

The Fictive Travelogue of Sindbad in Thousand and One Night

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Abstract

This article delineates the genre of travelogue, with the special reference to the fictive elements in the travelogue of Sindbad the seaman in 'The book of a thousand nights and one night', popularly known as The Arabian Nights. The study focuses on the comparative elements, which are present in the real piece of writing about travels and the fictive storytelling style of travel accounts of the seven voyages of Sindbad the seaman. The innovative techniques, which the storytellers rely on for increased drama, suspense or other emotions, in spite of the language being colloquial will be discussed. The elements of imaginary journey, dramatic visualizations, fate and destiny, fantasy and science fiction, adventure and action are all amalgamated into a piece of travelogue. The use of the embedded narrative form of storytelling – narration by Sindbad the seaman to Sindbad the Landman, which in turn was narrated by Scheherazade to King Shahryar. The details of the travelogue shed considerable light on seafaring and trade in the East. Sindbad describes about the goods, pirates, tales of shipwrecks, birds and apes and the savages. Also we can find parallel notions to the places and things, which Sindbad has made mention of, in the later works of Marco-polo, Pliny, and St. Epiphanius. Also Sindbad's adventures in turn influenced Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe and Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels. Thus I conclude that Arabian nights was the innovatory fictive travelogue that inspired many later literary travelogues.

Keywords: Travelogue, Sindbad the Seaman, Arabian Nights, Travel Literature, Alf Layla wa Layla, Voyages.

Introduction

Travel Writing or Travelogue is an old canon of Literature, dealing with nature writing, adventure writing, exploration writing.¹ For most of the readers travel book is an escape to an imaginary land which is far from the reality of this mundane world. It is a way to get transported to a forlorn land with all safety in their homes.² Style is the most important asset of Travel writing.³ Thus, Travel writing, one may argue, is the most socially important of all literary genres. It records our temporal and spatial progress. It throws light on how we define ourselves and on how we identify others.⁴

1*This paper was partially presented in the National Seminar on Travelogue in Arabic Literature. 29-30 September 2015 held at Islamic University of Science and Technology, Awantipora-JK India.

Smrutisikta Mishra, *Travelogues: An Innovative and Creative Genre of Literature*. p1

<https://www.academia.edu/11518748/TRAVELOGUES_AN_INNOVATIVE_AND_CREATIVE_FORM_OF_LITERATURE>

2Ibid., p2

3Ibid., p5

‘As a literary form, travel writing is a notoriously raffish open house where very different genres are likely to end up in the same bed. It accommodates the private diary, the essay, the short story, the prose poem, the rough note and polished table talk with indiscriminate hospitality.’⁵ So one step is to identify the importance of the concept of genre. It is not merely a descriptive label but a way of making sense of the structures by which we describe our surroundings and perceive meaning in them.⁶Travel writers draw on the techniques of fiction to tell their stories.⁷ And it is complicated by the existence of close overlaps between fictional and factual accounts of travel. Each borrows from the other, employing similar narrative structures and literary techniques.⁸Travel writers continue to utilize fictional devices such as an episodic structure, picaresque motifs, and (most significantly) the foregrounding of a narrator’.⁹Korte Says ‘As far as the text and its narrative techniques are concerned, there appears to be ‘no essential distinction between the travel account proper and purely fictional forms of travel literature’.¹⁰ He adds, ‘The actual experience of a journey is reconstructed, and therefore fictionalized, in the moment of being told’.¹¹Jonathan Raban has stated that he does not believe in the distinction between fact and fiction.¹² And now the Postcolonial and other theories demonstrate that ‘The biggest fiction ...is travel writing’s own claim to being an objective genre’.¹³

And as the Wikipedia page on travel literature says, the genre of travel literature includes outdoor literature, exploration literature, adventure literature, nature writing, and the guide book, as well as accounts of visits to foreign countries. The subgenre of travel journals, diaries and direct records of a traveller’s experiences, dates back to Pausanias in the 2nd century AD and James Boswell’s 1786 *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*. Some fictional travel stories are related to travel literature. Although it may be desirable in some contexts to distinguish fictional from non-fictional works, such distinctions have proved notoriously difficult to make in practice, as in the famous instance of the travel writings of Marco Polo or John Mandeville. An example of a fictional work of travel literature based on an actual journey, is Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, which has its origin in an actual voyage made by Conrad up the River Congo. A contemporary example of a real life journey transformed into a work of fiction is travel writer Kira Salak’s novel, *The White Mary*, which takes place

4Tim Youngs, *The Cambridge Introduction to Travel Writing (Excerpt)*,(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).p1

5Ibid., p2

6Ibid.

7Ibid., p4

8Ibid.

9Ibid.

10Ibid., p5

11Ibid.

12Ibid., p7

13Ibid., 10

in Papua New Guinea and the Congo. Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* (1957) and *The Dharma Bums* (1958) are fictionalized accounts of his travels across the United States during the late 1940s and early 1950s.

Literary travelogues generally exhibit a coherent narrative or aesthetic beyond the logging of dates and events as found in travel journals or a ship's log. Travel literature is closely associated with outdoor literature and the genres often overlap with no definite boundaries.¹⁴

Travelogues runs from picaresque adventure to philosophical treatise, political commentary, ecological parable, and spiritual quest. They borrow freely from history, geography, anthropology, and social science, often demonstrating great erudition, but without seeing fit to respect the rules that govern conventional scholarship. Irredeemably opinionated, travel writers avail themselves of the several licenses that are granted to a form that freely mixes fact and fable, anecdote and analysis. Travel books says, Paul Fussell, are not autobiographical and are not sustained by a narrative exploiting the devices of fiction. A guide book is addressed to those who plan to follow the traveller, doing what he has done, but more selectively. A travel book, at its purest, is addressed to those who do not plan to follow the traveller at all, but who require the exotic anomalies, wonders, and scandals of the literary form romance which their own place or time cannot entirely supply.¹⁵

It has long been termed novelistic, their modes of address and categorical imaginations are difficult to characterize as fitting the novel's framework.¹⁶ But it has one distinct fictional narrative.¹⁷ And a faux-travelogue is using the travelogue genre, but fictively charging it.¹⁸ Through travel writing, in both its factual and fictive forms, emerges a new form of literary imagination carved from new social contexts.¹⁹ Thus the autonomous category of "literature" by antecedents such as *Alf layla wa layla*²⁰ is marvellous.

'Fiction' is defined as any imaginative re-creation of life in prose narrative form. All fiction is a falsehood of sorts because it relates events that never actually happened to people (characters) who never existed, at least not in the manner portrayed in the stories. However, fiction writers aim at creating "legitimate untruths," since they seek to demonstrate

14Travel essays and Travelogues

<<http://www.newtonlibrary.org/discover/book-clubs/wednesdays-brown-bag-book-club>>

15Contemporary Travel Narratives

<<http://www.enotes.com/topics/contemporary-travel-narratives>>

16Kamran Rastegar, *Literary Modernity between the Middle East and Europe- Textual Transactions in Nineteenth-Century Arabic, English, And Persian Literatures*. (New York: Routledge. 2007).p89

17Ibid.,

18Ibid., 99

19Ibid., 100

20Ibid., 99

meaningful insights into the human condition. Therefore, fiction is “untrue” in the absolute sense, but true in the universal sense.²¹

Mas‘ūdī (d. 345/956; see Morūj IV, p. 90; ed. Pellat, sec. 1416) refers to work full of untrue stories translated from Persian, Sanskrit, and Greek, including the “book entitled Hazār afsāna, or the thousand tales, because a tale is called in Persian afsāna. This volume is known to the public under the title "One thousand and one nights;" it is the story of a king, his vizier, his daughter Šīrāzād, and her slave Dīnāzād.” This passage is corroborated by Ebn al-Nadīm in his Fehrest, written in 377/987-88 (ed. Flügel, p. 304; tr. Dodge, pp. 713-14). And these tales have been arbitrarily sectioned to keep the listener in suspense.²²

Sindbad the Sailor or Sindbad-of-the-Sea, in folktale, a hero in the collection of stories known in English as Arabian Nights. The name Sindbad, which means Traveler in Sind (a province of the Indian subcontinent), is the name of several fictitious characters in Arab-Islamic lore. The origin of the Sindbad the Sailor tales, the most renowned, is uncertain; the tales probably derive from Arab oral folktales and were part of the Arabian Nights manuscript by the 16th century.²³

Tzvetan Todorov, in *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre* (1975), classifies the stories of *The Arabian Nights* as marvellous tales. He suggests that *The Arabian Nights* fits the category of the marvellous tales more than the category of the fairy tales. He goes on to argue that the fairy tale is ‘only one of the varieties of the marvellous’. He divides the marvellous of *The Arabian Nights* into four types, three of which apply to *The Arabian Nights*. The first is the hyperbolic marvellous, which includes hyperbole and exaggeration in description or narrative such as this found in the stories narrated by Sindbad about his voyages and the supernatural creatures he encounters. Second is the exotic marvellous, when a supernatural event or creature is told about but without having knowledge about the background of this event or that creature, such as the roc which Sindbad describes in his second voyage.²⁴ Some of the best examples can be found in the flying horse, the magic carpet, or the huge bird who carries Sindbad to the Valley of Diamonds, which Irwin describes as ‘fantasies about the possibility of human flight’ and which must have had ‘a role in the imaginative prehistory of aviation’.²⁵

The cycle of Sindbād the Seaman is derived from the ancient Egyptian story of the *The Shipwrecked Sailor*.²⁶ He went on several journeys, experiencing the most threatening perils and witnessing the most wondrous things. Each time he returned home, he stayed for a

21Dr. Hallett, *Elements Of Fiction – Narrator / Narrative Voice Fundamental Literary Terms That Identify Components Of Narratives*.

<<https://www.carrollwooddayschool.org/uploaded/documents/ElementsofFiction6-4-10.pdf>>

22Alf Layla wa Layla

<<http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/alf-layla-wa-layla>>

23*The Arabian Nights’ Entertainments*, Trans. Richard Burton, (New York: 1959), Random House. p1.

24Mada Saleh. *The Arabian nights and the modern short story: Stevenson, Wilde and Conrad*, Ph.D. thesis, Newcastle University, United Kingdom, 2010. p5

25Ibid., p32

while before becoming restless again and setting out on yet another journey. Finally, having satisfied his curiosity after seven journeys and having become a rich man, he decided to settle in Baghdad for good and enjoy a peaceful life.²⁷The origin of the Sindbâd cycle is unknown. The subject matter of the stories is usually assumed to be derived partly from sailors' tales, partly from the lore of remote peoples, and partly from geographical literature. Michael J. de Goeje (1889) has pointed out several passages that are taken almost literally from works about the "Wonders of India" ('Ajâ'ib al-Hind), such as those by the Persian sea captain Buzurg ibn Shahriyâr (ninth century) and the geographer Ibn Khurdâdhbih (d. ca. 912). Stories and episodes similar to the Sindbâd tales are also contained in the geographical works of al-Qazwîni (d. 1283), Ibn al-Wardî (d. 1332), and al-Idrîsî (d. ca. 1165). Furthermore, the Sindbâd cycle shows similarities to other tales in the Arabian Nights containing adventurous journeys, such as the stories of Sayf al-Mulûk, Hasan of Basra, and The Adventures of Bulûqiya. An analogue to Sindbâd's seventh journey in the Calcutta II edition is included in al-Tanûkhî's (d. 994) al-Faraj ba'd al-shidda.²⁸Some episodes of the Sindbâd tales reflect motifs in classical Greek literature, such as the whale mistaken for an island, the egg of the giant bird, and the one-eyed giant, who has been associated with Polyphemus, the cyclops in Homer's *Odyssey* (Chauvin 1899b; Montgomery 1999).²⁹Mia Gerhardt (1957; 1963: 236–263) was the first to analyse the Sindbâd tales from a literary perspective. She noticed that the tension within the story does not culminate toward the end but is built up in a cyclical way, leading to the relaxation of the return home. For Tsvetan Todorov (1968; 1971), the Sindbâd story is an example of his concept of what he labels "l'homme-récit," or people telling who they are by telling what they have experienced.³⁰Peter Molan (1978b) reads the story as an "ego-novel" in which the hero attempts to justify his inclination to hunt for riches and to practice the ethics of unrestricted violence to achieve his aims.³¹

A strong infusion of the miraculous in the stories has exaggerated the dangers encountered.³² He encounters by a combination of resourcefulness and luck and returns home with a fortune. Sindbad's movement from prosperity to loss, experienced during a voyage filled with adventure, and back to prosperity, achieved when he returns home, is repeated in the structure of each tale.³³ Later in the same article it is delineated that: The details of the stories of the voyages shed considerable light on seafaring and trade in the East. For instance, though Sindbad does not specify the goods that he takes from Basra, it is stated that he obtains diamonds and other precious stones, sandalwood, camphor, coconuts, cloves, cinnamon, pepper, aloes, ambergris, and ivory during his voyages. Possible references to

26 [Ulrich Marzolph](#), et al. "The Arabian Nights Encyclopedia, V. 1", (ABC-CLIO: 2004). p11

27 Ibid., p385

28 Ibid., p387

29 Ibid., p387

30 Ibid., p388

31 Ibid.

32 Sindbad the Sailor. *Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2015. Web.

33 Ibid.

pirates are hidden in the tales of shipwrecks, which in the third and fifth voyages are caused by the fabulous roc, a bird that drops huge stones on the ship, and by hairy apes that swarm over the ship and leave the crew on an island. The savages in canoes who torture Sindbad and his shipmates on the seventh voyage may have been from the Andaman Islands.³⁴

And in its stories are unique in the collection because they most closely align with the epic tradition.³⁵ And Epics were produced during antiquity in many of the ancient cultures, including the Greeks, Romans, early Indian civilizations, early China, and more. Sinbad is arguably the best known of the Islamic empire's epics.³⁶ A remarkable amount of inventiveness and imagination³⁷ is present in these stories. So, if stories are the way we define ourselves, it is telling that all of Sinbad's stories are about the sea. It is where he became who he is.³⁸ It is interesting that he continues to tell these stories with such gusto - even though he has given up the sea, he is clearly still obsessed with it.³⁹ The fact that the fall-then-rise pattern occurs seven times over only makes it (Story) all the more potent.⁴⁰

The Tale of Sindbad the Seaman and Sindbad the Landsman being a collection of adventures related by Sindbad the Seaman to Sindbad the Landsman. The concept of the frame story dates back to ancient Sanskrit literature, and was introduced into Persian and Arabic literature through the Panchatantra. In a richly layered narrative texture.⁴¹ The One Thousand and One Nights and various tales within it make use of many innovative literary techniques, which the storytellers of the tales rely on for increased drama, suspense, or other emotions.⁴² Usage of theme of death and horror⁴³, embedded narrative, frame story, story within a story, dramatic visualization, fate and destiny, foreshadowing, repetition, satire and parody, unreliable narrator, crime fiction elements, horror fiction elements, science fiction elements and fantasy makes it more interesting and innovative in its techniques and approach. And all these elements amalgamated into a single piece of Travelogue, makes it stand alone

34Ibid.

35Kathryn Gundersen, S.R. Cedars, ed. "The Arabian Nights: One Thousand and One Nights "The Seven Voyages of Sinbad the Sailor: Voyages 1 and 2" Summary and Analysis". GradeSaver, 9 June 2014 Web.

36Ibid.

37Ibid.

38Kathryn Gundersen, S.R. Cedars, ed. "The Arabian Nights: One Thousand and One Nights "The Seven Voyages of Sinbad the Sailor: Voyage 7" Summary and Analysis". GradeSaver, 9 June 2014 Web.

39Ibid.

40Ibid.

41Ibid.

42Literary themes and techniques from 1001 nights
<<https://memories2memoirs.wordpress.com/literary-themes-and-techniques-from-1001-nights/>>

43 Peter d molan, Sinbad the Sailor, a Commentary on the Ethics of Violence on JSTOR. University of California.

in sub-genre of its own. Narrator, setting, plot, character and characterization, atmosphere, tone, style, theme and dialogue⁴⁴ makes it a copiously fictional narrative.

Paradigmatic insight into the voyages

Introducing the story he says: I have made seven voyages, by each of which hangeth a marvelous tale, such as confoundeth the reason, and all this came to pass by doom of Fortune and Fate. For from what Destiny doth write there is neither refuge nor flight⁴⁵. About the first voyage he says: I embarked, with a company of merchants, on board a ship bound for Bassorah. Then the adventurous journey on the back of the fish begins⁴⁶. He says: I fell to exploring the island⁴⁷. And then: the coming forth of the sea stallions⁴⁸ was witnessed by him. Exploring the vastness he adds: Moreover, they told me that the people of India are divided into two and seventy castes, and I marvelled at this with exceeding marvel. Amongst other things that I saw in King Mihrijan's dominions was an island called Kasil⁴⁹. He declares: I also saw another fish with a head like that of an owl, besides many other wonders and rarities⁵⁰. The horror and death elements have been given importance in the second voyage. The flesh and carcass, also the valley in ruins gives the description for that: At this sight my wonder redoubled and I remembered a story I had heard aforetime of pilgrims and travelers, how in a certain island dwelleth a huge bird, called the "roc," which feedeth its young on elephants, and I was certified that the dome which caught my sight was none other than a roc's egg⁵¹. And with that the description of Serpent, Rhinoceros, trees of camphor, kinds of oxen and buffaloes. The third voyage brings forward the story of ape-folk, he says about them: Destiny, for our ill luck, hath brought us to the Mountain of the Zughb, a hairy folk like apes, among whom no man ever fell and came forth alive⁵². He adds about them that they were 'frightful giants'⁵³ and 'black ogre'⁵⁴. Adventure and action with dramatic visualizations is portrayed as: the savages give them to drink of coconut oil and anointed them therewith, and straightway after drinking there of their eyes turned into their heads and they fell to eating

⁴⁴Dr. Hallett, *Elements Of Fiction – Narrator / Narrative Voice Fundamental Literary Terms That Identify Components Of Narratives*.

<<https://www.carrollwooddayschool.org/uploaded/documents/ElementsofFiction6-4-10.pdf>>

⁴⁵Arabian nights, trans. Sir Richard Burton

<<https://www.library.cornell.edu/colldev/mideast/arabnit.htm#FIRST>>

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Ibid.

greedily, against their wont⁵⁵. And then 'I discovered them to be a tribe of Magian cannibals whose King was a Ghul. All who came to their country or whoso they caught in their valleys or on their roads they brought to this King and fed them upon that food and anointed them with that oil, whereupon their stomachs dilated that they might eat largely, wilst their reason fled and they lost the power of thought and became idiots. Then they stuffed them with coconut oil and the aforesaid food till they became fat and gross, when they slaughtered them by cutting their throats and roasted them for the King's eating, but as for the savages themselves, they ate human flesh raw'⁵⁶. Re-counting the bashful event of his marriage he says: he summoned the kazi and the witnesses and married me straightway to a lady of a noble tree and high pedigree, wealthy in moneys and means, the flower of an ancient race, of surpassing beauty and grace, and the owner of farms and estates and many a dwelling place⁵⁷. The horror filled episode of the pit of the dead and the survival instincts of a human is developed here as: so they threw them down on me and, closing the mouth of the pit with the stones aforesaid, went their ways. I looked about me and found myself in a vast cave full of dead bodies that exhaled a fulsome and loathsome smell, and the air was heavy with the groans of the dying⁵⁸. The fifth voyage starts its adventurous part when the roc gets to revenge and tarnishes the whole ship and Sindbad encounters 'the Sheikh-al-Bahr or Old Man of the Sea'⁵⁹, exploring the island he adds: Amongst other places, we came to an island abounding in cloves and cinnamon and pepper⁶⁰, and 'the Island of Al-Usirat, whence cometh the Comorin aloes wood, and thence to another island, five days' journey in length, where grows the Chinese lign aloes, which is better than the Comorin'⁶¹. And again setting out for bassorah after this episode with 'the deep bright great store of large and priceless pearls'⁶². After landing on the island in the sixth voyage, he found out it to be filled with ambergris and aloes wood and then the plan and plot for escape is depicted as the boat raft episode. Then the images sketched of Island Serendib's King is striking in its Visualizations. The seventh and the last voyage begins with the venture into the city called as Madinat-al-Sin⁶³. The three huge fishes came up and the last adventure begins by 'the haunt of sea monsters'⁶⁴. And his appearance was of 'the stress of fatigue and fear and famine'⁶⁵. Subsequently the imaginary journey of the skies and the Islamic concept of devils and angels

55Ibid.

56Ibid.

57Ibid.

58Ibid.

59Ibid.

60Ibid.

61Ibid.

62Ibid.

63Ibid.

64Ibid.

65Ibid.

is portrayed here in a simple manner as possible: 'Beware of going forth hereafter with yonder folk, neither consort with them, for they are brethren of the devils, and know not how to mention the name of Allah Almighty, neither worship they Him'⁶⁶. Sixth voyage provides some illustration of Islamic culture and belief. Sinbad briefly mentions ascending to the peak of the "tallest mountain in the world" in the island kingdom, where Adam fell from paradise. This is a reference to the Islamic and Judeo-Christian creation myth, and gives some insight into Sinbad's belief system.⁶⁷

Parallel notions

In Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's suite Scheherazade, the 1st, 2nd, and 4th movement focus on portions of the Sinbad story. Various components of the story have identifiable themes in the work, including Rocs and the angry sea. In the climactic final movement, Sinbad's ship (6th voyage) is depicted as rushing rapidly toward cliffs and only the fortuitous discovery of the cavernous stream allows him to escape and make the passage to Serindib. In *The Count of Monte Cristo*, "Sinbad the Sailor" is but one of many pseudonyms used by Edmond Dantès. In his *Ulysses*, James Joyce uses "Sinbad the Sailor" as an alias for the character of W.B. Murphy and as an analogue to Odysseus. He also puns mercilessly on the name:

'Jinbad the Jailer, Tinbad the Tailor,
Whinbad the Whaler, and so on.'

Edgar Allan Poe wrote a tale called "The Thousand and Second Tale of Scheherazade". It depicts the 8th and final voyage of Sinbad the Sailor, along with the various mysteries Sinbad and his crew encounter; the anomalies are then described as footnotes to the story. Polish poet Bolesław Leśmian's *Adventures of Sindbad the Sailor* is a set of tales loosely based on the *Arabian Nights*. Hungarian writer Gyula Krúdy's *Adventures of Sindbad* is a set of short stories based on the *Arabian Nights*. In John Barth's "The Last Voyage of Somebody the Sailor", "Sinbad the Sailor" and his traditional travels frame a series of 'travels' by the thinly anonymous 'Somebody the Sailor'.⁶⁸

Odysseus was not making his voyage voluntarily; he was merely trying his hardest to return home after a long and costly war. Sinbad, however, continues to venture out on his voyages of his own accord, seeking riches and adventure. The poem "Ulysses" (Odysseus's Roman name) by Alfred Lord Tennyson describes Odysseus's restlessness at home on land, and his desire to return to the sea. Though this adventurous spirit is not explicitly expressed in the original *Odyssey*, its likeness to Sinbad's situation is interesting to note. This thirst for adventure is a feeling experienced by all sailors and merchants, throughout all different time periods of history.⁶⁹

66Ibid.

67Kathryn Gundersen, S.R. Cedars, ed. "The Arabian Nights: One Thousand and One Nights "The Seven Voyages of Sinbad the Sailor: Voyages 5 and 6" Summary and Analysis". GradeSaver, 9 June 2014 Web.

68 Sindbad the Sailor

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sinbad_the_Sailor>

Robert Irwin suggests that behind the obvious similarity in structure and certain details between *Ulysses* (1922) and Homer's *Odyssey*, there lies another basis of comparison with *The Arabian Nights*. Irwin goes on to suggest that *Ulysses* contains references to the adventures of Sindbad⁷⁰. Later, Joyce refers to Sindbad the Sailor after the journey of one of his characters is done:

He rests. He has travelled.

With?

Sinbad the Sailor and Tinbad the Tailor and Jinbad the Jailer and
Whinbad the Whaler and Ninbad the Nailer [...]

The Arabian Nights here playfully signifies adventure, travel experiences, and discoveries of new worlds⁷¹.

In Wilde's story, the Soul narrates to the Fisherman: And after a year was over the Soul came down to the shore of the sea and called to the young Fisherman, and he rose out of the deep, and said, 'Why dost thou call to me?' And the Soul answered, 'Come nearer, that I may speak with thee, for I have seen marvellous things.' So he came nearer, and couched in the shallow water, and leaned his head upon his hand and listened. And the Soul said to him, 'When I left thee I turned my face to the East and journeyed. From the East cometh everything that is wise. Six days I journeyed, and on the morning of the seventh day I came to a hill that is in the country of the Tartars [...]

In The Arabian Nights' 'Story of Es-Sindibad of the Sea and Es-Sindibad of the Land', Sindbad the Sailor tells Sindbad the Porter: porter, know that my story is wonderful, and I will inform thee of all that happened to me and befell me before I obtained this prosperity and sat in this place where in thou seest me. For I attained not this prosperity and this place save after severe fatigue and great trouble and many terrors. How often have I endured fatigue and toil in my early years! I have performed seven voyages, and connected with each voyage is a wonderful tale, that would confound the mind. All that which I endured happened by fate and destiny, and from that which is written there is no escape nor flight.

In these passages, both the Soul of the Fisherman, in Wilde's story, and Sindbad the Sailor go on journeys that take a long time. Upon their return they tell stories about the marvels and wonders they encounter. The Soul comes back to the Fisherman every year to narrate his adventures. Likewise, Sindbad the Sailor narrates to Sindbad the Porter the adventures he carries out in each of his voyages.⁷² Sindbad performs part of his adventures on his own, and in the other part he is joined by others. They ask him who he is and he introduces himself,

69 Kathryn Gundersen, S.R. Cedars, ed. "The Arabian Nights: One Thousand and One Nights "The Seven Voyages of Sinbad the Sailor: Voyages 3 and 4" Summary and Analysis". GradeSaver, 9 June 2014 Web.

70 Mada Saleh. The Arabian nights and the modern short story: Stevenson, Wilde and Conrad, Ph.D. thesis, Newcastle University, United Kingdom, 2010. Pp33-34

71 Mada Saleh. The Arabian nights and the modern short story: Stevenson, Wilde and Conrad, Ph.D. thesis, Newcastle University, United Kingdom, 2010. p35

72 Mada Saleh. The Arabian nights and the modern short story: Stevenson, Wilde and Conrad, Ph.D. thesis, Newcastle University, United Kingdom, 2010. Pp150-151

repeatedly in every voyage. Similarly, in 'The Fisherman and his Soul', the Soul travels in all directions and meets with different people and various adventures⁷³. Hampson continues to argue that the relationship between The Arabian Nights and Conrad is not only restricted to the novels but it also extends to Conrad's shorter fiction, such as 'Karain' (1897). He goes on to suggest that there are other writers in different periods who drew on The Arabian Nights in some of their masterworks, such as James Joyce in *Ulysses* (1922) and *Finnegans Wake* (1939), and H. G. Wells in *The Time Machine* (1895), *The Sleeper Awakes* (1898), and *The Research Magnificent* (1915)⁷⁴. Ferial Ghazoul also suggests that the voyages of Sindbad are similar to the works of Conrad, because they 'offer a special case of embedding', which is 'not the usual enframed story, but a case of perspectivism' in which, as she specifies, the narration shifts between the third person and the first person, whereas in the usual framed story, the narrative is based on the 'objective' third person, and not the 'subjective' first person⁷⁵.

The story ends because Marlow stops telling; however, there is no closure. It is similar to what happens in the story of Sindbad the Sailor, for instance, where the story 'stops more than ends [...] in a sense, the story can stop only when the hero is liquidated either physically by death or mentally by conversion. Sindbad, suddenly gives up travelling at the end of seventh voyage'⁷⁶.

And also the miraculous experiences of Sindbad's travels find parallels in the literatures of several nations. For example, the giant roc, whose egg resembles a huge white dome, also appears in Marco Polo's descriptions of Madagascar and other islands off the eastern coast of Africa. The whale that is mistaken for an island on the first voyage has parallels with the great whales described by Pliny and Solinus. Al-Qazvīnī (13th-century Persian geographer), Marco Polo, and St. Epiphanius (bishop of Constantia [now Salamis, Cyprus]; d. 403) mention areas similar to the valley of diamonds discovered by Sindbad on his second voyage. One can further relate the cannibal giants of the third voyage to the Cyclops of the *Odyssey*, and the incident of Sindbad's companions being fattened by cannibals with food that causes them to lose their reason suggests the lotus eating of the *Odyssey*. A Scythian custom of burying alive with the dead those who have been dear to them, referred to by St. Jerome, parallels Sindbad's burial in the cavern of the dead, and the "old man of the sea" who, on the fifth voyage, compels Sindbad to carry him has been identified with the orangutans of Borneo and Sumatra.

Some scholars suggest that the tales of Sindbad's adventures in turn influenced Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*⁷⁷.

73Ibid., p153

74Ibid., p170

75Ferial Ghazoul, *The Arabian Nights: A Structural Analysis* (Cairo: Cairo Associated Institution for the Study and Presentation of Arab Cultural Values, 1980), p. 110.

76Mada Saleh. *The Arabian nights and the modern short story: Stevenson, Wilde and Conrad*, Ph.D. thesis, Newcastle University, United Kingdom, 2010. p170

77Sindbad the Sailor. *Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2015. Web.



**INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY
STUDIES**

Vol. 2, Issue 4, April, 2016

ISSN (Online): 2454-8499

Impact Factor: 1.3599 (GIF)
0.679 (IIFS)

Thus I do conclude that the Story of the voyages of Sindbad the Seaman was the innovatory fictive travelogue that inspired many later literary travelogues.

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