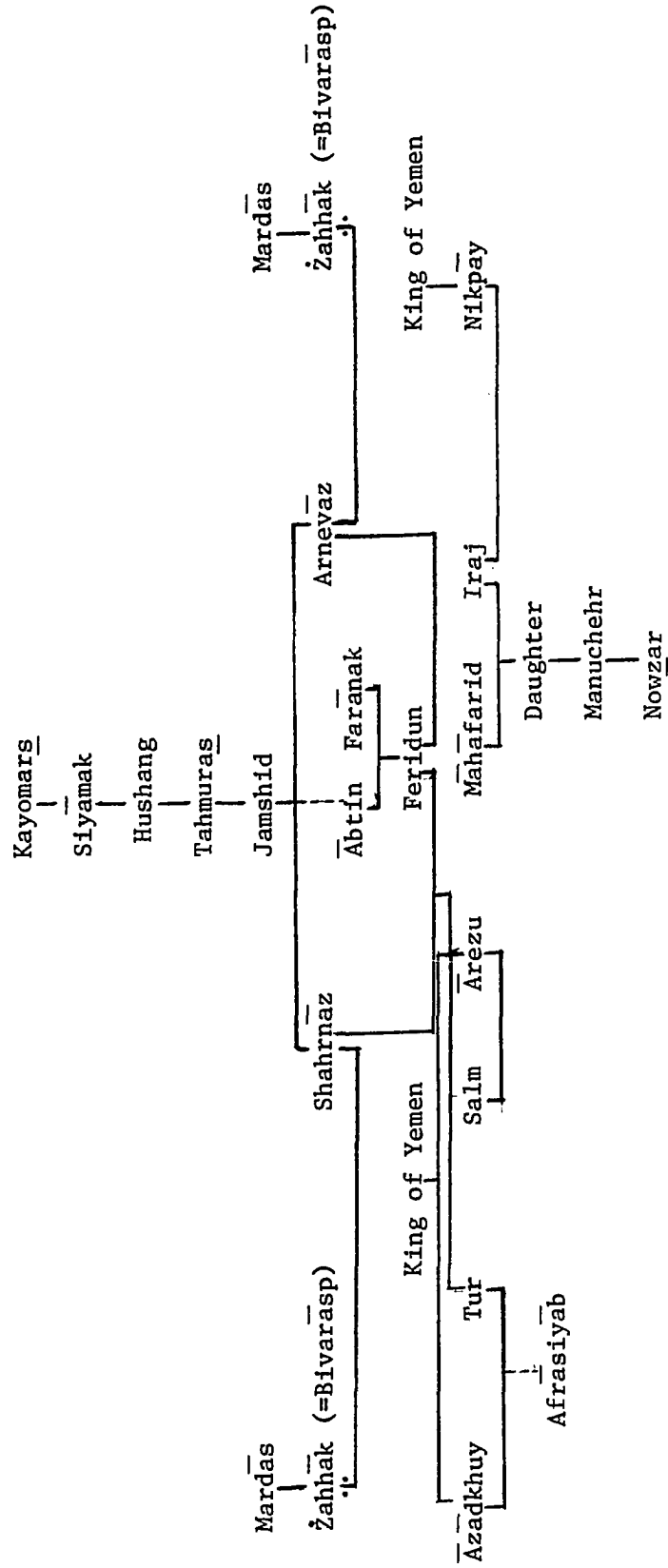


CHART XII  
Ferdowsi - Shahnama

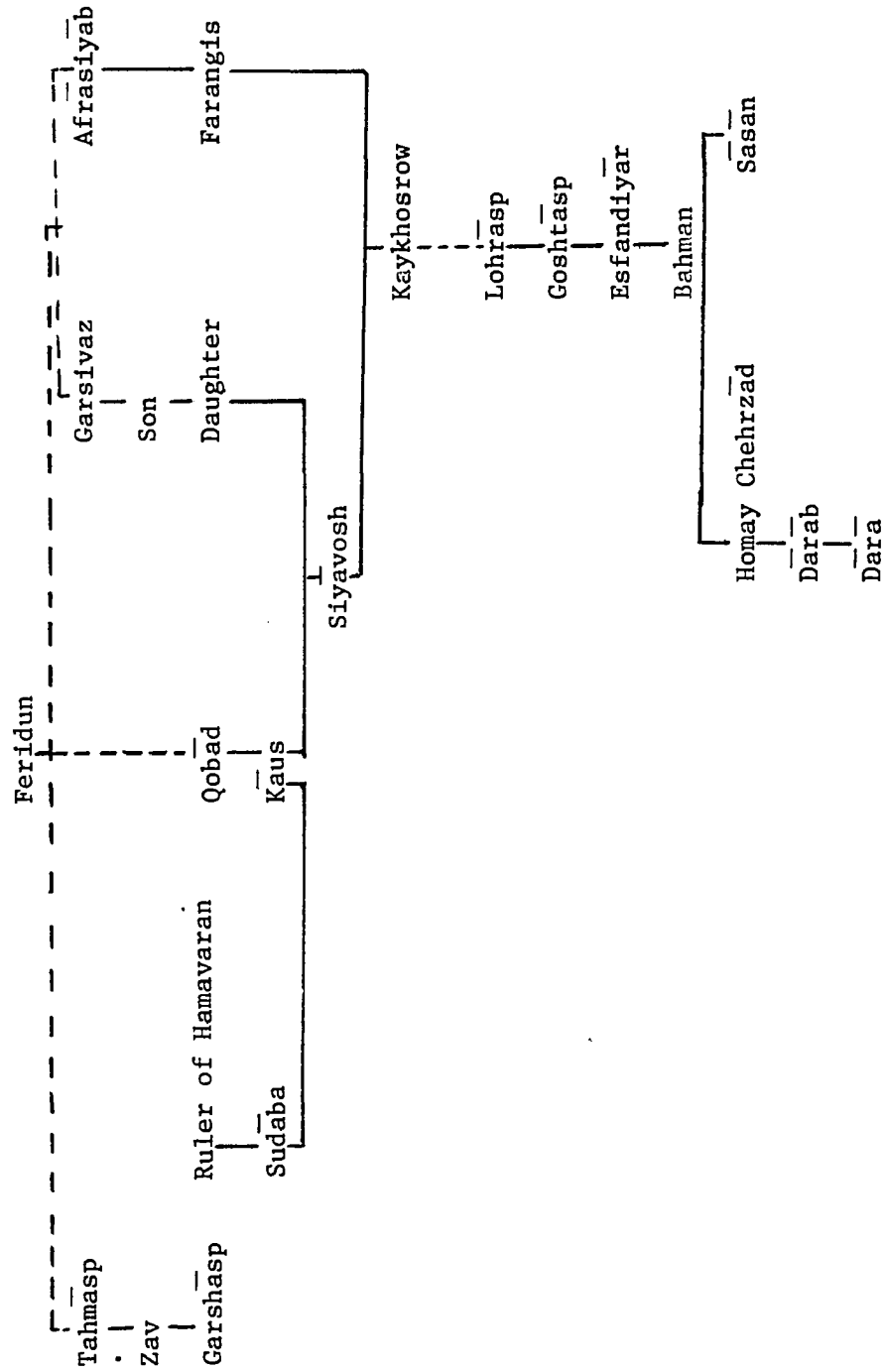


CHART XII  
Ferdowsi - Shahnama (Cont.)

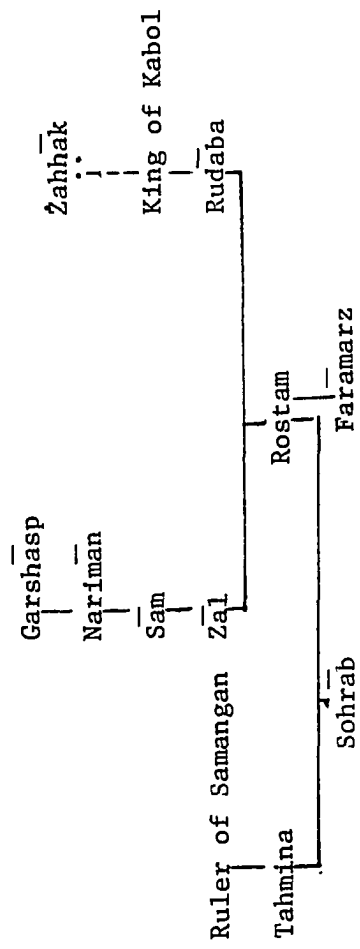




CHART XIII  
ORAL PRESENTATION OF CALI SANAKHAN

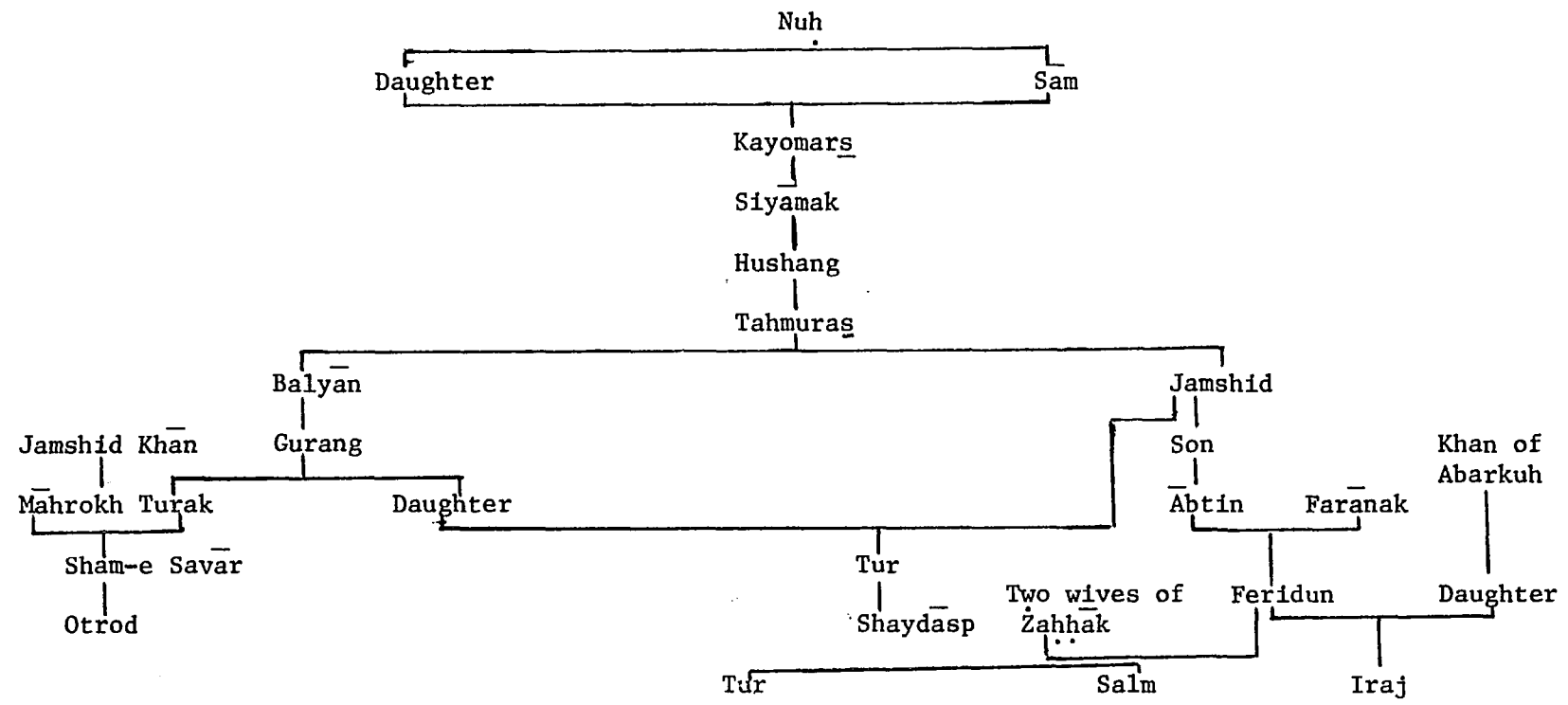


CHART XIII  
Oral Presentation of 'Ali Sanakhān (Cont.)

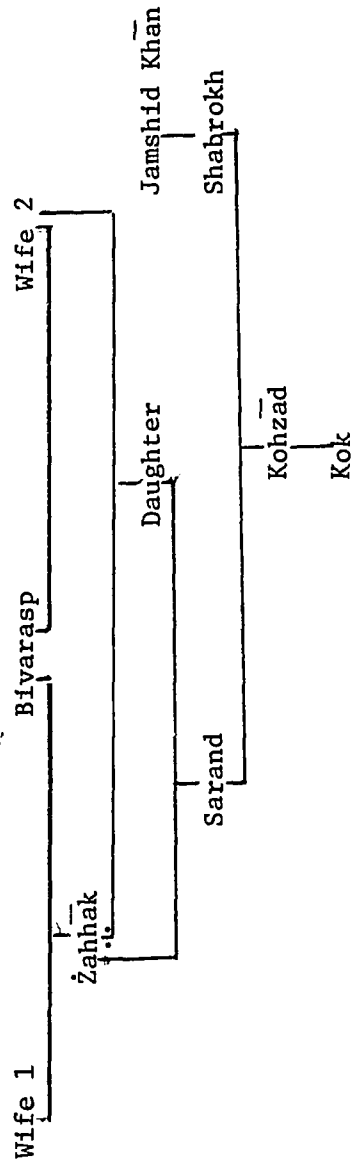
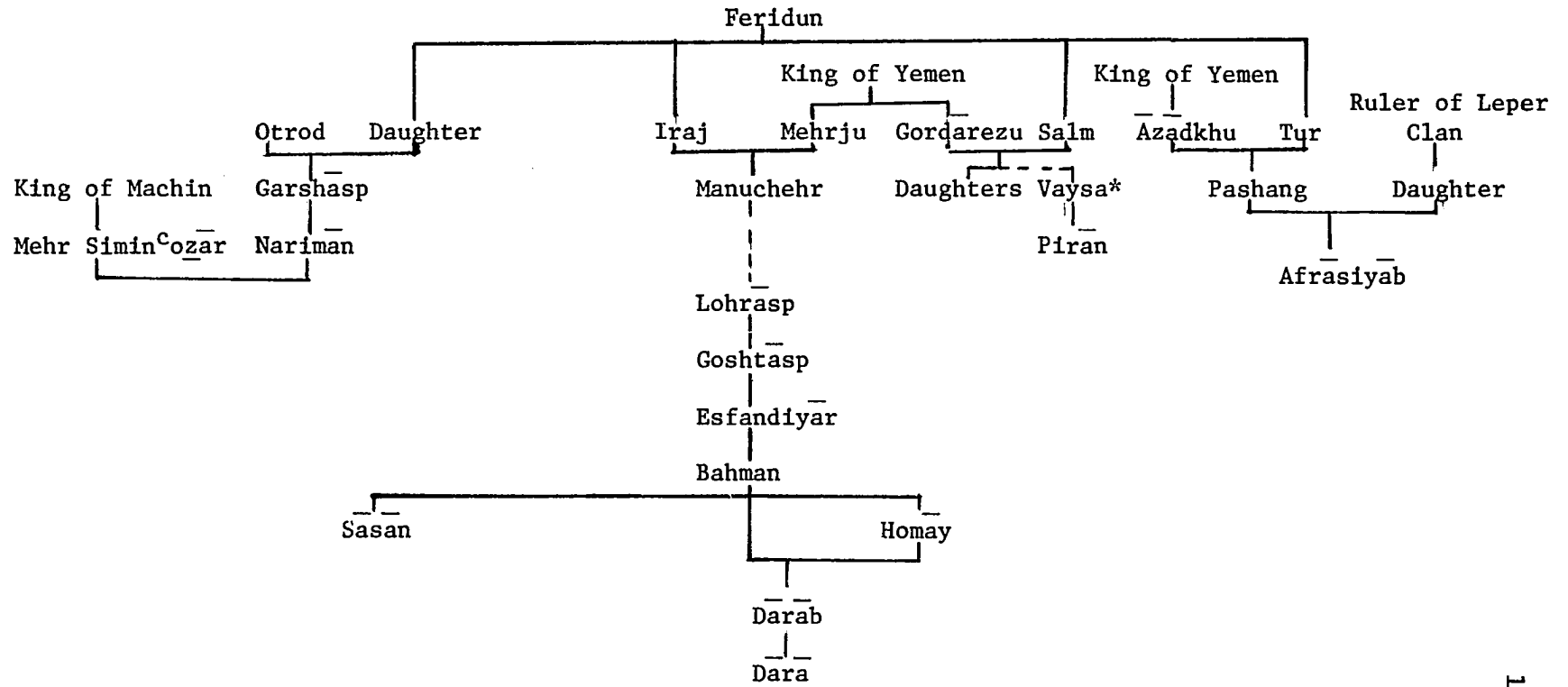
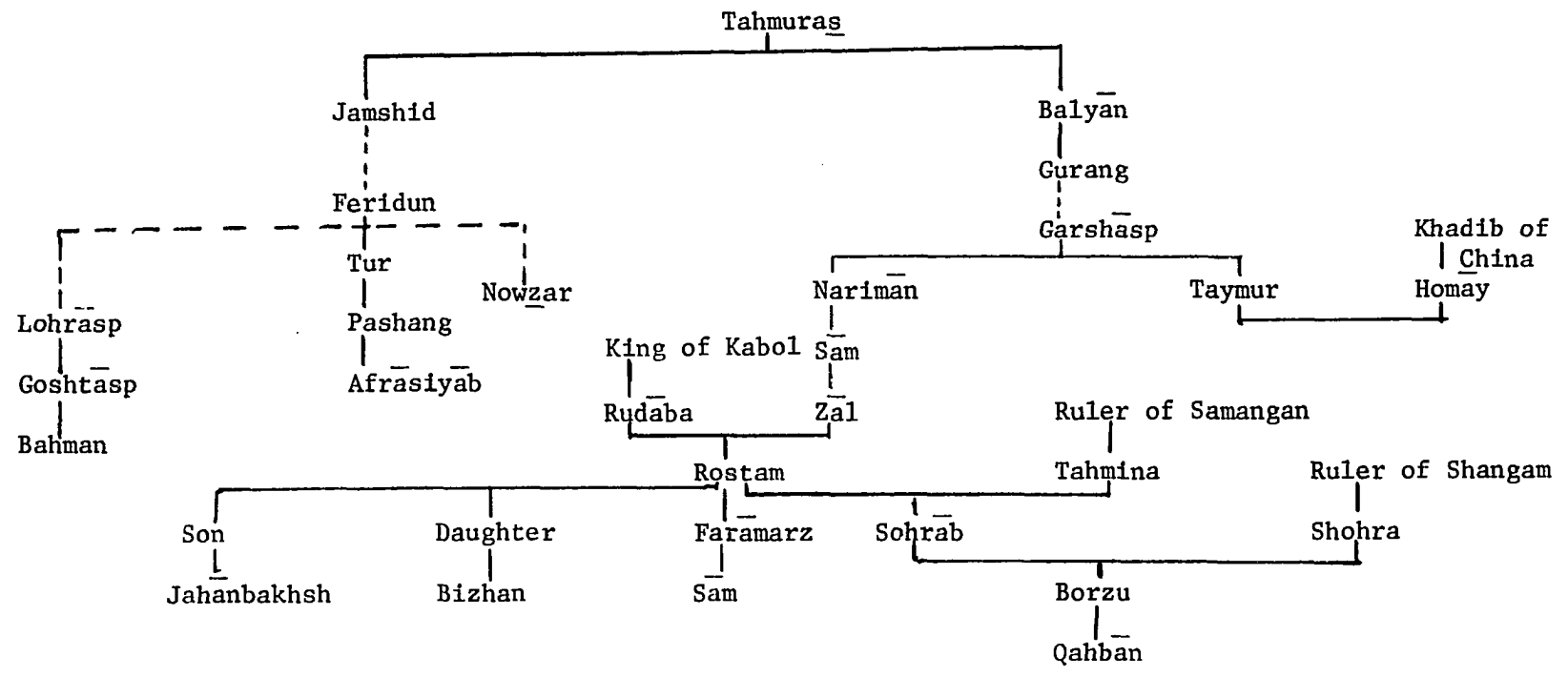


CHART XIII  
Oral Presentation of <sup>c</sup>Ali Sanākhān (Cont.)



\* Salm takes the child Vaysa from Yemen and acts as his protector.  
 Vaysa and his offspring become the viziers of the Turanians.

CHART XIV  
HABIB ALLĀH IZADKHĀSTI



One of the most obvious tendencies throughout the history of the national legend is the incorporation of Islamic motifs into the pre-Islamic material, which is by its nature religious. The telling of pre-Islamic religious stories is a problem in an Islamic country, so one solution is to incorporate elements of the new belief into the older material to legitimize the story. Some of the Islamic rescensions still retain elements of the old gods, however. In general, the way in which Islamic motifs are added is far from uniform.

Ferdowsi simply intrudes comments on Islam into his story, including an introduction bowing to the Islamic faith.<sup>69</sup> His story material remains fairly true to the pre-Islamic beliefs.

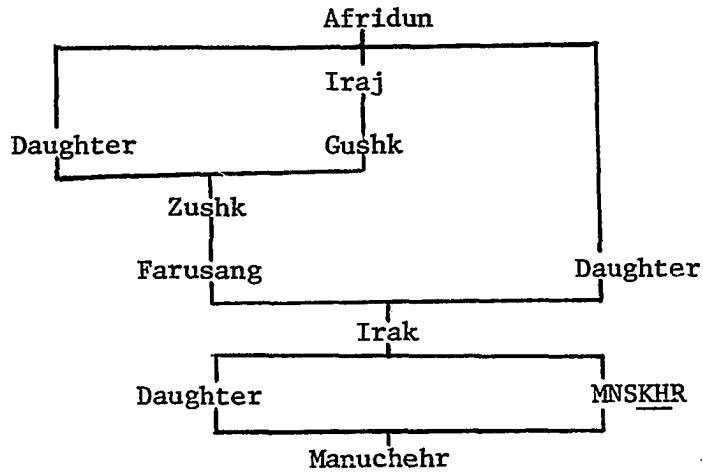
Most of the Islamic sources other than Ferdowsi add Islamic material, usually by inserting Islamic characters directly into the geneologies of the pre-Islamic figures. Dinavari, Mas<sup>c</sup>udi and Bal<sup>c</sup>ami all record Nuḥ (Noah) as the ancestor of Żaḥḥāk, probably because they regarded the Islamic faith as distinctly Arab and Żaḥḥāk is in legend an Arab king. Dinavari then makes Nimrud (Nimrod) the ancestor of the Iranian kings. Mas<sup>c</sup>udi and Sa<sup>c</sup>alebi present Kayomars (the Iranian first man) as the son of Adam (the Islamic first man). Bal<sup>c</sup>ami shows Gayomars as a descendant of Adam. The Mojmal al-Tavarikh also presents Kayomars as descended from Adam, but includes the pre-Islamic union of Kayomars with the Earth (a personification of the pre-Islamic deity Spendarmad) producing the pre-Islamic progeniteurs of man, Mashā and Mashyāna.

The Tarikh-e Sistan equates Kayomars with Adam and then derives both Moses and the Iranian kings from the one.

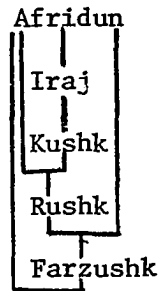
The version of <sup>c</sup>Ali Sanākhān does not return all the way to Adam, but rather begins with the flood and Noah.<sup>70</sup> Noah's son and daughter marry, taking the places of Mashā and Mashyāna, giving birth to Kayomars. As with the other sources, <sup>c</sup>Ali can continue with the pre-Islamic geneology uninterrupted by further religious characters. Where religious characters do appear, they are outside the line of descent as was Zakariyā whose judgment against Bahman has strong implications in the story. This is not to suggest that the storytellers are not greatly influenced by Islam and that Islam plays only this small part in their narratives. As has been discussed above, Islam plays a very great part in the telling of these stories in the modern context.

The second trend we will examine was touched on above, the idea of incestuous marriage. The Mojmal al-Tavarikh, Bal<sup>c</sup>ami and Biruni all retain the brother-sister marriage of Mashā and Mashyāna resulting in the offspring Siyāmak.

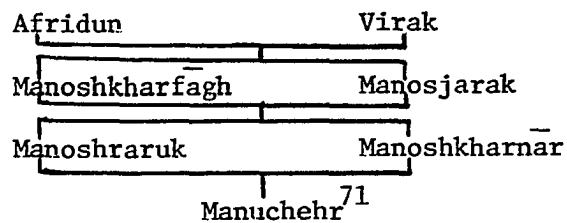
The geneology Bal<sup>c</sup>ami presents for the birth of Manuchehr is filled with unions most of which return ultimately to Afridun:



Bal<sup>c</sup>ami also offers as an alternative an elaborate system of father-daughter and brother-sister unions to produce Manuchehr. This alternative would look something like:



This pattern is repeated four more times and is followed by:



If a marriage within one's own bloodlines is seen as a strengthening influence, the elaborate system which Bal<sup>c</sup>ami presents would produce

a very strong king for Iran in Manucehr, who will restore Iran's greatness by defeating her enemies.

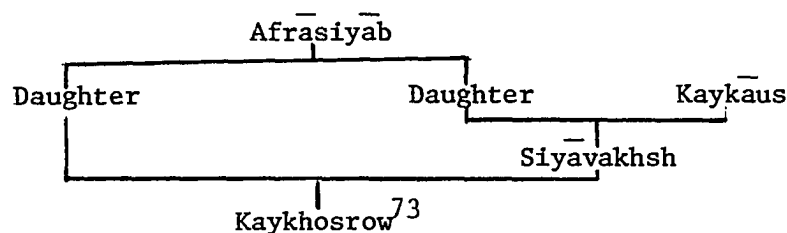
The Mojmal al-Tavarikh, Sa<sup>c</sup>alebi, the Zayn al-Akhbar, and Dinavari all record the father-daughter marriage of Bahman and Homa, as do Shahnama and the oral version of <sup>c</sup>Ali Sanakhan. This union produces Darab (or Dara) in all cases.

In the oral rescension of <sup>c</sup>Ali Sanakhan, the only brother-sister marriage recorded is the marriage between the children of Noah, Sam and his sister, which results in the first Iranian king, Kayomars. All other incestuous marriages are of the parent-child variety and are condemned. These unions, furthermore, center around evil people, not defenders of Iran. One example is Bahman's marriage to his daughter, which later becomes one of the sins of which Bahman is accused. Because the prophet Zakariya disapproves of this marriage, Bahman kills him. His killing the prophet becomes one more cause for Bahman's death. Two more parent-child marriages are between Zāhhak and his father's wife<sup>72</sup> and Zāhhak's marriage to his own daughter. The desire for the first marriage leads Zāhhak into the evil life which ultimately brings calamity to Iran. The second marriage produces the issue Sarand who becomes another source of trouble for the Iranian heroes in Zabol.

On the general topic of marriage we see a change in Islamic times from incestuous marriage to its opposite, marriage with an outsider, as being the model for producing the hero. The pre-Islamic texts show none of these characteristics, but the Islamic



texts surveyed demonstrate a trend toward viewing marriage with outsiders as propitious. The one marriage with an outsider in the Bundahishn is the marriage of Siyāvash with the daughter of Afrāsiyāb, which produces the king Kaykhosrow. This is a well-known marriage and is present in most of the texts examined. Bal<sup>c</sup>ami presents a double marriage with outsiders to produce Kaykhosrow, as follows:



Zayn al-Akhbar also has somewhat the same presentation. Sudāva is unidentified, but certainly not of the Iranian royal family. Sudāva and Kaykaūs produce Siyāvash who then marries Afrāsiyāb's daughter. Their union produces Kaykhosrow. Afrāsiyāb, incidentally, is here the son of Bashang whose relationship to the Iranian house is unclear.

Sa<sup>c</sup>alebi identifies Sudāva as So<sup>c</sup>dā (Sudāna), a foreign princess. Siyāvash's mother is a slave within Kāus' harem. This is roughly the same scheme which Ferdowsi presents. It is interesting to note that in this case the marriage with the foreign woman is the marriage which proves calamitous to the royal house.

In the Mojmal al-Tavarikh we see the beginnings of the elaborate system of marriage with outsiders which continues in the

oral stories. The important marriages are extracted from the full geneology and presented in table form below:

<u>Hero</u>	<u>Wife</u>	<u>Offspring</u>
1. Jamshid	Daughter of King of Zabol	Tur
2. Jamshid	Daughter of King of Machin	-
3. Faridun	Žahhāk's daughter	Salm and Tur
4. Garshāsf	Daughter of King of Rum	Narimān
5. Zāl	Daughter of King of Kabol	Rostam
6. Rostam	Kayqobād's aunt	Three heroes
7. Siyāvash	Afrāsiyāb's daughter	Kaykhosrow
8. Siyāvash	Turanian vizier's daughter	Forud
9. Goshtāsf	Daughter of King of Rum	Esfandiyār
10. Esfandiyār	Daughter of Talut al-Malek	Bahman
11. Bahman	Daughter of King of Egypt	Homāy and Sāsān

Habib Allāh presents the following marriages with foreign women which produce heroes or kings:

1. Zāl	Daughter of King of Kabol	Rostam
2. Rostam	Daughter of King of Samangan	Sohrāb
3. Sohrāb	Daughter of Ruler of Shangam	Borzu

Similarly, <sup>c</sup>Ali's presentation of heroic marriages is full of marriages to outsiders as tabulated below:

1. Feridun	Two wives of Žahhāk	Salm and Tur
2. Feridun	Daughter of khan of Abarkuh	Iraj
3. Iraj	Daughter of King of Yemen	Manuchehr
4. Tur	Daughter of King of Yemen	Pashang
(5. Salm	Daughter of King of Yemen	Daughters Vaysa's protector)
6. Jamshid	Daughter of the King of Zabol	Tur
7. Turak	Daughter of Tribal Khan	Sham-e Savār
8. Sarand	Daughter of Tribal Khan	Kohzād
9. Otrud	Daughter of Feridun	Garshāsp
10. Pashang	Daughter of Head of Leper Clan	Afrāsiyāb

Marriage outside one's own bloodline is the dominant type of marriage

in the oral stories of both storytellers. We have seen, however, that such marriage is not unique to the storytellers, but rather has precedents in the written sources from the very early period.

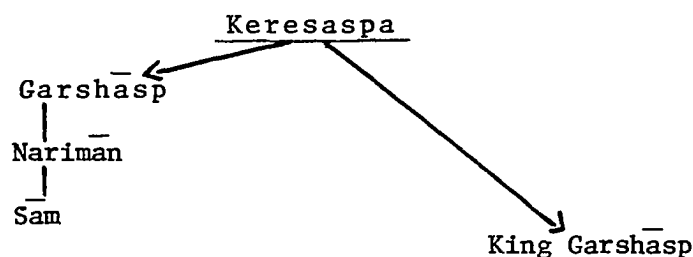
In the oral versions, however, the situation is complicated by an elaborate scheme of relating the various important houses. While there are several houses of heroes and kings which are important to the narrative, the three major houses are the Iranian royal house, the house of Zabol, and the enemy house (initially the *Žahhāk*ians and later the Turanians). In the first, fifth, and eighth of 'Ali's marriages above the marriages are within the major family groupings. A marriage between any descendant of *Žahhāk* and the Iranian royal house is impossible.<sup>74</sup> The heroes of Zabol are related by marriage to both other houses and stand in the middle between the enemy house and the Iranian royal house. An example of this situation is the marriage of the tribal khan's two daughters, one to Turak, a Zaboli hero, and the other to Sarand, *Žahhāk*'s son. These two heroes are then cousins even though they stand as direct opponents for the rule of Zabol and ultimately for the rule of Iran. Another such example is the marriage of Zal to Rudāba, a descendant of the house of *Žahhāk*, a marriage also related in Ferdowsi's work.<sup>75</sup> The Zaboli heroes can also marry freely into the family of the Iranian kings, as seen by the marriage of Otrud, the Zaboli hero, to Feridun's daughter, and the marriage of Jamshid to the daughter of the king of Zabol.

The situation of the Zaboli heroes in the legendary history of Iran is very complex and deserves some comment.<sup>76</sup> Of this house

only Keresaspa (Garshāsp) appears in the Avesta, but he appears as a king. In the Shahnama two Garshāsp's appear: a king and a hero who is the ancestor of the Zaboli heroes. The manner of this division has attracted much attention.

Molé concentrates on explaining how Garshāsp's character has split into two parts. He sees the explanation in the fact that Garshāsp is both a king in the Avesta and represents the warrior class.<sup>77</sup> Therefore Garshāsp can continue to play much the same role as a hero as he has in Zoroastrian tradition even though his attachment to a non-royal house precludes his becoming king.<sup>78</sup> The other characters and exploits, says Molé, have an historical background coming from legends surrounding warlike dynasties in Sistan in Parthian and Sasanian times. The exploits of these dynasties have been projected back into ancient times.<sup>79</sup>

Nöldeke notes that in the Zoroastrian tradition Sam is actually the same person as Garshāsp, so that Garshāsp has again become two people within the heroic lineage.<sup>80</sup> Furthermore, Nariman is also one of the descriptive terms used for Garshāsp.<sup>81</sup> In fact, the one character of Keresaspa accounts for a king as well as three heroes in the Zaboli geneology as follows:



Nöldeke also suggests that Ithrit (Otrod) might be identified as a Zoroastrian hero, but the identification is uncertain.<sup>82</sup> In short, the only two Zaboli heroes who are unrelated to the Zoroastrian tradition are Rostam and Zāl. The characters of these two heroes, Nöldeke points out, are different from the Zoroastrian heroes, being surrounded by all kinds of magical motifs. These two heroes are localized in Sistan, an area unknown to the Avesta and are without doubt later accretions to the heroic line above. It also appears, on the other hand, that these two heroes were added in very early times since they are already well-integrated in Sasanian times.<sup>83</sup> The fact that Rostam and Zāl are localized in Sistan implies that they were part of a local (Saka) heroic cycle.<sup>84</sup>

Ferdowsi includes both Garshasps in his Shāhnāma, the king and the hero. He introduces Garshasp as the hero leader into Iran's army, attempting no resolution of the two houses. Gradually the attention of his epic shifts to the heroes of Zabol and away from the kings.<sup>85</sup>

The authors of the Islamic histories are confused as to where the Zaboli heroes actually belong in their line of rule. Gardizi, Sa<sup>c</sup>ālebi and Mas<sup>c</sup>udi introduced the Zaboli heroes as unrelated figures in much the same way as did Ferdowsi. Bal<sup>c</sup>ami relates the house of Zabol to Jamshid through a marriage, also in <sup>c</sup>Ali's version, of Jamshid to the daughter of the king of Zabolestan. The author of the Mojmal al-Tavarikh uses the same marriage to explain the appearance of the Zaboli heroes.<sup>86</sup> The author of the Tarikh-e Sistan is utterly confused, adding numerous Rostams

and Sams to fill out a table which he wants to reach to the Islamic conquests. Biruni presents the Zaboli heroes as descended directly from Manuchehr.

Biruni is not alone in his relating the Zaboli heroes directly to the royal Iranian house. The authors of the Tarikh-e Sistan and the Ehya al-Muluk present a version similar to the oral versions in their attempt to place the heroes of Zabol on an equal geneological footing with the Iranian royal house. Both these authors introduce an ancestor, descended directly from Jamshid and the royal Iranian house, named SHHR. This ancestor has two sons, one carrying on the line of the Iranian kings and the other generating the heroes of Zabol. The author of the Tarikh-e Sistan centers all his attention on the heroes, neglecting the kings. Sistani on the other hand presents a continuing geneology from both figures.

The oral versions of both Habib Allah and Ali record just such a division. The royal bloodline splits immediately after Tahmuras who has two sons. These two sons, Balyan and Jamshid, are given a chance to prove their worth to their father. Jamshid demonstrates wisdom and spirituality. To him Tahmuras gives the rule of Iran (saltanat-e mamlakat). Balyan shows himself to be an organizer and courageous. He is therefore given the military command of Iran (sepahsalar-i-e mamlakat) and the rule of Zabol. In this way, the storytellers provide two equal houses. Neither can command the other, but the house of Zabol is directed always to protect the kings of Iran.

None of these three divisions of the royal house of Iran is surprising. This trend may be traced back in several of the other histories examined. Several sources give Jamshid a brother. Even in the Bundahishn Takhmorasp (Tahmuras) is the brother of Yim (Jamshid).<sup>87</sup> Although Mas<sup>c</sup>udi does not account for the heroes of Zabol, he does present Tahmuras and Jamshid as brothers, the sons of Nowbejahan. Tahmuras' line disappears.<sup>88</sup> Bal<sup>c</sup>ami makes Jamshid and Tahmuras the sons of Hushang.<sup>89</sup> The Mojmal al-Tavarikh gives Jamshid and Tahmuras as brothers, descended from Ushhanj (Hushang).<sup>90</sup> Hamza of Isfahan and Biruni tell us that Jamshid and Tahmuras were brothers and the sons of Vivanjahan (surely the same as Nowbejahan).<sup>91</sup>

In short, what appears to have happened is the continuation of one line through Tahmuras, and a substitution of another character for Tahmuras as the brother of Jamshid. From this substituted character comes the line of Zaboli heroes. From Jamshid come the Iranian kings. Given the range of possibilities for dealing with these heroes, this tradition has constructed a system of descent which explains the great importance of the Zaboli heroes (almost equal to that of the kings), and one which wholly integrates a foreign tradition.

We can see much of the basic plot movement of the narrative as told by the storytellers within the structure of the geneologies. Initially there is only one line of descent. This one line, however, accounts for only part of the session of one day of <sup>c</sup>Ali's story. The one line rapidly divides into two equal lines. The

usurper  $\dot{Z}ahhak$  is then added with a descending line which continues through the early period of the Iranian-Turanian wars.<sup>92</sup> So, within the first session, each of the three major houses has been accounted for.

By the time of the wars between the Iranians and Turanians, the  $\dot{Z}ahhakian$  line has disappeared and the third house is that of the Turanians under Pashang and his son Afrasiyab. This line is related to the house of Iranian kings in all the sources. Inter-marriage occurs between this house and the house of Iran only once. This marriage is that of Kaykaus' son Siyavash to Afrasiyab's daughter and results in more wars between Iran and Turan.

The three houses develop more or less independently from the time of Kaykhusrow until Rostam defeats Esfandiyar and takes charge of raising Esfandiyar's son Bahman. When Bahman becomes king, he destroys the house of Zabol in revenge for his father's death. The heroes who are left in the house of Zabol which was once equal to the Iranian royal house, are then taken in as retainers of Bahman. At this point in the story there is really only one house of significance left, that of the Iranian kings. The cycle has come full circle to one royal line again. The story ends at this point, summing up briefly the descendents of Bahman and the coming defeat of Iran at the hands of Alexander the Great. As long as the storyteller has several different story lines, dealing with the various houses, he can weave a complex story. He intertwines episodes dealing with alternate houses and need



never worry about solving the problems in all the episodes at one time. There is always something left over to attract the audience the next day. When all the other houses disappear leaving only one, the story closes quite naturally.

There have been trends toward change within the development of the Iranian national legend throughout the Islamic period, continuing still today. There have been changes in the optimum type of marriage for a hero, from marriage within one's own family (including incestuous marriages) to its opposite, marriage with a person outside one's bloodlines (particularly a non-Iranian).

While it is impossible to know the reasons for the apparent changes in dominant marriage types, there appear to be two forces at work, both tied to the religious situation in Iran. First, unlike the pre-Islamic faith, Islam has a very strong taboo against incest,<sup>93</sup> so that a change from incestuous marriages would be advantageous in an Islamic country. This explanation, however, does not take into account the introduction of marriage with complete outsiders which is not the most favored kind of marriage in Islamic Iran.<sup>94</sup> On the other hand, the motifs surrounding these marriages with outsiders are common in Iranian folktales and romantic fiction. The second force, then, is release of the pre-Islamic material from religious context. The texts we have from the pre-Islamic period are all religious codifications worked out by priests. It may be that the versions in such texts as the Bundahishn and Denkard are the result of conscious attempts to adhere strictly to a religious

version, excluding any motifs seen to be accretions from secular sources, such as folktales. Once the Shāhnāma material became secular after the advent of Islam, other versions (which may have existed all along) were able to surface.

In terms of the heroes in the Shāhnāma stories, the later versions present the outsider marriage in preference to the incestuous marriage. In fact, this preference is so marked that the marriage gives a clue to the kind of offspring which will be produced. In the pre-Islamic texts the hero is virtually always the result of an incestuous marriage while such marriage in the Islamic period ends only in calamity. On the other hand, virtually all great heroes and kings in the Islamic period are the result of marriages with outsiders.

The introduction of the second strain of pre-Islamic material, the stories of the Zaboli heroes, has also been incorporated totally into the story line. Unlike the Islamic material which is only introduced superficially, the Zaboli strain is completely incorporated with the story line.

As we have seen in the discussion, a close examination of the geneologies presented in the oral versions reveals more than relationships between people. The basic story line appears, dividing into various houses and recombining finally into one line again. With disappearance of all but the royal Iranian house, the Shāhnāma cycle comes to an end. As long as the storyteller has characters from each of the various houses to describe, interweaving the

the stories with one another, he will continue telling the Shāhnāma.  
When he has only one line to deal with, the Shāhnāma is finished.

It is even clearer now that the national tradition is developing and changing. Each of the texts examined here may be seen as a point on a continuing line reflecting on the one hand the variant forms of the story line available to the compilers, and on the other hand the personal interpretation of the compiler himself. This is particularly true of the later sources. Even though the Shāhnāma of Ferdowsi, and all other sources for the national tradition, were surely available to Sistāni in the sixteenth century, as they are to today's storytellers, he chose to present his own version rather than adhere to one of the literary versions.

## D

Conclusions

In this chapter we have examined several aspects of the unity and diversity in the national tradition of Iran. These aspects included the stability within the storytelling tradition, as represented by comparisons between storytellers and tumār̄s, the effect of Ferdowsi's literary epic on the oral stories, and the place of the oral stories within the national tradition.

Although there is unity within the storytelling tradition, it is apparent that the unity is not a result of reliance upon Ferdowsi's work. Despite the testimony of the storytellers and audience members themselves, storytellers tell their own versions of the Shāhnāmā while being thoroughly familiar with the literary epic. If there is a written source which confers stability on the storytellers' versions, that source is the tumār̄. A storyteller's version and that of his own tumār̄ are not greatly more similar than a storyteller's version and that of the tumār̄ of another storyteller. The stabilizing influence of the tumār̄, however, does not mean that the storyteller has no room for creativity. The tumār̄ provides only a skeleton which the storyteller fills out in the ways best suited to his own interpretation of the material.

Besides differences in the material presented, we have seen that the oral stories are arranged in a manner different from the Shāhnāmā of Ferdowsi. This arrangement involves a much more convoluted

scheme of intertwining episodes, and a continual shift from one sequence of actions to another. This difference and the difference in the storyteller's role between Ferdowsi's work and the oral stories are accounted for in the genre designations epic and romance. Although the participants in the storytelling performance make no distinction between the oral and written versions, we can view Ferdowsi's work as epic and the oral stories as romance, according to the criteria discussed in part B of this chapter.

By comparing Ferdowsi's work and the oral stories with other sources for the national legend, certain trends of change in the national tradition are apparent. Some of these trends are at least partially explained by historical changes within Iran. Some trends, such as the tendency to include Islamic material in the stories, still remain superficial. The Islamization of the stories is best seen in such devices as we examined in the previous chapter. On the other hand, some trends, such as the inclusion of the Zaboli heroes, and the exclusion of *Zahhāk*'s line from the Iranian genealogy have been totally effected.

It becomes more and more apparent that there has never been one version of the Shāhnāma. Throughout the Islamic period authors presented their own version of the national legend. Even up to the sixteenth century, there were authors who did not rely totally on earlier written sources. Just as Ferdowsi chose the material which he wished to present in his epic from a mass of material which must have been available to him, the storytellers are not confined

only to Ferdowsi's version. They choose the material which they wish to present and interpret it as they best see fit. All of the versions, including the oral versions, represent points on a continuing line of the national tradition, which remains creative up to the present time.<sup>95</sup>

## Notes

1. The relationship between the rowza and the literary work entitled Rowzat al-Shohadā has been discussed above (see pages 112-14). It should also be noted that, unlike the Shāhnāma, Habib Allāh, at least, did not use the Rowzat al-Shohadā at all.
2. See Mohammad Qazvini, Bist Maqāla, ed. ʿAbbās Eqbāl, 2 vols. (Teheran: 1332/1953), 2:7 (hereafter Qazvini).
3. Zabiḥ Allāh Safa, Hamāsa Sara'i dar Irān [Epic Writing in Iran] (Teheran: 1333/1954), p. 98 et. seq. (hereafter cited as Hamāsa) and Qazvini, 2:12.
4. See Hamāsa, p. 99. Also see Qazvini, 2:12-16 who considers these to be distinct works.
5. The text of the Introduction has been edited and published by Qazvini and is included in his Bist Maqāla, 2:30-90. The introduction was first published in the Hazāra-e Ferdowsi (Teheran:1323/1954). It is translated by Valdimir Minorsky in his Iranica (Teheran: 1964), 260-73.
6. Qazvini (text of Introduction), 2:34.
7. Shāhnāma 1:20-24, lines 119-77.
8. See for example M. Molé, "L'épopée iranienne après Firdosi," La Nouvelle Clío 5 (1953), p. 379 (hereafter Molé).
9. An example of this overlay of Islam over the pre-Islamic Iranian traditions may be seen in the introductory sections of the Shāhnāma. Ferdowsi includes praise for Mohammed and his followers in a section on the creation of the world which is not Islamic. See Shāhnāma 1:12-20, lines 1-118.
10. On the problem of orality with regard to the Shāhnāma, see Marcia Maguire, "Oral Tradition in the Shāhnāmah," paper read at the Middle East Studies Association Conference, Denver, 1971, 8 pages. Also see Amin Banani, "Ferdowsi and the Art of Tragic Epic," in Islam and its Cultural Divergence, ed. G. Tikku (Urbana: 1971), p. 7.
11. On the development of the writing of epics after Ferdowsi, see Molé, pp. 377-93.
12. See Le Livre de Gerchasp, ed. and trans. Clement Huart

(Paris: 1926), and trans. H. Massé (Paris: 1951) and ed. Ḥabib Yaghmā'i. On the epic see Molé, pp. 380-38 and Hamāsa, pp. 283-89.

13. See Molé, p. 384 and Hamāsa, pp. 294-96.
14. See Molé, p. 384, and Hamāsa, pp. 303-10.
15. The authorship is questionable. See Jan Rypka, History of Iranian Literature (Dordrecht, Holland, 1968), p. 163.
16. See Molé, p. 384, and Hamāsa, pp. 289-94.
17. Molé, pp. 384-85, and Hamāsa, pp. 311-15.
18. See Molé, p. 384 and Hamāsa, pp. 300-02.
19. Molé, pp. 385-86, and Hamāsa, pp. 296-300.
20. See Hamāsa, p. 325 on the author.
21. See Molé, p. 385, and Hamāsa, pp. 324-35.
22. Molé, pp. 383-84, and Hamāsa, pp. 335-40.
23. Hamāsa, p. 375.
24. Molé, p. 380 quotes the Mojmal al-Tavarikh (for the Mojmal al-Tavarikh see below, note 63).
25. I have only parts of <sup>C</sup>Ali's tumar xeroxed in my possession.
26. My findings as to storytellers not using prompts are, however, contrary to those presented in Stephen Blum, "The Concept of the <sup>C</sup>Asheq in Northern Khorasan," Asian Music, 4 (1972): 28-29. The use of a prompt, in my experience, appears to be a purely personal choice.
27. This incomplete tumar is in the possession of William L. Hanaway, Jr. of the University of Pennsylvania.
28. Ḥabib Allāh told the Rostam and Sohrāb story from the fourteenth of February to the twenty-sixth of February but did not finish the entire story before he left Shiraz. The story should have taken about two to three weeks more to complete.
29. The tumar gives sur-āb [سورآب]. Perhaps it should be taken to be shur-āb [شورآب] which would mean "salty water."
30. For the reign of Bahman see Shāhnāma 6:343-53.



31. For the Rostam and Sohrāb story, see Shāhnāma 2:169-250.
32. Shāhnāma 2:176-82, lines 98-172.
33. Shāhnāma 2:177-78, lines 115-17.
34. See Hamasa, p. 280. This is a common ending to the Bahman story. See also Malek Shah Hosayn b. Malek Ghiyās al-Dīn Mohammad b. Shāh Mahmud Sīstāni, Ehyā al-Moluk (Teheran: 1344/1965), pp. 44-45 which greatly resembles the oral story version. See also Sayyed Abu 'l-Qāsem Anjavi, Mardom va Shāhnāma [The People and the Shāhnāma], (Teheran: 1354/1975), pp. 217-18.
35. Shāhnāma 6:354, line 1.
36. See Ruth Finnegan, "How Oral is Oral Literature?" Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies 37 (1974), 52-64 for a discussion of the coexistence of oral and written literature in the same society.
37. See Tzvetan Todorov, The Fantastic in Fiction: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre (Cleveland: 1973), p. 8. Todorov views the value of genre in just this way: "Genres are precisely those relay points by which the work assumes a relation with the universe of literature."
38. See Dan Ben-Amos, "Analytic Categories and Ethnic Genres," Genre 2 (1969), p. 295. Ben-Amos makes a strong case for the importance of ethnic significance for genre designation. See also Frederick Jameson, "Magical Narratives: Romance as Genre," New Literary History 7 (1975), p. 135, who also identifies genres as societally determined "institutions" which mark speech with "certain indications and signals as to how it is properly to be used."
39. See pages 214-15 below.
40. Northrup Frye considers the nature of the character's power of action to be of critical importance in the determination of the "mode" and, by extension, the genre. See Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton: 1957), pp. 33-34.
41. Eugéne Vinaver, "From Epic to Romance," Bulletin of the John Rylands Library 46 (1964), p. 477 (hereafter "From Epic to Romance").
42. "From Epic to Romance," p. 486. See also Eugéne Vinaver The Rise of Romance (New York: 1971), pp. 1-14 (hereafter Rise of Romance).

43. "From Epic to Romance," p. 486.
44. Rise of Romance, p. 76.
45. Rise of Romance, p. 80.
46. Rise of Romance, p. 17, and "From Epic to Romance," p. 490.
47. "From Epic to Romance," p. 493.
48. "From Epic to Romance," p. 495.
49. "From Epic to Romance," p. 488.
50. Ehya al-Moluk, pp. 44-45. See also pages Anjavi's version includes similar lines.
51. Ehya al-Moluk, p. 46.
52. See Edmund Leach, "The Legitimacy of Solomon: Some Structural Aspects of Old Testament History," Archives europeennes de sociologie 7 (1966), pp. 58-101.
53. Ibid., p. 82.
54. See for example Lord Raglan, The Hero: A Study in Tradition, Myth, and Drama (London: 1936), pp. 62-63 and 193. Also see Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces (New York: 1949).
55. On the problem of dealing with various rescensions of material as a continuing whole rather than imperfect reflections of the "real" myth, see Dan Sperber, Le Structuralisme en anthropologie (Paris: 1968), pp. 50-51, and Edmund Leach, "Genesis as Myth," Discovery 23 (1962), p. 35.
56. Some work has been done on the differences between written sources of the national tradition. These include Ferdinand Justi, Altiranisches Namenbuch (Marburg: 1895), in particular pp. 390-96 where he charts genealogical relationships according to the pre-Islamic tradition (hereafter Justi); Theodor Nöldeke, "Das Iranische Nationalepos," in Grundriss der Iranische Philologie, ed. Ch. Bartolomae, et. al., 2 vols. (Strassberg: 1895-1904), 2:130-211, (hereafter Nöldeke), and trans. L. Bogdanov, Journal of the K.R. Cama Oriental Institute 6 (1925), pp. 1-161; and Arthur Christensen, Les Kayanides (Paris: 1932), esp. pp. 35-146 (hereafter Christensen). While these writers provide elaborate and valuable detail about the national tradition, they are primarily interested in tracing material from the Shahnama of Ferdowsi back into pre-Islamic times rather

than forward into times after Shāhnāma.

57. See Bundahishn, trans. E.W. West in Sacred Books of the East, vol. 11 (New York: 1901), pp. 52-136.

58. Denkard, trans. P.D.B. Sanjana (Bombay: 1881), 3 vols., 2:92-93.

59. Al-Akhbar al-Teval, ed. <sup>c</sup>Abd al-Mon<sup>c</sup>am <sup>c</sup>Amer (Cairo: 1960), pp. 4-29.

60. Tarikh-e Bal<sup>c</sup>ami, ed. M.T. Bahar (Teheran: 1341/1963), pp. 112-50 for Gayomars to Feridun; pp. 342-49 for Manuchehr to Afrasiyab's rule over Iran; pp. 519-699 for Zav to Alexander.

61. Les Prairies d'or; texte et traduction, ed., and trans. C.A.C. Barbier de Meynard and A.J.B. Pavet de Courteille, 9 vols. (Paris: 1861-77), 2:105-51, also reprint, 5 vols. (Beirut: 1965), 1:260-74.

62. Tarikh Senni Moluk al-Arż va 'l-Anbiya (Beirut: 1961), pp. 14-39.

63. Mojmal al-Tavarikh va 'l-Qesas, ed. M.T. Bahar (Teheran: 1313/1939), pp. 13-58.

64. Ghorur Akhbar Moluk al-Fors va Siyarehem, ed. and trans. H. Zotenberg (Paris: 1900), reprint (Teheran: 1963), pp. 1-411.

65. Al-Asar al-Baqiya <sup>c</sup>an al-Qorun al-Khaliya, ed. C. Eduard Sachau (Leipzig: 1923), pp. 99-112.

66. Zayn al-Akhbar, ed. <sup>c</sup>Abd al-Hayy Habibi (Teheran: 1347/1968), pp. 1-16.

67. Tarikh-e Sistan, ed. M.T. Bahar (Teheran: 1314/1935), pp. 2-8.

68. Ehya al-Moluk, pp. 23-46.

69. See Shāhnāma 1:12-20.

70. The flood tradition in Islam is much the same as it is in the Judeo-Christian tradition, which makes it a good place to begin a recreation of the world. See Koran X;47-75.

71. Bal<sup>c</sup>ami, p. 603.

72. This wife is not Zāhhak's mother. Nonetheless the marriage

has an incestuous tone about it. It may be worth noting that the marriage of mother to son is the only incestuous union not represented.

73. Bal<sup>c</sup>ami, p. 603.

74. The daughters of Zāhḥak, married by Feridun elsewhere, are, in the oral stories, wives of Zāhḥak. This is also the case in Ferdowsi, where they are also the daughters of Jamshid. See Shahnama 1:51, lines 9-10. Here too we see the tendency to leave Zāhḥāk out of any geneological relationship to the Iranian kings although he had been included in pre-Islamic texts.

75. Shahnama 1:159-91.

76. See for example Justi, pp. 280, 225, 161-2 and 391. Here he examines the introduction of the Zaboli line into the history of Iran's kings.

77. Molé, p. 382.

78. Molé, p. 383.

79. Molé, p. 383.

80. Nöldeke, p. 138.

81. Justi, p. 225.

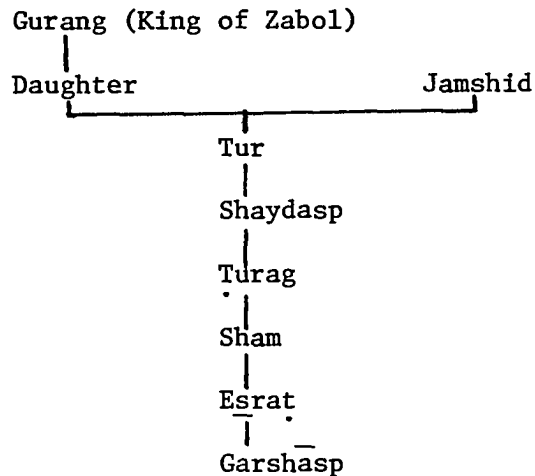
82. Nöldeke, p. 138.

83. Nöldeke, pp. 139-40.

84. Nöldeke, p. 139.

85. Shahnama 1:116, line 620. Beginning with the birth of Zal more and more of Ferdowsi's attention is directed toward the Zaboli house.

86. Also see the Garshaspnāma, ed. Habib Yaghma'i, pp. 21-49 which gives the following geneology for Garshāsp:



87. Bundahishn, p. 59.

88. Mas<sup>c</sup>udi, p. 112.

89. Bal<sup>c</sup>ami, pp. 129-30.

90. Mojmal, p. 13.

91. Hamza, p. 26 and Biruni, p. 103.

92. This line of Zahhakians is absent from Ferdowsi's work, except for Zahhak himself. There is however a Kushnama among the later epics which centers on the line of Zahhak. See page above.

93. Koran IV:22-23. See also Arthur Christensen, L'Iran sous les Sassanides (Copenhagen: 1936), pp.318-9 on the possibility of incestuous marriages as a common type among the Sasanians.

94. Even though the preferred type of marriage is within one's own family, system, though not incestuous, this is not to imply that such marriages are the rule in society. See Frederick Barth, "Father's Brother's Daughter Marriage in Kurdistan," Southwestern Journal of Anthropology 10 (1954), pp. 164-71 and reprinted in Louise E. Sweet, ed., Peoples and Cultures of the Middle East (Garden City, N.Y.: 1970), 2 vols., 1:127-54.

95. The question of tradition existing as being reworked during performance has been of great concern to modern folklorists. See Dell Hymes, "Breakthrough into Performance," in Folklore: Performance and Communication, eds. D. Ben-Amos and Kenneth S. Goldstein (Paris: 1975), p. 19 where the author states, ". . . especially in an oral tradition performance is a mode of existence . . . that is partly constitutive of what the tradition is."

## Chapter VI

### Conclusions

In this study I have attempted to show how oral and written literatures may exist side by side into the modern period. Examination of the example of naqqāli shows that in Iran a creative oral literature does in fact exist along with the written literature and is not dominated by the literary tradition. Even though the audience members and the storyteller are familiar with the literary work, the tradition of telling the stories does not have as its primary aim the reproduction of the literary story.

Iran has had a flourishing written tradition centering on the Shāhnāma since the early Islamic period. Not only has Ferdowsi written a much-read and revered epic poem setting down a version of this material, but other writers coming after him also set down what they considered to be necessary material which Ferdowsi did not include in his work. Historians discussing Iran's legendary history have also provided other versions, both in Arabic and Persian.

At the same time the oral tradition in Iran has had a long history. There is evidence of professional storytelling from pre-Islamic Iran as well as from early Islamic times to the present. While the court storyteller has disappeared, the popular storyteller remains, playing an active part in Iranian culture. His material

has changed, becoming centered almost exclusively on the telling of the Shāhnāma and has been infused with religious significance.

Ironically, Iran's tradition of naggāli is one where the participants in the storytelling themselves testify that it is Ferdowsi's literary work which is being performed. A comparison of oral story texts with Ferdowsi's literary work, however, demonstrates that a great deal of variation exists between the oral versions and the written one. Some added motifs are also found in other, later, epic works by such men as Asadi Tusi or Qasem Mādeh, but much more material seems to be independent of any known literary text.

Besides differences in motifs and stories presented in the oral versions, there is also a great deal of difference in the arrangement of the story material. Ferdowsi's literary work, as we have seen, concentrates on the development of one story at a time, focussing his presentation on one character, or group of characters. Only when one story is completed, does Ferdowsi move on to another story. Storytellers, on the other hand, regularly expand the number of characters and sequences of action with which they are dealing. They weave episodes from the different sequences together, moving back and forth from one to another creating a complex pattern of narration. Part of the reason for this may be the need of the storyteller for a kind of narrative type which will attract his audience back the next day.

We can conclude, then, that the storytellers of modern Iran are not dependent upon Ferdowsi's version of the Shāhnāma. They

call upon this text, as with other literary texts, to aid them in presenting their story only when the literary text is appropriate to the story which they are telling. In the same way, the Sām̄nāmā, the Garshāspnāmā and the other epics written after Ferdowsi's need not be seen as reflections of or reactions to Ferdowsi's Shāhnāmā, but as independent reworkings of material which has been continually reworked from ancient times. The appearance of a Shāhnāmā in a verse form appealing to the new literary tastes may have inspired the form of the later epics, but need not have been their origin.

The oral stories are part of this same tradition of reworking the national tradition. As we have already mentioned, the storytellers and audience members include all of Ferdowsi's material, all of the later epics dealing with Zaboli tradition, and all of the storytellers' material in their definition of Shāhnāmā. This term may be taken to mean the national tradition in all its versions. It is an integral characteristic of the national tradition not to become fixed, but rather to be continually reworked. As Ferdowsi added his literary version to the tradition, men like <sup>c</sup>Ali and Habib Allāh continue to add their versions to the national tradition.

Consideration of the historical texts dealing with the Iranian national tradition demonstrates that there are trends within the development of the national tradition. The historical sources for the Shāhnāmā provide versions which may be compared with the versions of Ferdowsi and the storytellers. Such a comparison



allows us to see trends in the development of the national tradition, some of which are still apparent in the oral stories. These trends include the integration of foreign strains into the Iranian national tradition. In this case we see that the Zaboli house has tended to become more and more integrated into the national tradition finally becoming equal to the kingly house of Iran in the oral stories. The Islamic tradition has remained only superficially laid over the Shāhnāma, being integrated into the storytelling performance in other ways. Other trends of change also include such things as changes in the optimum marriage type which may be tied to social circumstances in Iran.

An examination of the historical sources for the Shāhnāma, also demonstrates that much material and many versions have existed continually side by side. Artists could be capable of recombination of stories and motifs to create an almost infinite number of different versions of the Shāhnāma. By examining these texts we may also see that Islamic writers after Ferdowsi, themselves working within a literary tradition, did not feel an obligation to adhere to the version of the Shāhnāma presented by Ferdowsi. These writers were aware of the epic poet and even cite his work on occasion, yet they still present their own reworking of the national tradition.

On the other hand, the comparison of oral stories with tumars demonstrates that there is stability within the Shāhnāma tradition. If any written text determines the line of narration, it is unquestionably the tumar. All storytellers, no matter whether

they are trained formally or self-trained, consider the acquisition of a good tumār to be a major concern. They all learn their tumārs thoroughly and depend upon it for their stories. Storytellers do not make up the stories they tell, being tied to a set of characters and actions, as presented in their tumār, so that we might assume that the national tradition, as told today, has been codified in the tumār.

Despite the dependence of the storyteller on this written text, the story which he tells remains uniquely his own. For one thing, the tumār provides a skeletal outline of the story so that the text of a story presented in an hour's time may run to only about one or two pages in the tumār. Given this outline, the storyteller has freedom in filling out the story and may extend and expand his material to fill up as much time as he needs. He may provide motives for actions, or change the motives which he finds in the tumār. He is virtually free to characterize his people and describe them as he wishes. Therefore, we see that, even with the constraints imposed by the tumār on the story line, the storyteller has an opportunity to be creative in his rendition of the Shāhnāma.

The storyteller's greatest opportunity to show his creativity is outside the story line of the Shāhnāma. It lies in his ability to interpret and expound upon the meaning of his story. Such things as digression and insertion of poetry allow him to make the value of the Shāhnāma clear to his audience. By digressing from the line of the narrative, the storyteller has a chance to break out

of the strictures of the story and give his story relevance. He may explain why an action occurred or analogize that action to actions in modern times or in the historical past. Occasionally he may have to assert his position as storyteller and say outright what he feels to be the value of attending to the story. By reciting poetry the storyteller demonstrates himself to be a learned man in control of his cultural heritage and able to draw upon this heritage at any appropriate time. Both of these non-narrative elements draw the audience's attention to the storyteller and demonstrate that he is an erudite man worthy of attention and respect.

At the same time that these elements demonstrate the storyteller's creative ability, they also underline the basic roles which the storyteller plays for his audience. As we have seen, the storyteller is a respected man, considered by his audience to be a teacher. He deserves this honor because he is able to reinterpret his material and make it meaningful in addition to being a lively and interesting entertainer. Much of this role as teacher also centers around the religious function of storytelling. Historically the storyteller has had links both to formal religious activities and to informal religious activities. While the formal organization of performers has disappeared, these links still hold today. Both of the storytellers with whom I worked had ties to religious performance -- <sup>c</sup>Ali as a reciter of mystic poetry and Ḥabīb Allāh as a non-professional rowza-khān. Many of the digressions used to interpret the Shāhnāma material are of a religious nature with Iran

set up as the analogous representative of Islam.

The understanding of the religious significance of storytelling also makes clear the unity of the performance. Because the whole performance is tied to Iranian Shiism, the poetry, prose story and rowza all bind the storyteller to his audience as sharers in a common heritage. Furthermore, the participants in the storytelling performance recreate not only the legendary past of Iran, but also the past of Iran as the center of Shiite Islam. Such legends surrounding the origin of naqqali as a means for spreading Shiism and of Ferdowsi as a Shiite reaffirm the storytelling as a religious function.

An examination of the rowza provides another example of many of the conclusions we have reached regarding the Shahnāma. Even though the Rowzat al-Shohadā of Kashefi may be known to the storytellers, it has not come to dominate the tradition of rowza-telling. Many of the stories told as rowzas are not found in the literary work at all, and there is great variation in the storyteller's presentation of stories that are found there. The reinterpretation of stories is a part of rowza telling despite the fact that the stories are supposedly considered to be literally true. The storyteller is free to invent conversations or actions for which there is no historical evidence. In the rowza, the storyteller's concern is to provide an effective rendition which will bring the audience to participation in the mourning of the Shiite martyrs, rather than to narrate a series of historical facts.

Like the Shāhnāma stories, the make-up of a rowza may carry within it an explanation of its social meaning. The Roqaya story examined is a good example of how a storyteller can create a sensitive and meaningful version of a martyr tale which really includes the audience as participants in the event which gives the story its cultural significance.

If we assume the above points to be true, we would expect great changes in storytelling if it were performed in a different setting where the relationships between the storyteller and his audience and their relationship with the material no longer obtained. As a final proof of the contentions of this study, we will discuss what is sometimes happening to storytelling in the modern period. The audience for storytellers today is declining rapidly as working and social conditions change. A good storyteller is still able to make a decent living, but fewer young men are even considering storytelling as a profession. As we have seen the government has attempted in the past few years to encourage storytelling, both with financial incentives and by public recognition of naqqāli as one of the native arts of Iran. Government support in Shiraz of the Chahār Fasl Coffee House and the two storytellers provides a traditional setting and encourages storytellers. An older storyteller, like <sup>c</sup>Ali, can supplement his income and continue his profession. A young storyteller like Asghar has a forum to practice and, with luck, eventually to prove himself a storyteller.

What appears to be happening more often is that storytellers,

even good ones, are being hired by middle and upper class restaurants or hotels to entertain the foreign and Iranian tourists. Cut off from their usual audience of regulars, they tell short snatches of stories out of order and with very little detail. Since they cannot look forward to seeing the same people in the future there is no longer any need for the elaborate intertwining of episodes, always leaving something hanging at the end of the performance. The rowza is totally unacceptable in these circumstances. Here instead the vignette -- one battle scene or one love story -- will suffice. As an example of what happens, I might mention the case of Habib Allāh. He was very conscious of his position, vis-à-vis his audience, and looked down on the telling of light tales. A real naqqāl, he had assured me, would only tell Shāhnāma stories. Later he returned to his home city of Isfahan and I heard that he was telling stories in the coffee house of the posh Shah Abbas Hotel. The stories he was telling were from the late twelfth century love story Layla and Majnun by Nezāmi. It is also worth noting that he kept that job only a short time, finding that he could earn more in his customary coffee house, doing the traditional material.

The learning and religiosity which are so important in the eyes of a storyteller's regular audience are unimportant in the newer surroundings. Aspects of performance (important everywhere) become the main commodity. Often a man who has been a creative storyteller will spend much of his time singing poetry from books instead. In his new situation, he no longer receives the same

kind of audience response -- indeed there is any. Storytellers often complained (even during their performance) of the lack of attention and lack of perception of the importance of the stories they were telling. This example tends to support our analysis of storytelling, and it is clear that as the setting of storytelling changes, we will witness the decline of this activity as a creative phenomenon.

## Appendices

Two Appendices are included. The first contains summaries of six storytelling sessions recorded from <sup>c</sup>Ali Sanākhan from May 5, 1975 to May 11, 1975. These sessions are the first of the telling of the Shāhnāma. They recount the repopulation of the world under Noah after the flood to the fall of the tyrant Žahhāk.

Since the stories included go beyond the boundaries of the sessions, the material is presented in a continuous form. The number of the session is indicated in the margin.

The second Appendix includes a transcription and translation of the stories presented in one session by Habib Allāh with notes following. This session was recorded on December 14, 1974.

In this session, the Iranian army, under the leadership of Kaykhosrow, has their enemy, the Turanian leader, Afrāsiyāb, on the run. They are closing in on him when he takes refuge in the city of Makran. The end of the session tells the storyteller's version of how Lohrāsp was named to be heir to the throne. This particular set of events does not appear in Ferdowsi's work. In this session, too, the hostility begins between the heroes of Zabol and the line of Lohrāsp. The heir takes a disliking to the heroes immediately because of their reaction to his demands. Eventually a complete break will occur between the kings and the heroes of Iran.



## Appendix I

### Story Summaries from <sup>c</sup>Ali Sanākhān

1. After Noah and the flood the people of the world came from his sons. Noah remained in Iran while others of his sons went to the other parts of the world. His son Kayomars̄ became the first king over the world. At the same time demons came to destroy Kayomars̄' land. His son Siyāmāk harrassed them until they finally killed him. His wife was pregnant and, after his death, gave birth to Hushang.

Hushang fought with the demons until his son Tahmuras̄ defeated the demons. The demons asked to be set free and to live under the White Demon in the jungles of Mazandaran. Tahmuras̄ allowed them to do so.

Tahmuras̄ had two sons, Jamshid and Balyān. The people agreed that one of the two sons must be chosen to rule. Tahmuras̄ sent them off to learn and prove their worth. Both went away. Jamshid became the disciple of a wise man and learned about divine justice and philosophy. Balyān gathered men in Sistan and began agriculture. He developed cities and organized the people.

Tahmuras̄ called them together to examine them. He saw that Jamshid had acquired wisdom while Balyān had proved himself strong. Tahmuras̄ gave Jamshid the kingship and Balyān the management of the army. Neither one of them was to be greater than the other. Jamshid built his capital as king in Persepolis. Balyān made his capital Zabolestan.

Balyān had a son, Gurang. Jamshid gave Gurang a cloak of honor and told him he also had Balyān's right to lead the army. Jamshid ruled wisely and all was well in his country for a long time. Then he had his face put on the coins and claimed to be a god.

At the same time an Arab, Zāhhāk, was born among the Arabs. When Zāhhāk's father was old, he took a wife who was young and beautiful, but he could not consummate their marriage. Zāhhāk fell in love with his step-mother. He began to plot his father's death.

One night while contemplating this problem, Zāhhāk saw a man wearing a red turban. The man said he was a fortune-teller (rammal). Zāhhāk asked for help, and the fortune-teller said the only cure for the situation was the father's death. He told Zāhhāk to dig a pit where his father regularly walked. In this way the father would be killed and no one would know that he was killed by his own son.

Zāhhāk followed the fortune-teller's instructions. One day the father came on his walk and fell into the pit. Zāhhāk ran to the pit. His father was still alive and called out to him for help. Zāhhāk said he would go for help and ran off. He saw the fortune-teller who told him to get a large rock and throw it down on his father to kill him. Zāhhāk also followed these instructions. [The fortune-teller was actually the devil, Iblis.]

The father was missed for two days then found in the pit. Zāhhāk offered himself to his father's wife, who was shocked and insisted that Zāhhāk go to Jamshid and get a dispensation for the marriage.

Ẓahhāk went to Persepolis to get the dispensation. When he reached Jamshid's court he was awed by its grandeur and wealth. He appealed to Jamshid for the dispensation which Jamshid gave him. The two were married.

One night Ẓahhāk saw the fortune-teller again. The fortune-teller asked Ẓahhāk if he would like to sit in Jamshid's place and Ẓahhāk said yes. In order to acquire Jamshid's position, the fortune-teller said, Ẓahhāk had to gather sand from the desert and fill a vacant tower with it. In two months Ẓahhāk had filled the tower. When he showed the tower to the fortune-teller, Ẓahhāk saw that all the sand had turned to jewels. With this fortune Ẓahhāk began building his empire. People gathered around him until finally he moved against Jamshid.

2. Once the fortune-teller helped Ẓahhāk, he was told that he must always obey the fortune-teller's wishes in order to continue flourishing. Ẓahhāk agreed. The fortune-teller told Ẓahhāk to move against Jamshid now that God had deserted the king.

Jamshid heard that a man had come against him with a great army. He sent his men out to defeat this man, but with the help of Iblis, the Arabs defeated the Persians. When Jamshid was notified of the battle's outcome, he had a cup brought to him from his treasury. In the cup he saw the future--that this Arab would sit in his place, would destroy Jamshid's line and would kill Jamshid.

Jamshid and Ẓahhāk met together on the field of battle. Because of a charm on Jamshid's life, Ẓahhāk could not hurt him, but he was

able to put the king to flight.  $\dot{Z}ahh\bar{a}k$  took over the throne and killed all of Jamshid's family.

One night, while  $\dot{Z}ahh\bar{a}k$  was dallying with one of Jamshid's serving girls, the fortune-teller appeared to exact the promise of obedience which  $\dot{Z}ahh\bar{a}k$  had made. He told  $\dot{Z}ahh\bar{a}k$  that he wished his own face put on the coins and wanted to be worshipped as a god by the people.  $\dot{Z}ahh\bar{a}k$ , fearing the wrath of God, refused, and Iblis disappeared in a cloud of smoke.

One day a young man came to the court to cook for the king. He assured  $\dot{Z}ahh\bar{a}k$  that he knew how to make food which had never been seen before.  $\dot{Z}ahh\bar{a}k$  made him his special cook, and every day the cook delighted the king with some new dish. One morning while  $\dot{Z}ahh\bar{a}k$  was in the bath, the cook brought a special dish for him.  $\dot{Z}ahh\bar{a}k$  was so pleased with this treat that he offered the cook any favor he wished. The cook asked to be allowed to kiss the king's bare shoulders.  $\dot{Z}ahh\bar{a}k$  granted the favor, but when the cook kissed his shoulders he made a small prick with his mouth so that his saliva entered  $\dot{Z}ahh\bar{a}k$ 's body.  $\dot{Z}ahh\bar{a}k$  began to burn throughout his whole body. He asked what the cook had done. The cook announced that he was really Iblis and had done something to  $\dot{Z}ahh\bar{a}k$  which would cause the king to suffer forever in punishment of his disobedience. Then Iblis disappeared.

$\dot{Z}ahh\bar{a}k$  screamed with pain and had doctors called to look at him. They recommended that the wound be lanced, but one hour after it was lanced the pain began again. When they looked at the wound again,

they saw that two worms were growing from the wound. They removed the worms, but after an hour two small snakes grew out of the wound. They cut off the snakes, but after an hour two larger snakes appeared on the king's shoulders. These doctors did not know what to do, so Ẓahhāk had the city combed for a doctor who could solve the problem.

A man came forward who said he was an apothecary and a fortune-teller and could cure anything. He came to the king, examined him and announced that the snakes could not be removed. The snakes were part of Ẓahhāk's body and if they were removed dragons would appear. Furthermore, he said, the snakes required the brains of two people every day or else the snakes would eat Ẓahhāk's own brains. First Ẓahhāk had the doctors killed and fed their brains to the snakes who then became peaceful and stopped bothering the king. Every day the same thing was done to keep the snakes at peace.

3. [The apothecary who appeared to Ẓahhāk was also Iblis. He could have specified two sheep's brains, but preferred to insist on two human brains.]

Every day two people were given to the court cook who executed them and prepared their brains for the snakes. One day a youth and his father were brought in. The cook felt sorry for the young man and determined to rescue him. He killed the father and a sheep and mixed their brains for the snakes who did not seem to notice the difference. The cook knew that he could save the life of one person every day. He also knew that if these people were allowed to go home, everyone would know what he was doing. Therefore, he sent the rescued people into

the desert to live together as a tribe. [This group of people formed the Kurdish tribe.]

Ẓahhāk sent men out to kill all of the descendants of Jamshid. He used these men to feed the snakes. After a while there were no more descendants of Jamshid, and he began having criminals killed for the snakes. Eventually all of the criminals in the country were dead. The people became terrified of being arrested, so all discord and crime ceased in the country. Then Ẓahhāk brought slaves to be killed. Finally Ẓahhāk was forced to start executing innocent people to keep the snakes happy. A lottery was begun for the two daily victims.

Years went by and Ẓahhāk showed no sign of age. One day a man was brought who was the offspring of Jamshid and a village woman married by Jamshid while he was fleeing. Ẓahhāk ordered the man killed for the snakes.

Jamshid had been fleeing for one hundred years. One day he came to a garden wall where he sat down to rest. A servant came to the wall and began talking with him. The garden belonged to Gurang, the king of Zabol. Jamshid asked why Ẓahhāk had not killed Gurang and his family since they were related to the past king. The servant explained that Ẓahhāk's ruler in Zabol was really the Vālī of Sistan. Gurang had treated the Vālī well and given him valuable gifts so that he had allowed Gurang's family to live.

The servant brought Jamshid into the garden. Gurang's daughter was living in the garden and met Jamshid. She recognized him as being noble and ordered him given good clothes and food. After a period of

time in the garden Jamshid admitted to her that he was the king. The two were married in the garden and on the wedding night their son Tur b. Jamshid was conceived. They spent one month together in the garden, but she still had not told her parents what she had done. She was afraid that if the Vāli of Sistan learned of their marriage her whole family would be killed.

One day her mother came to see her. She recognized immediately that her daughter was no longer a virgin; in the bath she saw the signs of her daughter's pregnancy. The daughter told her what had happened, leaving out that her husband was Jamshid. At home, her mother told her husband of their daughter's marriage, and he rushed off to the garden to kill them both. When he arrived at the garden he learned his son-in-law was Jamshid. They all knew that the Vāli would kill them if he were to discover what had happened. Jamshid ordered Gurang to turn him over to the Vāli to be taken to Żahhāk. The family refused. Jamshid convinced them that he knew his fate. The only thing that would save Gurang, his family and Jamshid's unborn child was for him to go away. That hour Jamshid left.

4. Jamshid went off into the desert. [His child will be known as the son of Gurang Shāh, Tur b. Gurang, even though he is really Tur b. Jamshid. He will be the father of Shaydāsep.]

Everywhere Jamshid went, death was before him. For one hundred more years he was not found. Finally he came to a monastery in China where he hoped to be forgotten. The head monk there read his future and told him that his life was over, but one day his name would

reappear. Jamshid entrusted the symbols of rule to this man to give to his descendant when he would appear. This man hid them in the mountain. Jamshid decided to go back to  $\dot{Z}ahh\bar{a}k$  and face death. He offered himself to the first people he saw, and they took him to Isfahan to  $\dot{Z}ahh\bar{a}k$ 's capital.

Jamshid told  $\dot{Z}ahh\bar{a}k$  that a charm protected his life so that he could only be killed by being sawn in two. As he was killed, Jamshid confessed his sin, and asked god for forgiveness. They carried his body to the dakhma and  $\dot{Z}ahh\bar{a}k$  was at rest from fear of Jamshid.

Years passed. One day a man and a woman were brought to the king.  $\dot{Z}ahh\bar{a}k$  was told this was the son of Jamshid and his wife. The woman asked for mercy and to be allowed to have her child. If it is a girl, it would carry no threat for  $\dot{Z}ahh\bar{a}k$ . If it would be a boy,  $\dot{Z}ahh\bar{a}k$  could do as he liked with it.  $\dot{Z}ahh\bar{a}k$  allowed her to have the child. He had the woman put in confinement until she had the child. [The child was  $\bar{A}btin$ , the father of Feridun.] They told  $\dot{Z}ahh\bar{a}k$  that the child was a boy.  $\dot{Z}ahh\bar{a}k$  ordered the child made a servant to his own women, and insisted that the boy not be allowed to marry. If the boy married, both he and his wife would be killed, along with all the wife's family. The mother agreed and took her child off to another village to be raised. She entrusted the boy to the kadkhoda of the area,  $\bar{S}am$ . This kadkhoda had a child of his own, a girl named  $\bar{F}aranak$ , who was two to three years younger than  $\bar{A}btin$ . The two children grew up and played together.



When the boy was seventeen years old, the two fell in love. Farānak told Ābtin that she would marry only him. Ābtin asked his mother for her permission to marry but she told him that the marriage would be the ruin of them all. Then she explained his lineage. The two young people were separated hoping the love would die. At night they would see one another in secret.

One night the mother saw Jamshid in a dream at the same time the kadhoda saw the same dream. He told them to go and dig up some treasure near there. The two of them did as the dream instructed and found a great treasure. Then the parents agreed to the marriage.

The wedding night Feridun was conceived. That night Żahhāk saw a dream in which a youth came from the desert riding on a cow and holding a cow's head mace with which he struck out Żahhāk's brains. The vizier said the youth was to be Żahhāk's killer and had been conceived but not yet born. He would be the grandson of Jamshid, the son of Ābtin and Farānak.

In the morning Żahhāk went to his court and called his brother Mordād. He sent Mordād to kill everyone in Farānak's village, and bring Ābtin to him alive. When the army arrived, it was night and everyone was asleep. The army killed everyone except Farānak who fled from the village under the stomach of a cow and Ābtin who ran off into the mountains.

The Arabs followed Ābtin to a cave in the mountains where a traveller pointed out the cave. Ābtin hid in the stomach of his horse but was found by the Arabs, who bound him up and took him to Żahhāk.

On the way they passed an abandoned village where Farānak was hiding. When she saw them, she colored herself with green-tinted water, threw herself on the ground and began wailing. When the Arabs saw her, they thought she was sick and stayed away.

[One session is missing.]

5. When Feridun reached one year of age under the care of the cow, Żahhāk was warned that the child was getting older. Mordād thought that he had killed the child. The mother and child had been shot at in the desert, but had not been killed. A third time Żahhāk sent his troupes under Mordād into the desert. This time he told Mordād to bring the head of the cow and Feridun to make sure that they were both dead.

Farānak had come to a cave where the ascetic Hum lived. Hum said she must take the cow and child and flee. She ran toward the jungle. The Arab army followed her there. The cow attacked the army bravely while her calf fled into the jungle. Farānak found her child where the cow had been caring for him and ran. Finally an Arab soldier killed and beheaded the cow. Then the Arabs went after the woman and the child.

Farānak brought her son to the monastery. The Arabs followed her but were magically stopped from entering. Hum allowed Mordād to come in alone. When Mordād entered the cave, he explained to Hum that he had to kill the two refugees to save Żahhāk. Hum explained that the child was divine and could not be killed. He forced Mordād to do the child homage and to pledge not to harm him and to help him

when the child came to overthrow Żahhāk. Then Hum took a rock and changed it into a replica of the child's head to be given to Żahhāk. Mordād must remain faithful to the child forever or he would die immediately. Mordād followed Hum's instructions.

The army returned and gave the head to Żahhāk who then felt that his kingdom was secure. He put the head in his treasury for safe keeping.

Hum took Feridun from Farānak and taught him great wisdom. When Feridun reached the age of fourteen, Hum took him back to his mother.

In Isfahan at this time there was a blacksmith named Kāva. He had a beautiful but poor widow for a neighbor. One day he accidentally saw her in her courtyard naked and fell in love with her. Kāva thought he could offer to help her, and then she would also fall in love with him. He knocked on her door and offered her food for her children if she would become his lover. That evening she stopped him on his way home from work and agreed to be his lover but only when they were absolutely alone. He went home and sent everyone out. She came over the roof to his house. He gave her food and clothing; then she said, "We are not alone." When he asked her meaning she said, "God and his angels are always watching." Kāva repented his sin against her. Then he helped her as a brother helps a sister.

One day Kāva spilled some iron on his apron. His four sons saw that the iron had spelled out the name of God on the apron. Some time later two Arabs came into Kāva's shop to take away one of his sons.

His sons killed the two Arab soldiers and fled. Kāvā addressed the people of the bazaar, showed them the apron, and told them to rebel against Żahhāk. He raised an army and closed the bazaar. They marched on to Żahhāk's castle. When Żahhāk heard what was happening, he asked to see their leader. He made a contract with Kāvā sparing all the people of Isfahan and the surrounding area.

6. When the people of Isfahan learned that they were free, they carried Kāvā home on their shoulders. The bazaar was opened and things continued as routine until nightfall. After Kāvā went home he began to fear that Żahhāk's men would come and take his sons away and kill them. He discovered that the apron with the name of God gave him courage to face Żahhāk. In the morning he saw that some townspeople had been guarding his house all night to keep him safe.

Several days went by, then one day the dyer in the shop next to Kāvā came to him. He took Kāvā to his own shop and he saw that the colors in the dying pots had spelled out, "The era is the era of Feridun."

By that time Feridun had learned what his background was. Hum sent the child into the jungle to dig up a box in a particular place and to bring back the grown calf he would find. Feridun did these things and found Jamshid's symbols of rule in the box. Hum told Feridun that he must go against Żahhāk. As Feridun put on the symbols of rule, one by one they fell from Żahhāk. Żahhāk sent for the head in the treasury, but when he opened the box, he found only a rock.

Feridun mounted the cow and set out. Wherever he went people

gathered behind him against Żahhāk. At the same time, Kāvā heard that Feridun was raising a rebellion. He closed the bazar, raised his apron as a banner and gathered people around him as an army. With money from the city's rich merchants, he armed his men. They camped outside the city waiting for Feridun.

Żahhāk sent Mordād to kill the ironsmith and put down the rebellion. Mordād was worried because he had promised to follow Feridun. The next day Gurang and the army of Zabolestan appeared to help Kāvā and his men. Mordād then sent a letter to Gurang asking for peace. Later, Mordād explained how it happened that Feridun was still alive and how he himself in reality was a follower of Feridun. Mordād and his brothers all joined the rebellious troupes. With them two-thirds of the Arab army joined the battle against Żahhāk. Żahhāk knew that the end was coming when he heard what had happened on the battlefield.

## Appendix II

### Text of Story by Habib Allāh

reshta-e sokhan ruz-e gozashta be-dinjā rasid ka <sup>c</sup>arż kardam ta<sup>c</sup>qib-e afrāsiyāb leshkar-e irān omadan tā durāha-e makrān afrāsiyāb be-shahriyār-e makrān panāh āvorda bud va unam qowl dāda bud ka az afrāsiyāb negāhdāri konad shāh dāvṭalab khāst bizhan ebn-e giv boland shod goft man miram tā ham khabar biyāram hamagar afrāsiyāb o leshkarash be-makrun rafta-and shahriyār-e makrun-rā āgah sāzam savār shod o harakat kard va vaqti rasid did leshkar-e afrāsiyāb jelev-e makrān otrāq karda e<sup>c</sup>tenā'i be-in leshkar-e qiyāmat-aṣar nakard bā yek sepehr jagar ba yek donyā shahāmat az kenār-e in leshkar gozasht o dākhel-e shahr-e makrān shod o porsān porsān dar-e bārgāh dast biyāra markab piyāda shod dākhel-e bārgāh shod did afrāsiyāb ru takht neshast-ast shahriyār-e makrān zirdast neshast omarāy-e makrāni o turāni dowr tā be-dowr bazmist hama cheshmhā be-bizhan bar gasht zebān be-hamd o senāy-e khosrowshāh-e makrāni goshud be-afrāsiyāb e<sup>c</sup>tenā nakard va ba<sup>c</sup>d az ehterām goft shahriyār-e makrun bā dom-e shir dāri bāzi mikoni afrāsiyābi ka ruz-e dero va ḥāsel-e a<sup>c</sup>mālāsh-a az hama gorizān omada-ast bikhod rāhash dādi khadib-e chin az komakat bevay ehterāz kard man az ṭaraf-e <sup>c</sup>alā ḥāzrat-e irān khadib-e kasrākhadam kaykhosrow omadam behat begam vaqef-e koshti-e khod bash ka pay nakhori dom-e meqrāzak az in zolf-e do tā'i nakhori kaykhosrow marā ferestāda-ast ka be-to begam yā afrāsiyāb-ra az shahrat birun kon jan o māl o

nāmus-e keshvarat-o hefz kon yā cheshm be-rāh-e ruz-e bad o vakhim-e  
 khod bāsh afrāsiyāb va yāranash sarhā-rā zir andākhta budand bebin  
 āqā shahāmat o jagar cha mikonad afrāsiyāb dah mesl-e bizhan-rā bā  
 yek tan-e nay az pāy dar miyārad amma poshtgarmi o jagar cha mikonad  
 yek tana biyād tu yek chenin shahri ya mār-e zakhmi-rā ta<sup>c</sup>qib konad  
 afrāsiyābi ka in hama qorbāni dāda talāfāt dāda vatanash-rā zir-e  
 pā ferār karda omada hālā ta<sup>c</sup>qibash biyād tu ya shahr tanhā dar  
 hožur-e afrāsiyāb o garsivaz o in hama sardār-e tork jolo cheshm-e  
 afrāsiyāb cha miga shahriyār-e makrān be-bizhan goft sharm kon amirzāda  
 afrāsiyāb vali ne<sup>c</sup>mat-e man-a emperatur-e torkestān ast tār o pud-e  
 haykal-e man az namak-e afrāsiyāb ast garcha sāheb-khānast vali  
 ejālatan mehman-e man-a va hich nā-mardi tā hāl mehman-rā az khānash  
 birun nakard-ast boro be-kaykhosrow begu bish az in afrāsiyāb-o  
 ta<sup>c</sup>qib nakon pay-e kār-e khod boro agar na bad mibini bizhan goft  
 hanuz az ketme-e ādam be raḥam-e mādar . . . az raḥam-e mādar be-  
 arsa-e vojūd nayāmada kasi ka betavānad in gostākhi-rā bekonad goft  
 agar tanhā va mehman nabudi adabat mikardam bizhan goft hama-e inhā  
 ka gerd-e to neshastand qābel nistand cha kārī asat sākt-ast  
 goft hālā mehman-i goft na farz kon mehman nistam shahriyār-e  
 makrān be-gholāmi goft farzandam-o begu yād tūli nakashid bizhan did  
 yek javāni az dar-e bāregāh dākhel shod lebas-e valiahdi dar bar  
 o yek shamshir-e gharq-e javāhera-e kutāhi dar miyan bast-ast o  
 osār-e shoja<sup>c</sup>ati nadārad vali javānist ārasta takhmim nazdik-e  
 bist sāl kamtar yā bishtar az <sup>c</sup>omrash gozashta-ast posht-e lab

tāzā [unintelligible] shoda hanuzash khatt nārāsta bar benāgush  
 be-margh-e <sup>c</sup>ashequn zolfash siyahpush bizhan goft zirāt sedā kardi  
 barāy-e cha shahriyār-e makrān be-pesarash goft farzand bizhan-rā  
 adabash kon onham omad barābar-e bizhan ehterām kard o be-bizhan  
 goft amirzāda shomā mehman-i az rāhi ka omada'i var gard yek  
 payghāmi bebar boro be-shāh-e irān begu afrāsiyāb unjāst khosroshāh-e  
 makrāni havādārash-a khod-e shāh kaykhosrow biyād talaf beshad  
 ākha to ya ma<sup>c</sup>mur-i yek nafar-am hasti gostākhi ham mikoni  
 entezār dāri bāz ham ehterāmat konam bizhan goft foḏuli nakon goft  
 be-yazdān-e pāk sharm az afrāsiyāb mikonam goft afrāsiyāb sag-e  
 kist barq-e shamshir kashid be-shāhzāda-e makrān ḥamla bord  
 daryāy-e jam<sup>c</sup>iyat tamāshā mikonad diruz ham <sup>c</sup>arż kardam afrāsiyāb  
 be-shahriyār-e makrān goft ākha poshtgarmit be-chiy-a ka migin injā  
 agar biyāy dar emān-i leshkar ziyād dāri shahrat mohkam-a pahlavān-e  
 shāyesta dāri goft ākha ya feكري dāram afrāsiyāb ḥālā dāra tamāshā  
 mikonad dast-e bizhan bā shamshir <sup>c</sup>alam shod unam kaf bar kaf band-  
 dasti gereft jelev-e chashm-e afrāsiyāb dast-o feshord shamshir  
 az kaf-e bizhan dar āmad dast-o dād be-dast-e digar shast khābond  
 har bolboli ka zamzama mikonad avval marāz-e barg-e goli yād mikonad  
 bargi ka dar khazān-e zamastān khazān nashod dar posht-e parda kār-e  
 [unintelligible] mikonad shast kenār-e chār angosht yek dorosht-  
 kashida zad o rahā shod amirzāda az zamin kanda shod az ŷarb-e  
 in sili tā ākher-e bargāh kafzanān-e khun az demāgh o dehan pashid  
 birun leng az sarash gozār shod o az hush raft bizhan-rā bar dāsht  
 bord tu ḥaramsarā posht-e haram-e shāh ya bāgh-a bizhan-o bord dar



yeki az oṭāqḥāy-e ākher-e bāgh u-rā sakht qofiband o zangir kard  
 negahbān-am barash gozārd bar gasht hoẓur-e shāh afrāsiyāb be-in  
 shāhzāda ḥalāqa paydā kard be-u goft sāher-i ḥarẓ kard khayr farmud  
 agar sāher nisti namitonam bāvar konam ka to bizhan-rā bā yek sili  
 az pāy dar āri ḥarẓ kard eqbāl-e shomā bud qābel nist afrāsiyāb  
 khayli mohabbatash kard shahriyār-e makrān porsid bā bizhan cha  
 kardi farzand u-rā nakoshid dokhtarzāda-e rostam ast javān ast  
 ilchi-a mehman ast ḥarẓ kard u-rā garogan dar bāgh pahanash kardam  
 farmud dastur bedeh nān o ābash bedand azash pazirā'i konand  
 shāyad pashimān shad in qāziya gozasht ruz sepahari shod shab  
 ghorub-e āftāb-a in shahriyār-e makrān yek dokhtar dārad khayli najib(?)  
 khayli zibā dokhtara did barādarash bā chand tā sarbāz hay mirand  
 tu bāgh o bar migardand o gāhi nān o āb mibarand o mashḥal mibarand  
 az yeki az gholāman porsid cha khabar-a goftand amirzāda-e iran  
 pesar-e dokhtar-e rostam bizhan ebn-e giv zendāni-a dar hoẓur-e  
 afrāsiyāb ya chonin gostākhi kard va barādarat bā yek sili u-rā  
 bastast o ḥalā-m tu bāgh tu folān oṭāq bastand u-rā ḥess-e konjkāvi  
 taḥqibash kard umad bebinad in zendāni cha jur bashariy-a in dokhtar-  
 zāda-e rostami ka āvāza-e inā donyā-ro por karda-ast cha farqi bā  
 baqiy-e mardom dārad farqa'i chist vaqti rasid ka barādarash  
 dāst az zendān bar migasht barābar-e barādara ezḥār-e adab kard  
 o porsid kojā buda-in khāhar goft umadam shenidam yek chenin zendāni  
 dārim mikhām bebinamash didani nadārad sobḥ goft na in-o nazar  
 mibinam shenidam āvāza-e ishun-rā delam mikhād ya nazar-rā tamāshā

konam bebinam farq-e u va mardom-e digar chist tā cha andāza-ist goft  
 zud var gard o be-yeki az qarāvola goft dar-o bāz kon ya negāhi bekonad  
 dōbāra dar-o beband qaravol ehterām kard shāhzāda ham raft nozar-e  
 makrāni raft dokhtara omad do tā sarbāz jelev-e dar pās midand qofl-o  
 bāz kardan mash<sup>c</sup>ali rowshan kardand avval shab-a partov-e ma<sup>c</sup>shal  
 nur-e mash<sup>c</sup>al oftād tu chehra-e bizhan dokhtara cheshmash oftād tu  
 chashmay-e [unintelligible] bizhan <sup>c</sup>asheq shod badan-e dokhtar saropā  
 larzid o labi be-dendān gazida fekri kard o foran bar gasht bizhanam  
 did ka ya neqābdari umad ya negāhi kard o ḥarfi nazad o raft vali un  
 cha midāned dar basta shod do tā qarāvola jelev-e dar-and dokhtara omad  
 ya qadri birun o fekri be-khatārash omad bi-yeki az in gholamān goft  
 kay in amir-rā gereftand goftand ṣobḥ ina ka be-dast-e barādaram  
 gereftār shoda goftand bala goft namidonam chera nakoshtand u-rā  
 goftand akha dokhtarzāda-e rostam-a amr-e pedar-e shomāst sāl-e  
 garagon bashad زندān bashad farmud khayli khub raft sā<sup>c</sup>ati neshast  
 va fekr kardan <sup>c</sup>aqlash be-jāy narasid <sup>c</sup>eshq sakht gereftastash va  
 hayajānash dar āvorda az ṭaraf-e digar-am midunad ka agar bād-e  
 [unintelligible] in khabar be-barādarash berasunad mikoshadash vali  
<sup>c</sup>eshq az tars bālā zad unjā ka <sup>c</sup>eshq khayma zanad jāy-e <sup>c</sup>aql nist unjā  
 ka <sup>c</sup>eshq khayma zanad jāy-e <sup>c</sup>aql nist ghoghā bovad do pādashāh andar  
 vilayati dokhtara neqāb be-chehra be-fekr-e shaytāni āmad nima-e  
 shab-a qerāvola-y-e dam yek ṣeday-e pay miyād istādand dokhtara goft  
 āshnā nazdik shod unā shamshir be-rahnamāy-e mostaḥeq didand ay  
 malaka-st dokhtar-e shahriyār-e makrān khahar-e nozar-a ezḥār-e adab  
 kardand farmud mikhāstam bā shomā ṣoḥbat konam goftand moṭi<sup>c</sup>-e

avamer-im inhā-rā be-behāna-e in ka rostam kiya vo dokhtarzādāsh  
 kiya vo aya unā khodashun kiyand o <sup>c</sup>ajab jagari dārand o be-sohbat  
 in do tā qarāvōl-o yavāsh yavāsh az jelev-e dar-e in oṭāqi ka zendān-a  
 chand zar<sup>c</sup>i bord be-behānai ka namikhām zendāni in sedā-hā-ro  
 beshnavad ya agar barādaram omad marā jolo mash<sup>c</sup>al bebinad in do  
 tā sarbāz-o ghāfelgir kard o az dar-e zendān dah bist zar<sup>c</sup> tu tāriki  
 bordashun qiflatan barq-e khangar kashid mes<sup>l</sup>-e babr-e mādda har do-  
 rā az pāy dar āvord har do sarbāz-rā kosht davān davān omad qofl-o  
 shekast dar-e zendān-ro goshud mash<sup>c</sup>al-o bar dāsht omad jolo chashm-e  
 bizhan oftād be-ya dokhtar khunālud vahshat-zada dārad miyād  
 be-hevāsh unam tarsid sedā bar āvord kisti dokhtara goft barā nejātat  
 omadam amirzāda man khāhar-e nowzar-e makrāni-am dokhtar-e shahriyār-e  
 makrān-am emruz ka qarāvōla to-rā hay mibordan ghazā bedand o  
 berand o beyānd zanin shodam omadam ya nezar didamat o <sup>c</sup>asheq shodam  
 hālā ādamam be-et begam be-parvardegār sogand hayāt o mamātat  
 basta be-muyist injā man do tā qarāvōl-o barā to alān koshtam agar  
 rāzi shavi alān dast-e to bāz mikonam vasila barāt farāham mikonam  
 do nafari mirim man-am cheshm az barādar o pedar o hasti mipusham  
 mes<sup>l</sup>-e kaniza hamrāhat miyām agar qābul nakoni nāchār-am ham to-rā  
 az bayn bebaram ham khodam bizhan goft ya so'al azat mikonam rāst  
 migi goft bala goft to-rā be-mazhabat goft be-mazhabam farmud in  
 barādarat sehr midona goft na be-<sup>c</sup>ayinam goft cha guna sehr namidānad  
 o in qodrat-rā dārad ya dast-e man be andāza-e u-st goft cha sehr-is  
 namidonam vali midonam sehr namidonad va injā akhtarshenasān goftand  
 iraniyān qerān dārand biyā harf-e man-o beshno alān bāzat mikonam

asp o asās mohayyā-st savārat mikonam ya kuh-a ru be-ruy-e shahr-e  
 makrān mibaramat tu in kuh jay-e bayesta-ist ba safā nakhchir  
 farāvān darakht o āb-e ravān injā mimānim irāniyān miyānd agar  
 irāniyān az °ohda-e makrāniyā bar omadand o fath kardand man o to  
 ham miyāym qāti-e irāniyān man cheshm-o az barādar o pedar o hasti  
 pushidam barā to agar khodāy-nakhāsta jeddat rostam az °ohda bar nayomad  
 irāniyān shekast khordan man o to zenda bemanim bizhan qabul  
 kard qowl bedeh qasam bekhord qasam khord dast-e bizhan-o bāz kard o  
 raft ya dast asleha barāy-e u āvorda ya mādeyan o ya asp āvord o  
 az birāha dokhtara u-rā bar dāsht shab-e tira o havā ka rowshan shoda  
 az shahr medqāri dur shoda budand raftand tā be-dāstāneshun berasim  
 sobh qarāvol omad °avaž beshad didand sarbāzā nistand be-hevāy-e  
 inā chand zar°i jelotar koshta ānhā-rā yaftand dar-e zendān bāz-a  
 dākhel shoda az zendāni khabari nist ghoghāy shod nowzar-e makrāni  
 omad barā bāz-juyi o bāz-porsi az kanizakān o gholāmun bebinad in  
 kār kār-e kiy-a sar-e nakhi tā andāza'i āmad dastash o behesh goftand  
 khāharat dishab lebās hay °avaž mikard hay miraft tu bāgh o var  
 migasht ākher-e kār-am do tā markab o in meqdār-e asleha omad o  
 gerefta-ast fahmid khāst be-hevāy-e u berad khabar dādand jānpahlavān  
 qavvihakaltarin now°-e bashar jonbakhsh ba chand tā sarbāz az  
 taraf-e shāh-e irān dārand miyānd barāy-e shahr-e makrān khodā  
 °aqebat be-khayrat konad salavāt (salavāt) unam nāchār shoda az  
 khāharash o bizhan cheshm bepushad chun qowl dāda-st afrāsiyāb-rā  
 hefzash kona jāhānbakhsh rasid ru be-ruy-e shahr-e makrān bā chand  
 tā sarbāz angosht-shomār omada-st ya negāhi be-leshkar-e afrāsiyāb

kard ya nāma dād barāy-e shahriyār-e makrun maẓmun-e nāma az in qarār bud ka man jānbakhsh ebn-e farāmarz nobāva-e rostam-am bizhan diruz omada az u khabari nis agar eṭṭalā<sup>c</sup>i dārid marā masbuq va dar <sup>c</sup>ayn-e ḥāl dānosta bāsh har ka afrāsiyāb-rā panāh dahad jān o māl o ahl o <sup>c</sup>ayālāsh dar khaṭar-a nāma raft o sā<sup>c</sup>ati ba<sup>c</sup> be-jāy-e javāb afrāsiyāb o khosrowshāh-e makrāni o ṣadḥā afsar o sarbāz az shahr omadand birun barābar-e jānbakhsh ṣaff basta shod jānbakhsh fahmid qasd-e mojādela dārand khiyāl-e nabard dārand raft maydān dārad [unintelligible] nabard be-jāy miyārad fil-e maymuna baq baq mikonad shāhzāda-e makrān omad jānbakhsh did ka yek javān laḡher-andām vali khosh-simā lebās-e valiahdiyā dārad miyād maydun khiyāl kard miyād payḡham biyārad chun asleḡha nadārad ya shamshir-e valiahdiyā faqāṭ unam barāy-e zinat basta be-jānbakhsh salām kard jānbakhsh ebn-e farāmarz pāsokh dād ki hasti goft man pesar-e khosrowshāh-e makrāni-am omadam chand tā kalām ḡarf ba shomā bezanam goft avval begu bebinam bizhan kojāst goft be-mardān-e <sup>c</sup>alam diruz bizhan omad tu shahr dar ḡozur-e afrāsiyāb biadabi o gostākhi kard man gereftamash dish-b zendān buda az zendān bā khāhar-e man gorikhta do tā qarāvōl-am koshtand mikhāstam ta<sup>c</sup>qib-e ānha beram shomā omadi [bad nabini āqā ya ṣalavāt beferesti (ṣalavāt)]. khodā <sup>c</sup>aqab-e vāladaynat nakonad nikutarin az in be-moḡammad ṣalavāt beferestid (ṣalavāt)]. jānbakhsh goft āncha gofti rāst gofti qasam khord farmud mituni beri be-bābāt begi <sup>c</sup>ellat-e inka afrāsiyāb-rā rāh dāda va <sup>c</sup>alam-e khoṣumat barābar-e dowlat-e <sup>c</sup>aliya-e irān be-eḡtezaz dar āvorda chist labi be-dandān gazid <sup>c</sup>arẓ kard pahlavān shomā-m ka hamān ḡarf-rā mizani afrāsiyāb

vali ne<sup>c</sup>mat-e mā-st shahriyār-a emperātur-e torkestān ast khub-ast  
 arsa-nevesht (?) tang karda omada behash yeki az shāhāy-e khodash  
 panāh āvorda mehman-e mā-st khodām nā-mardi tā hāl mehman-o az  
 khānash birun karda be-doshman seporda jānbakhsh goft foḏuli nakon  
 payghām bebar gofta man ma<sup>c</sup>mur-am bā shomā harf bezanam farmud gofti  
 masalan bizhan-o gerefti man bāvar konam to bizhan-o gerefti <sup>c</sup>arż  
 karda agar gerefta bāsham cha shegeft o ta<sup>c</sup>ajobi dārad goft magar  
 sāher bāshi goft be-<sup>c</sup>ayinam sehr namidānam farmud ākha ya dast-e  
 bizhan be-andāza-e to-st goft dar diyār-e shomā pahlavāni be-[unin-  
 telligible] o tanāsob-a asp-e lāgher-miyān be-kārha az ruz-e  
 maydān na gāv-e parvari jānbakhsh farmud man zabān-e to kutāh  
 mikonam bā dodama ḥamla bord band-e dast-o gereft jāhānbakhsh bā tamām-e  
 qodrati ka dārad did alān dastash bād neshast shamshirash dar  
 miyāra bā dast-e digar ruy-e garibān-rā gereft u az asp payāda shod  
 inam az fil payāda shod ru garibān ham do gereftand talāsh-a mokhtaṣarish-  
 o jānbakhsh-o kand sar be-kand zad zamīn baqalḥāy-e jānbakhsh-rā  
 bast dād bordand filash-am bordand rush kard be-in chand tā sarbāz-e  
 irāni goft shomā ma<sup>c</sup>mur-id ma<sup>c</sup>mur ma<sup>c</sup>zur-e man shomā-rā kārī  
 nadāram bar gardid be-dowlat-e irān ettela<sup>c</sup> bedeh dowlat-e irān  
 ya fekri dārim bād bokonam be-kaykhosrow az zabān-e mā begid ka  
 afrāsiyāb mehman-a az makrān cheshm bepush va elā injā sarzamini-st  
 ka ayman-e falak rafta be-bād sarbāza raftan khabar rasid be-  
 kaykhosrow vo shāh farman-e kuch kard mikhāstand amirān-e irān berand  
 rostam ṣalāḥ nadānest fekri be-khātarash omad rasidand barābar-e  
 leshkar-e qiyāmat-āsar-e emperātur-e tork foru shod be-māhi o bar

shod be-māh bon-e nayza vo qobba-e bargāh tabl o ʿalam o naqqārkhāna sar-e pā shod leshkar az har jahat arāsta nāma-e khadiv-e kasrākhadam kaykhosrow ferestād barā shahriyār-e makrun nāma baʿd az enshā va alqāb be-in maẓmun ka bizhan o jānbakhsh-o beferest va cheshm be-rāh-e ruz-e bad-e jangat bāsh agar na chenin o chenān khāhad shod unam javābi ferestād rasid dast-e shāh-e irān baʿd az mokhtaṣar-e enshā va alqāb neveshta-ast yādegār-e siyāvash bizhan ebn-e giv az zendān gorikhta-st be-ʿayinamun az u ettelāʿ nadārim ammā jahānbakhsh injā asir-e zenjir-a zir-e zenjir-e māst shomā agar ḥāzer-id bā afrāsiyāb solḥ konid jahānbakhsh-o midaym har nowʿ delkhāhash-e shomā hast raftārī mikonim jang bas ast afrāsiyāb bā tamām-e showkat o eqtedārash-a ḥāzer-e māliyāt bedeh digar cha az jānash mohemm agar na ākher-e ḥilahā shamshir-a mijangim kaykhosrow mikhāst nāma-e digar benevisad rostam māneʿsh shod o ruz gozasht o shab pesar-e zāl-e zarr lebās-e shabravi dar bar o raft tu orduy-e torkestān har cha bishtar gasht zendān-o paydā nakard ʿaqebat omad barā khayma-e atābak-e aʿzem-e jadid farzand-e pirān ebn-e vaysa pirman ebn-e pirān did farq-e in va pirān tafavoṭ az zamin tā āsmān-a khābidast va ṣeday-e nafirash-am boland-a rostam dākhel-e khayma shod balā sar-e u zānu zad dast ru sina-e u ya dast be-dasta-e khanjār ṣedash zad in ka qābel ni porjagartarin pahlavān rostam-o be-in ḥāl bebīnad mitarsad zebānash band omad bā badan-e larzān cheshma-rā bast taṣvir-e marg shod rostam delash sukht khangar-o dar qelāb zad benā kard u-rā nevazash konad be-ḥalash āvord goft amirzāda khangar-e man be-khun-e ādam-e boz-deli mesl-e to rangin namishad man bā to kārī nadāram man faqat

omadam ya so'al azat bokonam goft befarma har cha bedanā be-  
 [unintelligible] afrāsiyāb be-arvāḥ-e pirān migam farmud bizhan.  
 kojāst goft be-parvardegār be-towri ka migoftand dokhtar-e shahriyār-e  
 makrān bizhan-o farāri dāda o bā ham raftand o do tā qarāvōl-o ham  
 koshtand bi-eṭṭelā<sup>c</sup>at-am goft jahānbakhsh goft jahānbakhsh posht-e  
 in ordu dar yeki tanga'i o yek mosht sarbāz negahbānesh-and o az  
 ṭaraf-e afrāsiyāb ham dastur dārand ka agar shab-e tira kasi nazdik  
 shod zendāni-rā sar bebor farmud man ḥālā miram do tā kār bāt dādam  
 agar awlād-e pirān ebn-e vaysa hasti yeki inka delam mikhād beri  
 be-afrāsiyāb az qowl-e man begi agar jahānbakhsh āftāb zad o āzādash  
 nakardi fardā shab sarat-o barā kaykhosrow mibaram yeki digar ṭabl-e  
 jang bezani tā taklif-e man be-in shāhzāda-e makrān rowshan misha  
 rostam raft pirman ebn-e pirān sar o pāy-e barahna az tarsash david  
 barā khayma-e afrāsiyāb esm-e shab dārad negahbān hast esm-e shab  
 goft rāhash dādan omad sadr-e a<sup>c</sup>zam bālā sar-e afrāsiyāb bidārash  
 kard afrāsiyāb harāsun parid cha khabar-a <sup>c</sup>arż kard dastam be-  
 dāmanat emshab rāfiqemun umada bud umad bālā sar-e man o in towri  
 shoda ḥālā marā taḥdīdam karda qasam khordast be-arvāḥ-e siyāvash  
 agar emshab jahānbakhsh-o najāt nada bered be-orduy-e irān o  
 ṭabl-e jang nazani fardā shab biyād o sar-e shomā-rā khodāy  
 nakhāsta afrāsiyāb larzid avval dastur-e ṭabl-e jang dād morgh o māhi  
 khāb budand ṭabl-e jang hama-rā bidār kard ba<sup>c</sup>dam nowzar-e makrāni-rā  
 khāst o be-nowzar goft jānbakhsh-o āzādash kon agar rostam-o zadi  
 donya-rā zada-i rostam-o agar jangash-o fath kardi mesl-e inka



donyā-ro barā man gerefta-i az <sup>c</sup>ohda-e rostam bar nayomadi ka  
jahanbakhsh cha tarsidi darad azad bashad ya basta goft akha  
geraon in farmud lazem ni namitunad be-i begad ka janam dar khatar-a  
rostam ya chenin qowli dada janhakhsh-ra ba<sup>cd</sup>-e nima-e shab azad  
kardand ferestadand har koja'i ka pay-e zur bovad dast-e haqq o  
hesab dur bovad tabl-e jang tarafang zadand o shab andak andak  
gozasht sahgahan ka farzandan-e anjom shodand az cheshm-e  
ya<sup>c</sup>qub-e falak gom shaypur-e jonbazi bar amad <sup>c</sup>alam zad leshkar-e  
darya-<sup>c</sup>alamat zamin ba past miraft ta qiyamat chenan az jush-e  
leshkar qat<sup>c</sup>-e ja bud ka naqsh-e saya bar dush-e hava bud agar  
simab baridi chu baran ba<sup>c</sup>ziya simay migand simay akha ya<sup>c</sup>ni chi  
simab ya<sup>c</sup>ni jiva agar sima baridi cho baran bemondi bar [unintelligible]  
nayzadaran har pasti be-sarmasti har bolandi be-arjomandi har gusha  
be-sorpusha qalb o janah o pas o pish-e leshkar arasta o pirasta  
abr-e saqai o bad-e farashi az maydan raft az gard o ghobar arast  
chun del-e sayidan rowshan be-namayan-e hama shahbaz-e nazar dar  
avardagah shahzada-e makran az saff joda shod afrasiyab be-behana'i  
ka mikhad ruy-e tahrik konad suratash-ro bebusad be-u goft  
shahzada agar betavani az chang-e pesar-e zal emruz jan be-dar  
bebari marg baray-e to nist agar in mard-o zadi donyayi-ra baray-e  
man mosakhkhar shoda-i [unintelligible phrase] baqal-e markab  
[unintelligible] o nabardi be-ja avord rajazi khund dar avardagah  
o [unintelligible] az zamin-e iran rostam-ro khast bala o payin ya  
salavat (salavat) chu rakhsh-e tosam-e sahra o nabard o hamungard

chu rakhsh-e raqam az sayr-e moshtari jowlān be-gāh-e raftan-e bālā  
 chu sho<sup>c</sup>la-e azār be-gāh-e āmadan-e shib hamchu āb-e ravān rasad  
 be-gardash-e aflāk agar beguyi hay jahad ze gombad-e gardun agar  
 beguyi han dom o som o badan o kākol o benāgushash harir o susen  
 o fulād o sombol o khazrā in qadr markab-a be jowlān [unintelligible]  
 o tan be-<sup>c</sup>azm-e jang borid be shāhzāda <sup>c</sup>aql-e rostam māt-a did ka  
 yek javāni me<sup>s</sup>l-e in ka az afsarān-e jozv-e irān lāgher-andām lebās-e  
 valiahdi ya asp-e bolandi savār ast ki hasti kojā buda-i goft  
 shāhzāda-e makrān-am shomā-rā khāstam avval agar mishad az qowl-e  
 bābām peyāmat bedam omadam bet begam in charkh-e soflā bā kasi vefā  
 namikonad hamāntowri ka afrāsiyāb-rā az owj-e ref<sup>c</sup>at be-khok-e  
 mazalat afkanda ba shomā-m tā elā 'l-akher dorost raftār namikonad  
 biyā vāseta besho khosrow-rā bā afrāsiyāb solh beda farmud shāhzāda  
 in kār marbut be-man o to nis afrāsiyāb kārash az solh gozashta-ast  
 jormash khayli sangin-a kāvus barā khāter-e in nā-mard khosrow-rā  
 mikhāst bekoshad khosrow amir-e valiahd-a hanuz be-maqāmi narasad  
 ka be-ekhtiyār-e tāmm dāshta bāshad vallā be-mā bayn-e afrāsiyāb  
 o kaykhosrow yeki me<sup>s</sup>l-e shangal khāqān qaysar bayad vāseta bāshand  
 na man o to ay magas arsa-e simorgh na jowlān gāh-e to-st <sup>c</sup>arz-e khod  
 mibari o zahmat-e mā midāri be-rostam goft pas rāst migoftand in  
 fetna zir-e sar-e to-st farmud yābaguyi nakon pesarak-e biadab  
 to ya peyāmi āvorda-i payghām bebar goft omadam ka agar har hāli  
 nashod bād bejangam farmud bā man <sup>c</sup>arz kard bala bala hamin qadr  
 farzandat jonbakhsh maghrur bud be-āsani az pāy dar āmad farmud

magar jānbakhsh-o to gerefti <sup>c</sup>arž kard bala farmud sehr midāni goft  
 na farmud inka miporsam sehr midāni mikhām hayf az javānit bidārat  
 konam sehr dar man asar namikonad <sup>c</sup>arž kard man sehr balad nistam man  
 sehr namidānam farmud telesm-i telesband dāri javāb nadād be-rostam  
 goft agar mardi bā har harba delat mikhād nabard rostam yādash āmad  
 be qal<sup>c</sup>a-e bidād namidonam in dāstān-rā shenida-id az ostādān-e man  
 ya na dar an jang-e [unintelligible] ka ba<sup>c</sup>d-e montahi mished be-  
 ashkabus o qāmus o qarcha-e sagsār o sava-e javān o barta vo unham  
 delāvarān-e pādeshāhāni ka budand āzuqa-e irāni kam mished bizhan  
 be-lebās-e tajārat mirafta āzuqa migerefta miferestāda miresad be-  
 yek qal<sup>c</sup>a be-nām-e qal<sup>c</sup>a-e bidād qāfus shah pādshah-e <sup>c</sup>amaliy-e  
 ān qal<sup>c</sup>a az bizhan khosash miyād bizhan-am lebās-e tajārat dāshta  
 hay āzuqa be-vāseta-e dusti bā in jam<sup>c</sup> mikonad barā orduy-e irān  
 miferestād tā ya ru ya nāma mirasad dastash mibinad afrāsiyāb  
 neveshta ya amir-e irāni be-in shekl be-in lebās be-in qad dārad  
 āzuqa bebarad leshkar-e irān miferestād har kas āzuqa be-in bedād  
 be-manzela-e khiyānat-e bāb o khāk-e khunash-o bād be-bizhan migad  
 ki hasti bizhan migad in nāma-rā afrāsiyāb dāda migad bala migad  
 hamuni ka nāmat neveshta man bizhan-am unam ya pesar dāshta qarīn-e  
 hamin pesar bizhan-o migirad giv-o migirad irāni dar ham mishkanad  
 rostam miyād mikoshadash rostam hālā be-yād-e ān ruz oftād ya  
 telesband dārad dar [unintelligible] montakheb-e in telesbandi  
 loha-ist farmud sehr midāni goft na telesmi telesbandi goft injā  
 jāy-e in harfā nist begard tā begardim rostam farmud mosallah sho

goft man hama-e <sup>c</sup>omram asleha napushidam farmud pas man [unintelligible]  
 mipusham az rakhsh payāda shod asleha-rā dar āvord dāman be-kamar  
 zad ya khanjar barā sar boridan yek kaman barā baqal bastan barā  
 koshti goshud ṭabl zada shod ruy garibān hamla gereftand rostam  
 avval-e kār barā āzmāyash benā kard bā u nabard konad did har vahmā  
 in javān-rā <sup>c</sup>aqab bebarad mesl-e inka yek kuh-e <sup>c</sup>azim-o mikhād  
 bebarad khayli vazin-a in javān khayli sangin-a pāhā be-zamin  
 chaspida ba<sup>c</sup>d motavajjeh shod har vaqt dast-e rāst be-dast-e rāst-e  
 u mirasad ya<sup>c</sup>ni bāzuy-e rāst-e in javān-rā namigirad in javān  
 mesl-e [unintelligible]-a be-din vasila noqta zafr-o yāft unjam  
 hamintowr shod bāzu-rā bā dast-e rāst gerefta dāman-e kamar bā  
 dast-e chap bolandash kard zadash zamin barq-e khangar va khangar  
 sar-rā az qal<sup>c</sup>a-e badan jodā kard ya ra<sup>c</sup>d o barqash shod leshkar-e  
 qiyāmat-asar-e turāni o irāni az ja dar āmadand jang maqluba shod  
 makrāniyā sina o safar kardand dārand qorbāni mishand afrāsiyāb  
 zan o bachchā-rā bā in mosht sarbāz var dāsht zad be-biyābon raft  
 tuli nakashid makrān soqut kard dar barābar-e in narr-e shirāni ka  
 tu orduy-e kaykhosrow-and baqāyi barā doshman nist jahānbakhsh sām  
 ebn-e farāmarz taymur qahbān ebn-e borzu borzu jahāngir farāmarz har  
 delāvāri az har taraf mesl-e azhdehā mibal<sup>c</sup>ad az leshkar-e irān  
 ān vaqti ka poshtgarmi be-in sālārān dāshta bāshand taklifashān  
 rowsahn-a mardom-e shahr-e makrān tuli nakashid al-aman goftand  
 asleha rikhtand dasthā ru sar nehādand rostam dastur dād ṭabl-e  
 man<sup>c</sup>-e jang zadand jang ta<sup>c</sup>til shod farmud bizhan-o bedah va elā

bāqiyashun qatlā mishan garya eltemās pir-e mard o javān omadand  
 qasam khordand bizhan dar miyān-e mā nist mā ettela<sup>c</sup> nadārim  
 shahr-o zir o zabar kardand aşari az bizhan nayāft benā kardand  
 savār be-atrāf beferestand jāsus barā orduy-e afrāsiyāb mabādā  
 bizhan-rā borda bāshad hamrāh o mondand kaykhosrow-am goft barā  
 khāter-e bizhan be-fotuhāt-e namāyāni ka az in amirzāda sar zada  
 tā paydash nakonam digar ta<sup>c</sup>qib-e afrāsiyāb namiram shod chand  
 kelām carz konim az bizhan hālā bizhan-e giv o dokhtara raftand  
 tu kuhi ka rube-ruy-e shahr-a shabi ka qarār bud rostam bā shāhzāda-e  
 makrān nabard konad safid-e dam bizhan ya āhu did be-dokhtara goft  
 in āhu-rā mizanam miyām kebābi dorost konim bazm-e rangin konim  
 tā saranjām-e in jang be-fahmim chun az unjāyi ka neshasta budand  
 maydān-e jang o shahr-e makrān kāmelan zir-e nazar bud paydā bud  
 ya şalavāt-e digar (şalavāt) bizhan az kuh sarāzir shod o be-āhu  
 narasid o tira khata<sup>c</sup> raft o savār-e asp shod āhu-rā ta<sup>c</sup>qib kard  
 dokhtar-am savār shod hamrāhash raft gāhi bizhan mishenid yeki jigha  
 mizanad sedāsh mizanad vali e<sup>c</sup>tenā namikard miraft āhu ba<sup>c</sup>d az  
 paymudan-e rah-e besyār rasid tu ya risha-e kuh zad tu kuh bizhan az  
 asp parid pāyin ta<sup>c</sup>qib-e āhu hārahā kard dobāra sedā jigha-e zani  
 shenid az qafāy-e sar dar kuh tanin afkand bāz-ham e<sup>c</sup>tenā nakard  
 khasta shod sar bālāy-e kuh-a istād nafas tāza konad did jigha-e  
 zani kuh-ra tanin andākhta faryād mizanad torā be-khodāy-e nādida  
 sabr kard negāh kard did dokhtar ast dokhtar-e shahriyār-e makrān  
 in chera<sup>c</sup> omad cha mikhād az man chera<sup>c</sup> in towr parishān-a mabādā

ta<sup>c</sup>qibash karda bāshand nāchār dast bā keman khord shod o sabr kard  
 dokhtara rasid dokhtara goft javān be-parvardegār agar qadami ferātar  
 rafta budi digar khalās namishodi injā telesm-a injā telesm-e makrān-a  
 khub be-mowqa<sup>c</sup> rasidam in āhu sāhera'i buda mikhāst to-rā be-dām  
 biyandāzad in maghār telesm-a har ka dākhel shoda digar zenda bar  
 nagasht-ast o asari az u paydā nashod-ast var gard bizhan goft  
 yābaguyi nakon man khiyāl kardam mikhāyd tebākhi barāt dāda marā az  
 u bar hezār dārim man hālā mizanam in āhu-rā be-to sabet mikonam  
 har cha dokhtara jigha zad o eltemās kard bizhan david ya vaqt did  
 āhu raft tu maghār injā diga tir-e kaman namikhād kaman-rā andākh  
 ru ketf kamand dar āvord sar-e dast dākhel-e maghār shod āhu-rā bā  
 kamand begirad yek chāhi bud pā az pish be-dar shod raft ghār-e chāh  
 havā enqelāb shod digar dokhtara dar-e maghār-o nadid bar gardid sa  
 ruz-e jang khātema yāfta leshkar-e irān parishān-and jāsus atrāf o  
 aknāf rafta barā paydā kardan-e bizhan chāboqsavārān be-suy-e  
 leshkar-e afrāsiyāb va atrāf be-kaykhosrow goftand ya dokhtar-e zibā  
 surati ruy kharāshida muy mikanad mikhād khedmat-e shomā sharafiyāb  
 beshad migad man az bizhan ettela<sup>c</sup> dāram rāh beda āvordandash negāh  
 be-chehra zad o sharafiyāb shod o zānuy-e shāh busid <sup>c</sup>arż kard  
 shahriyār man dokhtar-e khosrowshāh-e makrāni-am man bizhan-o  
 najātash dādam man bizhan-o be-ān kuh bordam bā yek chenin sharti  
 bā ham qarār-a zanāshuyi nehādim folān ruz ya āhu'i paydā shod o  
 ta<sup>c</sup>qib kard o man-am raftam havāsh-o didam dārad berad barā telesm  
 har cha rasidam o jigha zadam o behash fahmādam injā telesm-a in

mard-e maghrur be-khod nagereft o goft sag-e kist o man hālā in āhu-rā  
 barāt mizanam raft o raft tu telesm o ra<sup>c</sup>d o barq shod o u nayomad  
 rostam o kudarz o amirā o hama shenidand o pay-e mashvarat majles  
 arāstand neshastand o goftand o bar khāstand akhtar-shenāsān khāstand  
 o monajjemīn-e ordu o ba<sup>c</sup>d az taḥqīqāt-e besyār dar <sup>c</sup>olum-e khod  
 goftand rāst migad injā telesm-ist be-nām telesm-e makrān va bizhan  
 dar telesm-a nāma neveshtand be-zābol chāboqsavār az ākher-e khāk-e  
 torkestan mojahaz nāma-rā bord zābol zāl did kaykhosrow neveshta-st  
 bizhan dar telesm-e makrān-a telesmshakan-ro bebīn kiy-a agar dar  
 orduy-a ka benevis tā mā u-ro ravāna konim agar dar shahr-a o atrāf  
 o aknāf-a barāt farāham-a biyarash nist benevis tā paydāsh konim  
 mā dar yek chenīn makāni be-yek chenīn mo<sup>c</sup>amma'i bar khordim unam  
 simorgh-o eḥzār kard az simorgh porsid simorgh-am bevay pāsokh dād  
 telesm be-nām-e lohrāsep-a az nasl-e kaypashīn <sup>c</sup>osāra-e kayqobād in  
 pesar lohrāsp dar ḥaramsarāy-e shāh-e irān zendagi mikonad javānak-ist  
 bimar pesarak-ist ranjur vali in telesm be-dast-e u shekasta khāhad  
 shod zāl az zābol omad paytakht mardom-e paytakht eḥterāmash kardand  
 o omad hejābbāshi-e ḥaram-e shāh-rā khāst o behash goft pesari be-  
 nām-e lohrāsp dar in ḥaramsarāhā has unam ya āhi kashid o goft agar  
 barāy-e ma<sup>c</sup>ālejash omadi fekr namikonam zenda bemanad be-khodā  
 dāstan sarāpā towḥid yazdah sālāsh bud lohrāsp un mowqa<sup>c</sup> vaqti zāl  
 goft ya chonim pesari lohrāsp nām tu in ḥaram hast yā na na in-a  
 ka zāl <sup>c</sup>elm-e ḥekmat midonast goft khiyāl namikonam betonim modavā  
 konim mimirad ḥokamā javābash goftand goft mikhām u-rā bebinam

raftand ejāza az bānuvān-e haram gereftand o i-rā bordandash dar haram kenār-e bestar-e in pesar zāl did ya pesar bachcha'i dah yāzdah sāla lāgher-andām zard chehra minālad telesm be-nām-e in-a cha kār konad in khodash-o namitonad tu bestar jam<sup>c</sup> o jur konad in mitonad berad ākher-e khāk-e torkestān telesm beshkanad simorgh-rā ch begad ka u in toṭwri dastur dāda dar rajaz khundan-e esfandiyār dar barābar-e pesar-e zāl-e zarr rostam shajar-e nāma-e u ma<sup>c</sup>lum mishad ka man pesar-e goshtāsep-am o goshtāsep pesar-e lohrāsep o lohrāsep az nasl-e kaypashin o <sup>c</sup>ošāra-e kayqobād zāl bā zanān-e haram goft ka shāh be-man ya chenin nāma'i nevesht va az man khāsta-st i-ro bebaramash makrān mādar-e in pesara goft fardā tashrif biyārid <sup>c</sup>emāri dorost konim bebaridash zāl-rā bordand be-mosib-khāna shab mādara kenār-e in bachcha harfā-rā yādash dād uncha bāyad fardām ya mosht khedmatkārdār-e in bachcha inhā-rā zāl var dāsht o harakat kard barā makrun tu rāh bachcha hālash behtar shod in-o lebāsash pushāndand o ārāstandash o vaqti rasidand be-ordugāh khabar be-shāh rasid dastur-e esteqbāl dāda az zāl albata bachcha-rā ka namidonan vaqti kaykhosrow āmada asari az in bachcha vo inā nabuda chehel o panj sāl ān kuhsar jang bud un kuh-e kenobard ba<sup>c</sup>d-am nazdik-e haft hasht sāl-a dombāl-e afrāsiyāb-an az in shahrābādiya in yāzdah sālāsh-a ārāsta āvordandash hożur-e shāh chashm-e kaykhosrow be-in pesar bachcha oftād lebās-e fākheri dar bar nimcha tāj bar sarash gozardand ā khayli ranjur o lāgher o natavān az zāl porsid in kiy-a <sup>c</sup>arż kard qorbān-e khāk-e āsanat in lohrāsep az nasl-e kayqobād o



dar haram-e shomā buda-st o mājerā-rā goft ka simorgh be-man amr farmuda man in-o biyāram barāy-e shekastan-e telesm ʿajab in telesm-o beshkanad zāl ʿarż kard bala agar garshāsephā dar in ʿalam paydā beshand berand farq namikonan telesm be-nām-e in-a in telesm-o mishkanad kaykhosrow khandid o jamʿiyat be-ham khord o raftand fardā shod o kaykhosrow farmud in pesar-o biyāridash raftand āvord tamām-e oranghā por-a dowr-e kaykhosrow sa chār hezār nafar az bozorgān neshasta budand kaykhosrow u-rā talabid unam umad nemāz-e shāh be-ja āvord ba maʿniyā vo vaqār va fesāhat-e kelām cherā ruy in jomla takiya kardan ka i ranjur bud o nātavān gush beda āqā inā ka dar haramsarā be-zāl goftand modavā namished in mimirad emruz o fardā ya hamin baʿd az dowrān-e saltanat-e kaykhosrow sad o bist sāl saltanat kard cherā namord saʿdi migad bas ka dar khāk tan-dorostān-rā dafn kardand o zahr-khorda namord kaykhosrow farmud lohrāsep to-i ʿarż kard bala qorbān-e khāk astānat farmud midāni barāy-e cha to-rā injā ezḥār karda-im ʿarż kard bala shahriyār-e ʿalam dastān barāyam gofta-st farmud khiyāl dārim to-rā be-telsm-e makrān beferestim barāy-e najāt-e bizhan ebn-e giv va majarā-rā barāy-e u naql kardand o behash fahmāndand bizhan dar telesm-a vo ghayr az to ham kasi namitonad in telesm-o beshkanad o bizhan-o najāt beda yek khandā'i kard o yek taʿzimi namuda o ʿarż kard shahriyār in kār az man sākhta nist shāh farmud cherā cherā nur-e dida hamāntowri ka shenada-i agar telesmi be-nām-e ya bachcha'i bāshad pahlavānān-e donyā qāder nistand hamān bachcha telesm-o mishkanad in telesm be-nām-e to-st

avval ka qābel nistam o man in kār-rā javāb namitonam bokonam o  
 man shamshir tā hālā dar miyān na bastam o qanun-e shamshir zadan  
 namidonam o ba<sup>c</sup>d ka fahmandand ehtiyāj be-inā nist ham tā rāhi dar  
 telesm telesmhā mishkani be-nām-e to-st in qerāniy-a be-dast-e  
 to goft be-yek shart mipaziram hama raghā gardanhā por shod bar  
 gashtand in bayad eftekhār konad ya bachcha az patakht bā un  
 esteqbāl āvordandash shāh mikhād behash dastur bedad cha khāheshi  
 dāra mikhād bokonad cha sharti dārad hama motavajjeh shodand shāh  
 porshid cha sharti carz kard raqam-e valiahdi benevisid be-nām-e  
 man khod-e kaykhosrow hanuz sakka be-nāmash nazadan kavus behash  
 gofta tā afrāsiyāb-o sar nabori sakka be-nāmat namizanam hālā migad  
 agar mayl dāri man telesm-o beshkanam in raqam-e valiahdi be-  
 nāmam benevis yek bāra kaykhosrow sokut kard darbār hama gholghol  
 oftād be-ham negāh kardand rostam kam taqati kard injā tokhm-e  
 kina keshta shod injā sedash zad o tā surata bar gasht be-samt-e  
 rostam rostam ya nok sili zad o in partāb shod bisharm khāk dar  
 dahānat fahmidi cha ghalati kardi hama-e mardoma-e irān entezār  
 dārand shāh bayn-e avāmeri befarmāyad bā jān o del bepazirand to  
 injā āmada mikhāst ya kārī-rā qabul koni ba<sup>c</sup>d khāheshi bekoni be-  
 unam tāza khāhesh-e valiahdiy-a tā liyaqat-e in maqām-rā dārid  
 gonjeshk bin ka sohbat-e shāhin eshāra mida partāb shod az hush raft  
 kaykhosrow farmud pesar-e zāl bikhod kardi zadish pahlavān mā  
 bizhan-o tā najat nedaym az injā harakat namikonim man-am qasam  
 khordam inam be-ṭowrika migan āftāb labāy-e bachcha-st ya chizi  
 be-zebānash āmad man minevisam kaykhosrow qabul kard fardā i-rā

arāstand āvordandash shāh behash goft mikhām telesm-e makrān  
beshkani goft harfam-o migiram raqam-e valiahdi telesm-e makrān  
namisha kaykhosrow nevesht amma az haminjā ya negāhi be-rostam kard  
zir-e nazar sepordash telesm-e makrān-rā in bachcha shekast [unin-  
telligible] shékastan-e telesm mishad [unintelligible] ehtiyāj nist  
barādar gerd shod o ra<sup>c</sup>d o barq shod o ghuli khost o divi kosht o  
in-rā namikhād telesm-o shekast bizhan-o najāt dād be-shokrāna-e  
paydā-shodan-e bizhan jashni gereftand dokhtar-e shahriyār-e makrān-rā  
be-bizhan dādand az ānjā ta<sup>c</sup>qib-e afrāsiyāb beshno az afrāsiyāb  
pesar-e pashang be-har ābādi o [unintelligible] vo qasaba'i hay āzuqa  
migirad chun midonad kāh-rā namishad jelo sayl begzari bā khār o  
khāshāk namishad jelo ya rudkhāna-ro beband midona in-o maqāmat  
namitonad bokonad tā inka ya ruz nāchār be-pirmān ebn-e pirān goft  
ākha pesarak bābāt šadr-e a<sup>c</sup>zam bud chunka gol rafta golestān  
shod kherāb buy-e gol-rā az cha juyi maz golāb ākha to-am ya naqsha'i  
bekesh man gharq-am <sup>c</sup>arż kard un cha man begam mipaziri afrāsiyāb goft  
nāchāram <sup>c</sup>arż kard be-selāh-e koll-e <sup>c</sup>ālam-a farmud begu <sup>c</sup>arż kard  
be-yazdān agar har gusha-e <sup>c</sup>ālam beri irāniyān dast azat bar namidārand  
boro sar-e qabr-e siyāvash unjā pas benshin mardom barā torbat-e  
siyāvash ehterām mikonand kārīt nadārand chāra nadāsht leshkar-o  
bar dāsht o āmad siyāvashgard o mardom-e siyāvashgard ghāfel agar  
midonestand rāh-rā mibastand besh inā ka tu siyāvashgard-an az  
afrāsiyāb khoshashun namiyād hanuz barā siyāvash dāgh dārand amma  
in bimowqa<sup>c</sup> rasid o dar bāz bud o sayl-e sepāh o leshkar-e i

keshvar rikhtan dar shahr dar gozasht darbāza bastand takht-e pol  
 kashidand khandaq por āb afrāsiyāb mānd ya moddati ba<sup>c</sup>d telesm-e  
 makrān shekasta shod o bizhan paydā shod o irāniyān be-jostojuy-e  
 afrāsiyāb tāzā āmadand afrāsiyāb sangari bud

Translation of Habib Allah's Session

Yesterday the chain of speech reached to the point which I told you. The army of Iran came to the outskirts of Makran chasing Afrāsiyāb. Afrāsiyāb took refuge with the ruler of Makran, who had promised him safety.

The shah asked for a volunteer. Bizhan b. Giv rose and said, "I will go, and bring news and if Afrāsiyāb and his army have gone to Makran, I will enlighten the ruler of Makran." He mounted up and left. When he arrived he saw that Afrāsiyāb's army had made camp outside of the city of Makran. He paid no attention to this endless army. With great bravery and a world of courage, he passed through one side of the army and entered the city of Makran. He asked as he went in order to find the court. He dismounted and entered the court. He saw Afrāsiyāb sitting on the throne with the ruler of Makran in a lower place, the princes of Makran and Turan all around. It is a feast. All turned to look at Bizhan.

Bizhan praised and complimented Khosrowshah of Makran, but paid no heed to Afrāsiyāb. After the proper courtesies, he said, "Ruler of Makran. You are playing with the tail of a lion. Afrāsiyāb, who has reached the day of harvesting and reaping the fruits of his actions, has come, fleeing from everyone. You had no choice but let him in. The King of China would not help you in this matter. I have come to you from the glorious<sup>1</sup> Kaykhosrow, the ruler of Iran, to say that you should be more mindful of your

impending destruction, lest you be deceived or put yourself in a foolish position.<sup>2</sup> Kaykhosrow has sent me to tell you that you must either turn Afrāsiyāb out of your city, being properly careful of your lives and wealth and the pride of your country, or else watch the road for coming trouble." Afrāsiyāb and his companions hung their heads.

[Look sir what courage and valor can do. Afrāsiyāb could knock over ten like Bizhan with one piece of straw. But what a strong backbone and real guts can do! To come alone into such a city following a poisonous snake: Afrāsiyāb who has made such sacrifices and given such rewards, now having fled from his homeland and come here. And now look what Bizhan says having followed Afrāsiyāb into a city in the presence of Afrāsiyāb and Garsivaz and all these Turkish heroes!]

The ruler of Makran said to Bizhan, "You should be ashamed of yourself, young prince. Afrāsiyāb is my leader. He is the emperor of Torkestan. My means of life are the result of his goodness. Even though he is really the ruler of this house, right now he is my guest. Up to this time, no coward has thrown a guest out of his house. Go, tell Kaykhosrow that he must stop following Afrāsiyāb and go about his own business. Go! If you don't, you'll be sorry."

Bizhan said, "No person has been born from a woman who can act in this haughty manner."<sup>3</sup> Kaykhosrow said, "If you weren't alone, and a guest, I would teach you a lesson." Bizhan said, "None of

these people sitting around you are worth anything. What is the matter with you?"

He replied, "You are my guest now." Bizhan said, "No, pretend that I'm not a guest." The ruler of Makran spoke to a servant, "Go, tell my son to come." It wasn't long until Bizhan saw a youth come into the court. He was wearing the clothes of the heir apparent and had a short sword covered with jewels at his waist. He had no trace of courage, but he was just young, about twenty years, give or take a few. Quietly, he [unintelligible]. He had no trace of a beard and showed no sign of having knowing life.

Bizhan said, "Why did he call you? Why?" The ruler of Makran said to his son, "Son, teach Bizhan a lesson." Then he came before Bizhan and greeted him, saying to Bizhan, "Prince, you are our guest. Go back the way you have come, and take a message to the shah of Iran that Afrāsiyāb is there, as Khosrowshāh wishes. Even if Kaykhosrow were to come here himself, he would be killed. Now, you are an official. You're alone. You are acting over-proud. You're asking for it, and I am going to have to teach you proper manners."

Bizhan said, "Don't be ridiculous!"

He answered, "By God, I will protect Afrāsiyāb." He said, "Whose dog is Afrāsiyāb?"<sup>4</sup> He pulled his lightening sword, and attacked the prince of Makran with a sea of people watching.

[I also told you yesterday that Afrāsiyāb had said to the ruler of Makran, "What strength do you have that you can say come here and you are safe? Do you have a large army? Is the city

strong? Do you have a great hero?" He had answered, "I just have an idea." And now Afrāsiyāb was sitting and watching.]

Bizhan held up his sword. The other fought with him hand to hand. Before Afrāsiyāb's eyes he pushed back the hand, and made Bizhan drop his sword. He reached for the other hand, then the trap was sprung.

Every nightingale who begins singing,  
Remembers the suffering of the flower petals.

The petal which did not fall in the Fall,  
Does [unintelligible] behind the curtain.<sup>5</sup>

He hit him with a doubled-up fist and jumped back. The prince was thrown through the air by the force of this blow to the back of the court with blood flowing from his nose and mouth, head over heels. He fainted.

They lifted Bizhan up and carried him to the haram. Behind the harem of the king there is a garden. They carried Bizhan into one of the rooms at the back of the garden and bound him up well and chained him and set guards to watch him then returned to the presence of the king. Afrāsiyāb was very interested in this prince. He asked, "If you aren't a magician I cannot believe that you knocked Bizhan over with one blow." He said, "That's up to you. It was nothing."

Afrāsiyāb developed a real interest in the boy. The ruler of Makran asked, "What have you done with Bizhan. My son, don't kill him. He is the grandson of Rostam. He's young and a servant." He said, "We are keeping him hostage in the garden."



Then he said, "Order that he be given bread and water and be cared for. Perhaps he will be sorry." All this was done.

The day passed. Nightfall came. The ruler of Makran has a daughter, very noble, very beautiful. The girl saw that her brother was coming and going into the garden, with a number of soldiers, sometimes bringing bread and water or a torch. She asked one of the slaves, "What is going on?" They said, "The prince of Iran, the nephew of Rostam, Bizhan b. Giv, is a prisoner. He acted over-proud in the presence of Afrāsiyāb and your brother knocked him down with one blow. Then he tied him up and now Bizhan is bound up in the garden in such and such a room.

The girl became curious and came to see what kind of man this prisoner was, this grandson of Rostam whose fame had filled up the world. What was the difference between him and the rest of the people? What is the difference? When she arrived, her brother was just leaving the prison. She came before her brother, greeted him, and he asked, "Where have you been, sister?" She said, "I've come because I heard that we have a special prisoner. I want to see." He said, "He's not worth seeing. Tomorrow." She said, "No, I'll just take a look. I have heard his fame and I want to see him, so I can see what the difference between him and the rest of the people is and how far it goes."

He said, "Come back soon." He spoke to one of the guards. "Open the door, so she can take a look, then close the door again."

The guard obeyed. The prince left -- Nowzar Makrani -- and the girl came up. Two soldiers were keeping watch at the door. They unlocked the door and lit a torch. It was early evening. The beam of the torch -- the light of the torch -- fell on Bizhan's face. The girl saw his [unintelligible] eyes. She fell in love with him, trembling from head to foot. She bit her lip in thought. Then she went away. Bizhan only saw a veiled figure come in, look at him, saying nothing, then go away. [What can he know?]

The door was shut with two guards in front of it. The girl came out a little way and began thinking. She asked one of the servants, "When did they capture this prince?" They answered, "This morning." "Is he the one who was captured by my brother?" They said, "Yes."

She asked, "I don't know why they didn't kill him." They said, "Ah! He is the grandson of Rostam. Your father has ordered this. He makes a good hostage when we need one in prison."

She said, "Very good." She went off and sat for an hour thinking. Reason did not win her over, she was so enamored. She was overcome with excitement, at the same time realizing that if a [unintelligible] breath of this should reach her brother, he would kill her. But Love overwhelmed Fear. Wherever Love sets up its tent, there is no place for Reason. Wherever Love sets up its tent, there is no place for Reason. Two rulers in one province are nothing but trouble.<sup>6</sup>

The veiled girl began thinking devilish thoughts. In the middle of the night, the guards at the door heard a footstep. They stopped. The girl said, "Friend." She came up. They saw a sword in the hands of a worthy owner. It is the princess -- the daughter of the ruler of Makran. Nowzar's sister. They bowed, and she said, "I wanted to talk to you." They answered, "At your service." With the pretense of asking such questions as who is Rostam and who is his grandson and who were they themselves who were so brave, she engaged the two guards in conversation. She gradually drew them a little way from the door of the prison, feigning that, "I don't want the prisoner to hear me or my brother to see me in the torchlight."

She took them unawares, luring them from the door of the prison ten or twenty zarcs<sup>7</sup> into the darkness. Suddenly she drew her lightning sword like a female tiger, and overthrew them both. She killed the two soldiers, then ran and broke open the lock. She opened the prison, grabbed a torch and went in.

Bizhan's gaze fell upon a bloody girl, frightened, coming in. She so took him by surprise, that he yelled out, "Who are you?" The girl said, "I have come to rescue you, my prince. I am Nowzar Makrani's sister, the daughter of the ruler of Makran. Today while the guards were coming and going, bringing you food, I got curious. I took one look at you and fell in love. Now I have come to tell you, swearing by God, that your life is hanging by a hair. I have just now killed two guards for you. If you're

willing, I will free your hands and bring you whatever you need. We will go away together. I will close my eyes to my brother, my father, and even existence itself, coming with you like a serving girl. If you don't agree, I have no choice but to kill you and then myself."

Bizhan said, "If I ask you a question, will you tell me the truth?" She said, "Yes." He said, "On your faith?" She said, "On my faith." He asked, "Does your brother know magic?" She said, "No. I swear." He said, "How is it possible that he doesn't know magic and yet has such power? One of my hands is as big as he is."

She said, "I don't know anything about magic, but I do know that he doesn't know magic." The astrologers here say that the Iranians are on the rise. Come on. Listen to me! I will release you now. The horses and provisions are ready. I'll put you on a horse. There's a mountain opposite the city of Makran. I'll take you into that mountain. It's a good place, pleasant, lots of hunting, trees, flowing water. We'll stay there until the Iranians come. If the Iranians defeat the Makranians, we'll come out and join them. I will close my eyes to my brother, my father, and existence for you. If, God forbid, your grandfather Rostam doesn't defeat them and the Iranians are defeated, you and I will still be alive."

Bizhan agreed. "Swear. Take an oath." He took an oath. She released Bizhan's hands and went and brought back a suit of armor for him. She brought a horse and mare. She took him

away from the roads in the dark of night. When it became light, they were a long way from the city. They went along until we reach their story.

In the morning guards came to change off with the others. They saw that no soldiers were there. Looking around, they found the dead soldiers a few zar<sup>c</sup>s away. The door of the prison is open! They went in and found no trace of the prisoner. A cry went up. Nowzar Makrani came to look into the matter, asking the serving girls and slaves who had done this thing. The clues reached to the point that he finally was told, "Last night your sister came and changed her clothes. Then she went into the garden and returned. Finally, she came and took two horses and some armor." He understood. He wanted to go after her when news was brought that the strongest of all heroes, Jahānbakhsh, was coming toward the city from the Shah of Iran.

[That God may make your final lot good, ṣalavāt. (Ṣalavāt)]

Nowzar was forced to forget about his sister and Bizhan since he had promised to protect Afrāsiyāb.

Jahānbakhsh arrived in front of the city of Makran with about as many soldiers as one can count on one's fingers. He took one look at Afrāsiyāb's army and sent a letter to the ruler of Makran. The contents of the letter consisted of this: "I am Jahānbakhsh b. Faramarz, the grandson of Rostam. Yesterday Bizhan came here and we have had no news of him since. If you have information about him, let me know. Right now, know yourselves that whoever gives refuge to Afrāsiyāb puts his life, wealth, family and people into danger."

The letter was sent. An hour later by way of answer, Afrāsiyāb, Khosrowshāh of Makran and hundreds of officers and soldiers came out of the city and formed a line in front of Jahānbakhsh. Jahānbakhsh understood that they were intent upon war and wanted to fight. He went into the field to arrange the [unintelligible] of war. His nimble elephant roared.

The prince of Makran came out. Jahānbakhsh saw that he was a thin young man, although good-looking, wearing the clothes of the heir. When he came out, Jahānbakhsh thought that he was coming to deliver a message because he had no armor except for a royal sword (and even that was only for decoration). He greeted Jahānbakhsh who replied, "Who are you?" Nowzar said, "I am the son of Khosrowshāh Makrani. I have come to have a few words with you."

Jahānbakhsh said, "First, so that we may know, explain where is Bizhan?" He said, "By all the people of the world, Bizhan came into the city yesterday and was rude in the presence of Afrāsiyāb and acted over-proud. I captured him. Last night he was in prison, but he escaped from prison with my sister. They killed two guards. I was going after them when you came."

[So that you never see any bad, send a ṣalavāt (Ṣalavāt). That God may never finish off your parents, send a better ṣalavāt than this one to Mohammed (Ṣalavāt).]

Jahānbakhsh said "Is what you are saying true?" He swore it was. He asked, "Will you go and ask you father why he has allowed Afrāsiyāb into his city and raised the flag of rebellion against the

government of Iran."

Nowzar bit his lip and said, "Hero, you are saying the same thing again. Afrasiyab is our leader. He is the ruler and emperor of Torkestan. He is good! Since times have become hard for him, he has come here. One of his own rulers has given him refuge. He is our guest. By God, only a coward has thrown a guest out of his house, giving the guest to his enemy." Jahanbakhsh said, "Don't be ridiculous. Just take the message." He replied, "I was sent here to talk to you." Jahanbakhsh said, "You have talked to me, telling me things like you captured Bizhan. Should I believe that you captured Bizhan?" He said, "If I did take him, what would be so surprising?" Jahanbakhsh said, "Perhaps you are a magician." He replied, "No. I swear, I know no magic." Jahanbakhsh said, "Ah! One of Bizhan's hands is as big as you are."

Nowzar answered, "In your area, is heroism judged only by size and [unintelligible]? Give me a thin horse on the field of battle over a fatted cow." Jahanbakhsh said, "I am going to cut off your tongue."

He attacked with a double-bladed sword. Nowzar grabbed Jahanbakhsh's hand. With all the strength Jahanbakhsh had, he saw that here his hand was as useful as the wind in using his sword. He grabbed Nowzar's neck with his other hand.

The one dismounted from his horse and the other from his elephant. They both grabbed each other around the neck. It was a great struggle. To make a long story short, Jahanbakhsh was thrown

head over heels. He hit the ground. Nowzar bound Jahānbakhsh and gave him over to the others. They took him and his elephant. Then Nowzar looked at the other Iranian soldiers. He said, "You are officials. I will forgive officials. I have nothing to do with you. Go back and tell the government of Iran that I have the urge to throw it to the wind. Tell Kaykhosrow for me that Afrāsiyāb is our guest. Forget about Makran. If not, remember, this is a place where the Heaven's favorite may become only air." The soldiers went away.

The news reached Kaykhosrow. He ordered them to set out. The princes of Iran wanted to go. Although Rostam was not sure what the right thing to do was, a thought came to him.

They arrived opposite the endless army of the Turkish emperor.

Down to the fish and up to the moon went           8  
the shafts of spears and the arch of the court.

The drums, flag and drum houses were set up. The army got prepared on all sides. They sent the glorious Kaykh's letter to the ruler of Makran. After proper greetings, the letter said, "Send out Bizhan and Jahānbakhsh and wait for the coming of your bad day of war. If not, such and such will happen."

The other sent back an answer which reached the shah of Iran. After short polite greetings, he had written, "Remembrance of Siyāvash! Bizhan b. Giv has fled from prison. I swear we know nothing of him, but we have Jahānbakhsh in chains here. If you are ready to make peace with Afrāsiyāb, we will give you back Jahānbakhsh. Whatever you want, we will allow. We have had enough war. With all



the glory and power that Afrāsiyāb has, he is willing to send you tribute. Why do you also insist on his life? If not, the only thing left is the sword. We will fight." Kaykhosrow wanted to send another letter, but Rostam stopped him.

One day passed. At night the son of Zāl put on his night-raid clothes and went to the camp of Torkestan. As hard as he tried, he could not find the prison. Finally he came to the tent of Afrāsiyāb's advisor, the son of Pirān b. Vaysa, Pirman b. Pirān. He saw that there was as great a difference between this one and his father as there is between the earth and the sky. Pirman was asleep, snoring loudly. Rostam entered the tent and knelt next to Pirman's head. With one hand on Pirman's chest and the other on the handle of his dagger, Rostam called to Pirman.

Pirman didn't have the strength to stand the shock of seeing the bravest hero, Rostam, this way. His tongue tied in knots and he began trembling. He closed his eyes and imagined his death coming. Rostam felt sorry for him. He put away his dagger and began to sooth him, until he brought him around. He said, "Prince, my dagger won't be soiled with the blood of a goat-hearted person like you. I have nothing to do with you. I have only come to ask you a question." He said, "Go ahead. Whatever I know, by the [unintelligible] of Afrāsiyāb and the spirit of Pirān, I will tell you."

Rostam asked, "Where is Bizhan?" He said, "By God, it is as they told you. The daughter of the ruler of Makran rescued Bizhan and they ran away together, killing two guards. We don't know

anything about them."

Rostam said, "How about Jahānbakhsh?" He said, "Jahānbakhsh is behind the camp in a gulley with a group of soldiers watching him. They have orders from Afrāsiyāb that if someone comes at night, they are to cut off the prisoner's head." He said, "I am going now, but I am entrusting two things to you, if you are Pirān b. Vaysa's son. One is that I want you to go to Afrāsiyāb and tell him, 'I promise that if the sun rises and you have not freed Jahānbakhsh, I will take your head to Kaykhosrow tomorrow.' The other is that the war drums must be beaten so that my duty will be clear to the prince of Makran."

With bare head and feet, Rostam left. Pirān b. Pirān ran trembling off to Afrāsiyāb's tent. The guard there asked him for the password, which he gave, and they let him in. The *sadr-e a<sup>c</sup>zam* came up next to Afrāsiyāb's head and woke him up. Afrāsiyāb jumped up frightened. "What's the matter?" Pirān answered, "I am your slave! Tonight our friend came to me and it was this way. Now he has required something of me. He has sworn on Siyāvash's spirit that if we don't free Jahānbakhsh tonight so he can go back to Iran's camp, and if you don't beat the war drums, Rostam will, God forbid, come tomorrow night for your head."

Afrāsiyāb shook. First he ordered the war drums beaten. All the birds and fish, who had been asleep, were awakened by the war drums. Then he sent for Nowzar Makrani and said to him, "Free Jahānbakhsh. If you can strike Rostam, you have struck the entire world. If you can defeat Rostam in battle, it would be as if you had conquered

the whole world for me. No one else matters. And if you aren't equal to Rostam, why be concerned about whether Jahānbakhsh is free or not."

Nowzar said, "He's a hostage." The other answered, "It doesn't matter." [He can't say to Nowzar, "My life is in danger. Rostam has sworn certain things."] They let Jahānbakhsh go in the middle of the night.

Wherever a strong foot is placed,  
The hand of truth and judgment flees.<sup>9</sup>

The war drums rumbled. The night passed slowly. At dawn when the sons of stars are lost to the eye of Jacob of the Heavens, the trumpet for staking lives sounded and the flag went up over the sea-like army. The earth was trodden down into eternity so that a shadow fell over the sky's shoulders from the movement of the army. If mercury poured like rain. . . . [Some people say sīmā instead of sīmāb, but what does sīmā mean? It means "mercury."]

If mercury poured like rain,  
It would stay on the lancers' [unintelligible].<sup>10</sup>

Even the lowliest thing was dizzied. The greatest things were further enhanced. Every corner was draped in red.<sup>11</sup> The center, the back, and the front of the army were readied and ordered. The water-carrier clouds and the valet wind swept across the plain cleaning it of dust and dirt, clean like the heart of a sayyed,<sup>12</sup> so everyone could see like a falcon in the battlefield.

The prince of Makran left the battle line. Pretending he wanted to kiss Nowzar goodbye to send him off, Afrāsiyāb said to him, "If you are able to save yourself from the grasp of Zāl's son today,

death will never get you. If you can defeat this man, you have conquered the whole world for me. [Unintelligible phrase.]" He did the proper [unintelligible] for battle. He bragged about himself on the field and [unintelligible] from the land of Iran. He called for Rostam.

[Above and below, a ṣalvāt (Ṣalevāt)]

An unbridled Rakhsh of the desert and battlefield and plain, Rakhsh orbiting like Jupiter rushing up to the zenith, like a torch of Āzar,<sup>13</sup> like water rushing downhill, reaching to the revolving heavens if you say hay, leaping over the arching sky if you say nan. The tail and hoof and body and mane and neck, silk and lily and steel and hyacinth and green,<sup>14</sup> he is such a horse in jumping [unintelligible phrase] war to the prince.

Rostam is astonished! He saw a thin youth, like one of the officers of some part of Iran, wearing the clothes of an heir, riding a large horse. "Who are you? What are you doing?" He said, "I am the prince of Makran. I called for you. First, if I may, I have a message from my father. I have come to tell you that this base wheel [of Fortune] plays false with everyone. Just as Afrāsiyāb was thrown from the pinnacle of dignity into the dust of disgrace, things won't always go well with you either. Come on! Be the instrument through which Afrāsiyāb and Khosrow may make peace."

Rostam answered, "Prince. This is not our problem. Afrāsiyāb's actions have gone beyond peace. His guilt lies heavy. Kāvus has ordered Khosrow to kill this coward. He is the heir but he does not yet have total power to do what he wishes. By God, for us only a lord

or a king or a caesar may be such an instrument. Not you and I, you insect! The simorgh's<sup>15</sup> heir isn't going to waste his time with you. You're just talking and wasting our time."

Nowzar replied to Rostam, "They've told the truth then. This is all your fault." Rostam said, "Don't talk nonsense, you rude child. You brought your message, now take one back."

He said, "I have come because, if everything else failed, I have to fight." Rostam asked, "With me?" He said, "Yes, ah, yes. In just this way your offspring, Jahanbakhsh was fooled, so that I threw him down easily."

Rostam said, "You defeated Jahanbakhsh?" He answered, "Yes." Rostam asked, "Do you know magic?" Nowzar said, "No." Rostam said, "In asking if you know magic, I just want you to be warned, magic has no effect on me."

Nowzar said, "I don't know any magic." Rostam asked, "Do you control a spell? Are you an enchanter?" He didn't answer. He said to Rostam, "Fight with whatever you want." Rostam remembered Bidad Castle.<sup>16</sup>

[I don't know if you have heard this story from one of my masters<sup>17</sup> or not. In that [unintelligible] battle, after a long time, the provisions run out for Ashkabus and Qamus and Qarcha the Sagsar and Sava the Youth and Barta<sup>18</sup> and all the royal heroes.]

[Bizhan went off dressed as a merchant to get provisions and send them back. He reaches a castle called Bidad Castle where Qafus Shah was ruler. Qafus Shah came to like Bizhan very much.

[Bizhan was still dressed as a merchant and getting provisions together by using Qāfus' friendship. He was sending the provisions to the Iranian camp until one day a letter arrived. Afrāsiyāb had written to Qāfus, "There is an Iranian prince of this description and wearing these clothes, of this height, who is sending provisions to the Iranian army. Whoever gives provisions to him is betraying his father and homeland."

[He asked Bizhan, "Who are you?" Bizhan said, "Is this letter from Afrāsiyāb?" Qāmus said, "Yes." Bizhan says, "Just as it's written in the letter, I am Bizhan." Qāmus also had a son just like this boy [Nowzar]. He captures Bizhan and Giv and defeats the Iranians. Rostam comes and kills him.

[Now Rostam was thinking about that day. He has a talisman in his [unintelligible]. The formula for the talisman is on a plaque.]

Rostam said, "Do you know magic?" Nowzar said, "No." He said, "Do you control a spell? Are you an enchanter?" Nowzar said, "This is not the place to talk. Go on, let's get going." Rostam said, "Put on your armor." Nowzar replied, "In my whole life I have never worn armor." Rostam said, "Then I will wear [unintelligible]." He dismounted from Rakhsh and took off his armor. He tucked in his shirt and took a dagger to cut off Nowzar's head, and prepared rope for binding Nowzar up to be killed.

The drums were beaten and they lunged for one another. At first, Rostam fought with him just to try him out. He saw that how-  
ever he tried to knock over this youth, it was as if he was trying to

move a mountain. The youth is so heavy. He is very heavy. His feet adhere to the ground. Then he realized that whenever his right hand met the other's right hand, that is, when he didn't grab his right forearm, the boy is like a [unintelligible]. Then he was able to win.

It went this way. He grabbed Nowzar's arm with his right hand. With his left hand, he grabbed the end of his belt and threw him down to the ground. Then he cut off Nowzar's head with his lightning dagger. The endless Turanian army and the Iranian army rushed forward and the war began. The Makranians moved forward and back, letting some men fall. Afrāsiyāb took his women and children, and the handful of men and ran off into the desert.

It wasn't long until Makran fell before these lions who are in Kaykhosrow's camp. None were left to remain enemies. Jahānbakhsh, Sām b. Fāramarz, Taymur, Qahbān b. Borzu, Borzu, Jahāngir, Fāramarz -- the heroes came from every direction devouring like dragons. Once the army of Iran had demonstrated their courage to these warriors, their impending destruction became clear. It wasn't long before the people of Makran cried out for peace. They threw down their armor and threw up their hands. Rostam ordered the drums beaten, signalling the end of the war. The war came to a close.

Rostam ordered them to give up Bizhan or all be killed. Crying for mercy, young and old came and swore, "Bizhan isn't here. We know nothing about him." They turned the city upside down and found no trace of Bizhan. They began sending soldiers out and spies into Afrāsiyāb's camp to find out if they had carried Bizhan off. They

waited. Kaykhosrow said, "Out of respect for all the victories Bizhan has brought us, we won't leave here until we find him." So they didn't leave.

Now let's say a few words about Bizhan. Bizhan b. Giv, and the young girl went into the mountain opposite the city the same night that had been set for Rostam to fight the prince of Makran. At dawn, Bizhan saw a deer. He said to the girl, "I'm going to kill that deer. Then I'll come back and cook it. We'll spend our time feasting well until we see that the war has ended." [From the place where they were staying the plain of battle and the whole city of Makran was visible.]

[Another salavat (Salavat).]

Bizhan went off down the mountain but didn't catch the deer. His arrows missed so he mounted his horse and followed the deer. The girl also mounted up to go along with him. Every once and a while Bizhan heard someone shouting, calling to him, but he paid no attention and went on.

After the deer had run a long way, it came to a crevice in the mountain and ran in. Bizhan jumped down from his horse and followed. Again he heard a woman's cry echoing from the mountain behind him, and again he paid no attention. Finally he got tired -- he had been running up the mountain -- and stood catching his breath. He heard the woman's cries again reverberating in the mountain. She was shouting, "I swear to you by the unseen God!" He stopped, looked around and saw that it was the girl, the daughter of the ruler of Makran.

"Why has she come" What does she want from me? Why is she so upset? Maybe they're following her."



Automatically he clutched his bow and waited. The girl caught up with him and said, "Young man, I swear by God that if you had gone one step further, there would have been no hope for you. There is a spell on this place, the spell of Makran. It's a good thing I got here in time. That deer was a magician who wanted to trap you. The cave is under a spell. Whoever goes in, never comes out alive and no trace is ever found of him. Turn back."

Bizhan said, "Don't try to change my mind. Food has appeared right in front of you. We have thousands like that one. Now I am going to kill it and show you what kind of deer it is."

No matter how the girl cried and pleaded, Bizhan ran on. She watched as Bizhan saw that the deer had gone into the cave. This was not the place for a bow. He threw his bow over his shoulder, grabbed his rope and entered the cave to rope the deer. There was a pit. First his foot fell in, then he fell into the hole himself. The world tumbled around and the girl could no longer see the entrance to the cave. She turned back.

The three days' war came to an end. Iran's army was at a standstill, spies having gone all over the empire to find Bizhan and horsemen chasing Afrāsiyāb and scouring the countryside.

Kaykhosrow was told, "A beautiful young girl is here. Her face is torn and she is tearing her hair from grief. She has asked for an audience with you. She says she has news of Bizhan."

"Send her in."

They brought her in. She looked at him and approached. She

kissed the king's knee and said, "My lord, I am the daughter of Khosrowshāh of Makran. I freed Bizhan, and took him to the mountains on the condition that we would marry. One day a deer appeared and he chased it. I went too seeing that he was about to fall under a spell. Even though I reached him and shouted that this place is under a spell, this foolish man did not stop, saying 'What kind of a dog is this? I am going to kill this deer for you.' He went and was captured by the spell. Thunder crashed and lightening flashed, and he didn't come out."

Rostam, Kudarz, the nobles and all listened. Then they organized a council meeting. They sat. They spoke. They rose and called for the astrologers and astronomers of the camp. After looking long into their sciences, they said, "She's right. That place is under a spell. It is the spell of Makran and Bizhan is in the spell."

A letter was sent to Zābol. An armed rider carried the letter from the furthest reaches of Turkestan to Zābol. Zāl saw that Kaykhosrow had written, "Bizhan is caught in the spell of Makran. Find the one who can break the spell. If this person is in camp, write so we can get him going. If he is in the city or the countryside, and you are able to find him, bring him here. If not, write so we can find him. We have met such a puzzle in such a place!"

Zāl summoned up the simorgh and questioned it. The simorgh answered, "The spell is in the name of Lohrāsp,<sup>19</sup> of the family of Pashin, descended from Kayqobād. This boy Lohrāsp lives in the king's harem. He is a sick little child, a small, ill boy, but he will

break this spell."

Zāl left Zabol for the capital. He was properly greeted and entered. He called for the captain of the private quarters of the harem and said to him, "Is there a boy in the harem named Lohrāsp?"

The captain sighed and said, "If you came to cure him, I don't think he's still alive."

By god, this story of life is all one, from beginning to end. Lohrāsp was eleven years old then.

When Zāl said, "Is there a boy named Lohrāsp in this harem or not" -- and it wasn't that he knew anything about medicine -- the other said, "I don't think we can cure him, so he will surely die. The doctors have given up on him."

Zāl said, "I want to see him."

They went and got permission to enter from the ladies of the harem who brought him to the boy's bedside. Zāl saw a little boy of ten or eleven years, moaning, emaciated and yellow. The spell is in his name!

What can be done? This boy can't even get along in his bed, and he can go to the furthest reaches of Turkestan to break a spell!

And what can one say to the simorgh -- for it was the one that gave Zāl the instructions -- when Esfandiyār brags before Silver Zāl's<sup>20</sup> son Rostam. A tree will appear in Lohrāsp's name so that Esfandiyār can say, "I am the son of Goshtāsp and Goshtāsp is the son of Lohrāsp and Lohrāsp is from the line of Kaypashin and the family of Kayqobād."

Zāl said to the women of the harem, "The king has written me a

letter asking me to bring the boy to Makran." The boy's mother said, "Come tomorrow. We'll have a litter ready so you can take him."

They took Zāl to his quarters. That night the boy's mother sat at his bedside and taught him a speech -- all that was necessary.

The next day Zāl took the boy and a group of servants and left for Makran.

On the way the boy's health improved. They dressed him and adorned him. When they reached camp, the king heard the news and ordered the men to go out and receive Zāl.

They knew nothing of the boy, of course. When Kaykhosrow left, there had been no boy and all. The war had waged on that mountaintop for forty-five years, on that Kenobard Mountain. After that, they had followed Afrāsiyāb around this area for close to seven or eight years. The boy is only eleven years old.

They brought him adorned to the king's presence. Kaykhosrow's gaze fell on the boy, wearing fine robes and a diadem on his head. Ah! But very ill, thin and weak. He asked Zāl, "Who is this?"

Zāl said, "May I be sacrificed in the dust at your doorway. This is Lohrāsp, from the line of Kayqobād. He was in your harem." Then Zāl told what had happened. "The simorgh ordered me to bring him to break the spell."

"Amazing! This one will break the spell?"

Zāl said, "Yes. Even if all the Garshāsp were to appear here and try to break the spell, they would make no difference. The spell is in this boy's name. He will break it."

Kaykhosrow laughed and the group rose together and left. The next day Kaykhosrow ordered them to bring the boy. They went and brought him. Every chair around Kaykhosrow was full, with three or four thousand Iranian nobles present. Kaykhosrow asked for Lohrāsp, and he came forward and bowed with proper speeches and dignity and eloquence in speaking.

[Why did they rely on the fact that he was sick and weak -- Listen, sir! -- on the people in the harem who told Zāl that Lohrāsp couldn't be cured and was going to die today or tomorrow, and the like? After Kaykhosrow's reign, he ruled one hundred and twenty years. Why didn't he die? Sa<sup>c</sup>di says, "Many healthy people have died and been buried while a poisoned person lived on."]

Kaykhosrow said, "Are you Lohrāsp?" He said, "Yes. I am your servant." Kaykhosrow asked, "Do you know why we have brought you here?" He replied, "Yes, king of the world. Dastān [Zāl] told me." Kaykhosrow said, "We plan to send you to break the spell of Makran in order to save Bizhan b. Giv." And they told Lohrāsp what had happened and explained how Bizhan was caught in a spell and, "No one but you can break that spell and save Bizhan."

He smiled and bowed low and said, "King, this business has nothing to do with me." The shah said, "Yes. Yes, light of my eyes. As you have heard, if a spell is in the name of a child, no hero in the world can break the spell -- only the child. This spell is in your name."

"In the first place, I don't have the power to take care of

this. I have never worn a sword in my life, and I don't even know how to handle one." Then they explained that there was no need for such things in breaking a spell. "The spell is in your name. You can break it. This is fated for you."

Lohrāsp said, "I will agree on one condition." Everyone turned to look at him, aghast that this person should be so bold -- a child brought like this from the capital -- when the shah wants to give him an order. What does he want? What condition will he impose?

They all waited. The shah asked, "What is the condition?" He said, "If you will write the order appointing me heir to the throne." [Even Kaykhosrow doesn't really have the rule. Kāvus told him, "Until you have killed Afrāsiyāb, I will not give you the rule." Now Lohrāsp is saying, "If you want me to break the spell, you must appoint me heir to the throne."]

For a while Kaykhosrow was silent. The court was in an uproar. They all looked at each other. Rostam lost his temper. [Here were sown the seeds of a feud. Right here.] Rostam called Lohrāsp and as soon as Lohrāsp turned to Rostam, Rostam slapped him hard across the face. Lohrāsp fell down. "Shame on you. Disgrace upon you! Do you have any idea what a blunder you've made? The people of Iran are all waiting to serve their shāh. They accept his orders with all their heart and soul. You come here. He makes a request of you. And then you ask for favors for accepting. And the favor is that you should be the heir to the throne. Until you deserve such a position, you should watch the sparrow who defers to the speech of the hawk."

Lohrāsp fell down and fainted. Kaykhosrow said, "Son of Zāl, hero, you forgot yourself in striking him. We can't leave this place until we have rescued Bizhan. I have sworn that. They say that the sun no more than hits a child's lips and he begins talking.[?] I will write that order." Kaykhosrow agreed.

The next day, they brought Lohrāsp to the shah. Kaykhosrow said to him, "I want you to break the Makranian spell." Lohrāsp replied, "If I don't get what I want, the spell will remain."

Kaykhosrow wrote the order. But at the same time he entrusted the affair to Rostam with a glance. This child broke the Makranian spell. He became the means [?] by which the spell was broken. [Unintelligible] [There is no need, brother, for dust to fly and thunder and lightening to crash and demons to be killed. All this will not break a spell.]

He freed Bizhan and in thanks for finding Bizhan they had a great feast. They gave the daughter of the ruler of Makran to Bizhan. Then they went off after Afrāsiyāb.

Hear what I have to say about Afrāsiyāb. The son of Pashang was trying to find provisions in every town or [unintelligible] or village he could, knowing that straw cannot stand up to a flood. You cannot dam up a river with thorns and kindling. He knew he couldn't stop anywhere, until one day he was forced to ask Pirman b. Piran for advice. He said, "Son, your father was my advisor.

[Once the flower is gone, the garden is ruined.  
Where can you find the<sup>21</sup> odor of a flower except  
in rose water.]

Find a way out, I'm drowning."

Pirman asked, "Will you listen to my suggestion?" Afrāsiyāb said, "I have no choice." He said, "It's safer than anywhere in the world." Afrāsiyāb said, "Tell me." He said, "By God, wherever you go in the world, the Iranians will not leave you alone. Go to Siyāvash's tomb so they won't bother you."

Afrāsiyāb had no choice. He took his army and came to Siyāvashgerd, taking the people unawares. [If they had known, they would have cut off the road to him. The people of Siyāvashgerd had no liking for Afrāsiyāb. They even still mourn for Siyāvash.]<sup>22</sup> But this intruder just arrived and the door was open. The army flooded into the city. They closed the gate and drew the bridge. They filled the moat with water.

Afrāsiyāb stayed there a while. After the spell of Makran was broken and Bizhan appeared, the Iranians came looking for Afrāsiyāb. When they arrived, Afrāsiyāb was entrenched.



## Notes

1. Kasrakhadam kaykhosrow seems to be what is on the tape. Perhaps it means "Kaykhosrow who has caesars for servants."

2. This idiom is unclear.

3. Habib Allāh first says "into the womb of a mother," then corrects himself.

4. The idiom sag-e kist (lit: "whose dog is he?") means here that Afrasiyab is a base as a dog.

5. Unidentified line of poetry in možare<sup>c</sup> meter (E.S. 4.7.14).

6. While this sounds almost metered and rhymed, it is slightly irregular in both ways.

7. This would be about three to six feet.

8. This line does not appear in Ferdowsi's Shāhnāma.

9. Unidentified couplet in moshakel meter (E.S. 4.2.11).

10. Unidentified couplet in hazaj meter (E.S. 2.1.11).

11. This passage is made up of rhyming prose, recited rapidly.

12. A sayyed is a descendant of the Prophet Mohammed.

13. Āzar is personified fire.

14. These images are all intended for sound and the visual images they evoke, combining hard and soft, living and non-living. The passage is recited rapidly to give the idea of Rakhsh rushing out to the battle-field.

15. The simorgh is a mythical bird with magical powers. It protects the heroes of Zabol. When Sam, Zāl's father, saw his son's white hair, he abandoned the baby in the mountains. The simorgh found the baby and nurtured him until Sam felt remorseful enough to come and take the boy back. Zāl and Rostam have the power to summon up the simorgh to aid them whenever necessary.

16. Literally this means "The Unjust Castle."
17. By "masters" Habib Allāh is demonstrating humility. He means any other storyteller.
18. Since some of these names are unfamiliar, I cannot be sure of the spellings.
19. Lohrāsp will be the king of Iran after Kaykhosrow. He is the father of Goshtāsp, whose son, Esfandiyār, is killed by the hero Rostam. Esfandiyār's son, Bahman, will take revenge by destroying the house of Zabol.
20. Zāl's epithet is "silver" because he was born with white hair.
21. The line is corrupt.
22. Afrāsiyāb killed his innocent son-in-law Siyāvash who was also the son of Kaykaus. The wars which follow between Iran and Turan were in revenge for Siyāvash's death.

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