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Chapter Author(s): István T. Kristó-Nagy

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Marriage after Rape: The Ambiguous Relationship between Arab Lords and Iranian Intellectuals as Reflected in Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's Oeuvre[1]

István T. Kristó-Nagy

Introduction

The title of this paper is advisedly incendiary. Evoking violent actions of the past is still often used as ideological ammunition for current conflicts. To counter this tendency, some scholarship tends to downplay the violence of the past, with the conscious or unconscious goal of promoting a more peaceful future. Forgetting violence, however, does not make it vanish. If we consider the scientific, and educational goal of historical studies, we should rather face it, and understand it. Encounters between human groups and cultures have often been violent, or partially violent.

We all have ancestors who raped, and ancestors who were raped. While rape has been a terrorizing tool and a demonstration of humiliating dominance, the appropriation of women used to be one of the main motivations of conquest.[2] In the context of the Arabic conquest of the Sāsānian empire, an example is offered in a speech delivered by an Arab commander to hearten their light cavalry before the decisive battle of al-Qādisiyya (636 / 14), promising them the property, the children, the women and the country of the vanquished, as recorded by al-Ṭabarī (died 310 /923).[3] This speech is echoed by another one, delivered in 130 /748, by Qaḥṭaba, a commander the ʿAbbāsid, or rather Hāshimite, revolution to encourage the (Iranian?)[4] Khurāsānians to fight the Syrians (*i.e* the dominantly Arab army of the Umayyads). He claims, according to al-Ṭabarī, that the latter conquered the land of the former's forefathers, took (married?) their women,[5] and enslaved their children:

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2 See Chagnon's seminal paper, "Life Histories". For a recent discussion of his work, see Chagnon, Pinker, Wrangham, Dennett, Haig and Dawkins, "Napoleon Chagnon". See also Kristó-Nagy, "Violence", 6 and 14.

3 For the entire speech, see al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, prima series, V, 2289[12-20], available on-line at https://archive.org/stream/annalesquosscri02guyagoog#page/n637/mode/2up. For an English translation, see Friedmann, *The History*, 85.

4 In this paper the adjective 'Persian' is used in the sense of *fārsī*, i.e. belonging to, or originating from the province of Fārs/Pārs, as well as referring to the *fārsī*, i.e. 'Persian', language. 'Iranian' is used in the more general sense of belonging to, or originating from the entire territory of Sāsānian Iran. For a nuanced study of the development of the ideological connotations of these terms, see Savant, "Persians".

5 واستنكحوا نساءهم For the term استنكح, see Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, 2847-2848.

Men of Khurasan, this land belonged to your forefathers before you, and they were given victory over their enemies because they were just and behaved rightly, until they changed and behaved unjustly. God the Mighty and Glorious was then angered with them. Their authority was taken from them, and the humblest people [*ummah*] to share the earth with them was given power over them and took their land and their women and enslaved their children. Yet this people ruled justly withal and kept their word and succored the oppressed. Then they changed and altered; they went astray in their governance, and people of probity and piety came to fear from the race of God's Apostle, may God's benediction be on him, and peace! Thus God has empowered you against them in order that revenge be enacted through you, that you should be their greatest punishment, for you have sought them out for vengeance. The Imam has sworn to me that you would encounter them in numbers great as these, but that God would give you victory over them, and you will rout and slay them.[6]

If 'cultural appropriation' and 'cross-fertilization' are valid notions, 'cultural rape' is also meaningful in describing forced imposition of cultural elements. Countless mythological and historical accounts relate that following the appropriation of the women of the vanquished, prolonged forced cohabitation can turn into a more or less merry marriage, which results, through time, in the mixing of the genes and cultures of both sides. The progeny of such 'marriages' has to deal with the historical memory of violence.[7]

The authenticity of the two speeches above does not concern us here, as the fact that they were recorded by al-Ṭabarī demonstrates their perceived importance. The commander Qaḥṭaba, the Khurāsānian troops, *and* the historian al-Ṭabarī[8] belonged to the progeny of a marriage between Arab and Iranian culture. The universalist character of Islam[9] allowed Iranians to appropriate the ideology of their conquerors to the extent of turning it against them. They made Islam their own. Their intellectuals excelled in knowing and using the language of the Qurʾān and the conquerors, Arabic.

The writings attributed to the eighth-century Persian[10] *kātib* (scribe-secretary), Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ and the biographical accounts about him give intriguing insights into this intricate process. They reveal the ambiguous interactions between conquerors and vanquished, Arabs and Iranians, men of power and political intellectuals, as well as Islam and Dualist religious thought. By his birth and education, Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ belonged to the privileged intellectual elite of Islamdom, a segment of society serving the even more advantaged political and military leaders. He was a prominent author of early Arabic prose so renowned for promoting the ideals and interests of his social stratum that he became the literary

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 6 This English translation is quoted from Williams, *The History*, 110-111. For the Arabic text, see al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh,* secunda series, III, 2004[19]-2005[9], available on-line at https://archive.org/stream/tarkhalrusulwaal09abaruoft#page/33/mode/2up.
    Regarding this speech, see Crone, *The Nativist Prophets*, 19-20, as part of her analysis of relationships between conquerors and the vanquished after the Arab conquest of the Sāsānian empire, and the Persians' motivations to convert to Islam, 1-22.
 7 See two recent studies by Sarah Bowen Savant: Savant, *The New Muslims* and Savant, "The Conquest".
 8 See Daniel, "Ṭabari".
 9 See the *Qurʾān*, 49/13.
 10 See above, n. 4.

embodiment of those ideals. He and his peers integrated elements of the ideology and high culture of a demolished empire into the construction of a new one. They provided their rulers with imperial administrative and ideological expertise while also enhancing their own status by describing themselves as the legatees of the wise men of a perfect empire and thus, the ideal advisers of the rulers of the new one.

It is impossible to determine with absolute certainty the degree of authenticity of the writings attributed to Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, or of the reports about him. Nevertheless, his oeuvre, his personal destiny, and his reputation form a controversial but coherent picture, which reveals the dialectic of submission, revolt, and mutual integration that shaped the intellectual history of the early centuries following the Islamic conquests.

Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's career and image

Due to the importance accorded to Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ by his contemporaries and subsequent generations, we have a number of accounts about him. Based upon such reports his career can be summarized as follows.[11]

Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ was from Jūr (today's Fīrūzābād), in Fārs. His original, Persian, name was Rōzbeh son of Dādūya/Dādōē. His father was a Persian nobleman who worked as a tax officer for the Arab conquerors of the land of his ancestors. He was tortured and his hand remained shriveled, *muqaffaʿ*. His son was called in Arabic 'The Son of the Shriveled', Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ. Nevertheless, Dādūya provided two eloquent Bedouin teachers speaking 'uncontaminated' pure Arabic to educate his son who not only learnt to perfection the language of the Arab conquerors, but also acquired familiarity with their culture and Islam, as well as the language(s), literatures, courtly manners, and administrative skills of his Persian ancestors.

Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ worked as a professional intellectual, a *kātib* (in plural: *kuttāb*), that is, a scribe, secretary, administrator, and adviser for the highest Arab dignitaries in the turbulent times preceding and following the ʿAbbāsid/Hāshimite revolution. After the victory of the ʿAbbāsids, Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ served the uncles of Abū-'l-ʿAbbās al-Saffāḥ, the first caliph of the new dynasty (r. 132-136 / 749-754). Subsequent to the death of this caliph, his brother, Abū Jaʿfar (al-Manṣūr, r. 136-158 / 754-775), rose to power and his (and his brother's) uncles became his first rivals. One of them, ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlī, who was a ruthless military leader and the strong man of the dynasty, claimed his right to the caliphate and al-Manṣūr needed all his political genius and luck to defeat him by the mighty commander Abū Muslim. But al-Manṣūr considered that Abū Muslim was also far too dangerous to survive, thus the latter was trapped and slain.

Al-Manṣūr was one of the most important rulers in the history of Islamdom. He founded Baghdad and solidified the ʿAbbāsid state. In his maneuvering against his uncles, al-Manṣūr deposed one of them from the governorship of al-Baṣra, a city of utmost importance, and appointed Sufyān b. Muʿāwiya b. Yazīd b. al-Muhallab, a member of a highly influential family. Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ was in this city serving al-Manṣūr's uncles, who tasked him with composing an *Amān*, letter of safe conduct, for ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlī, who fled to al-Baṣra

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11 For detailed studies of Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's life, career, and oeuvre, see Gabrieli, "L'opera", Sourdel, "La biographie", Cassarino, *L'aspetto*, Arjomand, "'Abd Allah Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ'", Cooperson, "Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ'", and Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée*.

after his defeat by Abū Muslim. The letter was so skillfully written that by signing it al-Manṣūr could not have ensnared his uncle, and this frustration made him realize with anger that his uncles had an irritatingly competent secretary-adviser, Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, who would need to be killed.[12]

According to our sources, it was al-Manṣūr himself who had Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ murdered by the new governor of al-Baṣra and his henchmen. The governor, Sufyān, who was an Arab aristocrat, harbored a personal hatred for Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, the Persian secretary, who had used his superior intellect to humiliate him in the past. Furthermore, while Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ served one of his former patrons he was also responsible for a break in Sufyān's career and clavicle. If we can believe a report recorded by the historian al-Jahshiyārī (died in 331 / 942), Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, at the age of thirty six, was captured in Sufyān's house. His limbs were chopped off one by one and put into the fire of an oven while he was still alive, watching them burning and listening to Sufyān's insults accusing him of being a *Zindīq*, a dualist heretic.[13] We do not know the exact date of Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's murder, but it must have happened after the appointment of Sufyān as governor of al-Baṣra – the middle of the month of Ramaḍān 139/ February 757 – [14] and before Abd Allāh b. ʿAlī finally went to al-Manṣūr and was captured by him – the 17th of *Dhū-ʾl-Ḥijja* 139/ the 12th of May 757.[15]

Our sources have also preserved numerous sayings and acts attributed to Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ. These reports are sometimes contradictory, but their contradictions are paralleled in the disharmonies presented by the writings attributed to Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, which reflect the conflicts of the period he lived and created in. As these tensions survived Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ and remained relevant for a number of generations, he evolved into a symbol, a literary figure himself.[16] Thus, it is quite difficult to distinguish between Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ and his image. Nevertheless, the reason why his figure remained relevant was the continuity of some of the major social tendencies and experiences lived by his generation and the following ones. Such was the arduous integration between the different ethnic and cultural components of the empire and the struggles and negotiations between its different elites. It is congruous therefore to assume an organic relationship between the historical person and the rather plausible portrait composed by the mosaic of the writings, sayings, and acts attributed to him.[17]

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12 On this letter see Marsham and Robinson, "The Safe-Conduct", and Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée*, 285-286.

13 See al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-Wuzarāʾ wa-l-kuttāb*, 103[13]-107[5] / al-Jahshiyārī, *Des Kitāb al-Wuzarāʾ*, fols. 55b/110[1]-57b/114[13]. Sourdel, *La biographie*, 314-317 and Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée*, 58-60.

14 This date is provided by al-Ṭabarī, who notes that according to other sources this event occurred in 140. See al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, tertia series, I, 125[21] (accessible on-line at http://archive.org/stream/ tarkhalrusulwaal10abaruoft#page/n554/mode/2up) -126[4] (accessible on-line at http://archive.org/stream/ tarkhalrusulwaal10abaruoft#page/n552/mode/2up), and McAuliffe, *The History*, XXVIII, 56.

15 This date is provided by al-Ṭabarī, who notes that according to other sources this event occurred in 140. See al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, tertia series, I, 126[11-12] and 127[12-13], accessible on-line at http://archive.org/stream/ tarkhalrusulwaal10abaruoft#page/n552/mode/2up, and McAuliffe, *The History*, XXVIII, 56-57.

16 A poignant example is the highly dramatized, but fearfully realistic description of his death by al-Jahshiyārī summarized above.

17 The validity of this image, irrespectively of the level of its correspondence to the historical person, is expressed in the title "*Autour d'Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ [...]*" of the chapter dealing with Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ in Urvoy, *Les penseurs libres*, 29-66.

His image is, however, still evolving today.[18] His dramatic figure, life and death has been rediscovered by modern literature.[19] Since his importance as one of the fathers of Arabic prose is hard to deny, some modern scholars have deployed admirably painstaking efforts in debunking the sulfurous image of Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, that was depicted by scholars and litterateurs of the generations following him, in order to replace it by the myth of a politically and religiously correct Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, a good mainstream Muslim hero.[20] In my view, the writings attributed to Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ mirror rather his image as rendered by the classical authors: a Persian *Zindīq* secretary-adviser, working in the service of Arab Muslim lords.

Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's oeuvre

Translating between the old and new empires

It is well-known that the Persian Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's writings formed a key part in the foundations of early Arabic prose. Indeed, he is mostly considered as a translator and belletrist, and his importance as an original thinker is still not fully recognized: certainly, he himself did his best to mask his thoughts.

Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's official and literary career were interrelated. This is clear even in spite of the fact that his only composition about which we know who commissioned it and for what reason is the above mentioned *Amān*, letter of safe conduct for ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlī addressed to al-Manṣūr, which had fatal consequences for its author.[21] We do not know which of his other writings were commissioned or which were composed on his own initiative. He certainly earned his living and fortune as a professional scribe-secretary-adviser writing for and on behalf of his patrons, but he also maintained his own views and conveyed them through his writings. His oeuvre fits into the universal pattern that most professional creators with a personal mission have to work on the agenda of their customers in order to produce opportunities to promote their own vision. The larger the gap between the intentions of the two, the likelier the use of some double language by the creator. Different layers of Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's texts are meant to be understood by different layers of society, and their contradictions reflect conflicting views and interests.

Writing for his extremely powerful patrons, Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ was able to employ his combined skills in the Arabic language and Iranian administrative, official and political expertise. He was one of the originators of the prose literature of the then new imperial language, Arabic. The recording of individual works of prose literature usually requires writing, and the production and storage of large amounts of written documents is only possible in sedentary cultures. Most of the Arabs were sedentary even before their

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18 Ahmed el-Shamsy is currently researching the rediscovery of Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ in the 20th century.

19 See Al-Bassam, *Kalila wa Dimna*. Other modern literary works with political messages referring to *Kalīla wa-Dimna* include the plays *Muḥākamat Kalīla wa-Dimna* (*The Trial of Kalīla and Dimna*) by Muʿīn Tawfīq Bisīsū (1926–1984), *Maʾsāt Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ* (*The Tragedy of Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ*) by ʿAlī Aḥmad Bā Kathīr (1910–69), and a recent poem by Naʿīm Ḥāfiẓ, *Al-Hiwār wa-l-murshid, nasaq Kalīla wa-Dimna (Dialogue and the guide according to* Kalīla and Dimna).

20 See for instance the impressively assiduous – and biased – scholarship presented by Chokr, *Zandaqa*, 189-209, or the similarly flattened image of Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ in Lampe, *Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ*, 28.

21 See above.

conquests which followed the rise of Islam, but, due to the shortage of lands allowing intensive agriculture, the powerful nomads were dominant. Their culture was mainly oral and aural and its most cherished treasure was poetry whose rhyme and rhythm made it relatively easy to memorize. Even the Qurʾān is composed in rhymed prose and Muḥammad was labelled by his opponents a poet,[22] or a soothsayer.[23] After the Islamic conquest, however, the status and the way of life of the Arabs changed, and the status and function of Arabic changed as well. Arabs became the military and political elite of a huge empire and their language – venerated as the language of God's ultimate revelation – was decreed to be the official language of the Islamic empire by the Umayyad caliph ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān (r. 65-86 / 685-785), whose rule consolidated the Islamicate state and shaped its future.

Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ and his ilk, non-Arab *kuttāb* (secretaries) transposed the legacy of highly refined courtly and administrative traditions into the Islamicate culture in formation.[24] The fifth successor of the caliph ʿAbd al-Malik was his fourth son, Hishām (r. 105-123 / 724-743). Hishām's secretary, Sālim Abū-'l-ʿAlā is, to my knowledge, the first identifiable translator of late antique wisdom literature into Arabic.[25] The husband of Sālim's sister (or daughter), ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd b. Yaḥyā al-Kātib (c. 69-132 / c. 688-750) was the secretary of the last Umayyad ruler, Marwān II b. Muḥammad (r. 127-132 / 744-750), the first celebrated author in Arabic prose. Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ was ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's younger friend. Sālim was a Syriac Christian,[26] ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd was 'a third-generation Muslim of non-Arab, probably Persian, extraction'[27] and Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ was Persian and and the sincerity of his conversion to Islam, which occurred only some years before his death, was highly dubious.[28] They and their confreres elaborated the style of official correspondence in Arabic and translated many Pahlavi (Middle Persian) works of late antique prose literature into Arabic, a language that did not have a tradition of prose. They initiated in Arabic the genre of written official and literary epistles (*risāla*), and – along a continuum of styles and topics – originated the Islamicate educative and entertainment literature (*adab*) including 'mirrors for princes' and 'mirrors for courtiers'.[29]

Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ is generally regarded as one of the most illustrious prose writers of this period. He was a crucial figure in conveying the imperial culture of Sāsānian Iran (including Indian and Greek elements) to the new Islamicate empire.[30] He was a master of translation and of the application of what he translated to his own times, combining the art of official letters with that of educative (wisdom and advice) literature. His literary works

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22 See *Qurʾān*, 21/5, 36/69, 37/36, 52/30, 69/41.

23 See *Qurʾān*, 52/29, 69/42.

24 See Arjomand, "Legitimacy", 227, and Kristó-Nagy, "Conflict and Cooperation".

25 See below, n. 78.

26 See *The Correspondence*, Maróth's introductory study, 8.

27 See al-Qāḍī, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd.

28 See Kristó-Nagy, La pensée, 75-79. See also below, the section, "Imperial Religion, Heretical Resistance".

29 The phrase 'mirror for princes' "served as a title for many mediaeval European works of political advice and has been adopted by Islamicists to describe similar books written in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish" (Marlow, "Advice"). In my view, we can also speak about 'mirrors for courtiers'.

30 On the translation from Pahlavi to Arabic, see Zakeri, *Persian Wisdom*, and Zakeri, "Translation". On the integration of the Persian heritage into the Islamicate culture see Crone, *Medieval*, 148-164.

(amongst them historical writings, tales, aphorisms, political epistles, and translations) form an educational program for the political elite. His official letters attest to his ability to apply and actualize Sāsānian patterns into the Islamic framework.

When translating Sāsānian texts, Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ edited them in a way that a Muslim reader would find acceptable and useful. He probably used translations also to express his own ideas, hiding behind the authors and authorities of the past. Al-Jāḥiẓ (c. 160-255 / c. 776-868 or 869), one of the brightest figures of Arabic literature, born some twenty years after Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's death, wrote that he was unable to distinguish between authentic Sāsānian texts and fake ones created by Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ or by other bureaucrat-authors of non-Arab descent, such as Sahl b. Hārūn (died in 215 / 830), Abū ʿUbayd Allāh (died in 170 / 786-7), ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd and Ghaylān (executed under the reign of Hishām b. ʿAbd al-Malik, 105-25 / 724-43).[31] All the personages listed here by al-Jāḥiẓ were *mawālī* (in singular: *mawlā*), i.e. clients, *kuttāb, i.e.* secretaries, eminent litterateurs (with the exception of Abū ʿUbayd Allāh) and suspicious Muslims (with the exception of ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd).[32] On the other hand, given that Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ himself became a celebrated authority for the following centuries, it is not surprising that later authors, such as al-Jāḥiẓ himself[33] abused his name in order to sell (in a figurative and in a literal sense) their thoughts and their texts.

The notions of translation and authorship of this period were much more fluid than their modern Western concepts.[34] In Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's texts we see a sort of 'osmosis' between his translations and his 'original' compositions. The most famous text by Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ is his translation of *Kalīla wa-Dimna* (*Kalīla and Dimna*),[35] a collection of educative political fables of mainly Indian origin based on the *Pañcatantra/Panchatantra.* It was translated from Sanskrit into Pahlavi by Borzūya/Burzōē,[36] a physician of the time of the formidable Sāsānian king, Khosrow I Anushirwān (r. 531-579 CE), and from Pahlavi into Arabic by Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ.[37] His Arabic translation was translated into Latin and into nearly all languages of Christendom and the Islamdom. He provided it with his introduction, probably

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31 وَنَحْن لا نستطيع أن نعلَم أن الرسائل التي بأيدى الناس للفُرْس أنها صَحيحة غَيْر مصنوعة وقديمة غير مولَّدة، إذ كان
مِثْل ابن المقفّع وسَهْل بن هارون وأبي عُبيد الله وعَبْد الحَميد وغَيلان يستطيعون أن يولِّدوا مثل تلك الرسائل
ويصنَعوا مثل تلك السِيَر.
Al-Jāḥiẓ, *al-Bayān wa-l-tabyīn*, III. 29[9-12].

32 On Sahl b. Hārūn, see Zakeri, Sahl b. Hārūn, and Chokr, *Zandaqa*, 179, 181-182. On Abū ʿUbayd Allāh, see Moscati, "Abū ʿUbayd Allāh", as well as the contrasting views of Vajda, Les zindîqs, 186-189 and M. Chokr, *Zandaqa*, 71-74. On ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, see above, n. 27. On Ghaylān see Pellat, GHaylān b. Muslim.

33 Al-Jāḥiẓ, *Kitāb al-Faṣl*, I, 350[7]-351[9]. For an English translation see Pellat, *The Life*, 218.

34 For an overview of the translations into Arabic from Pahlavi in this period, see Zakeri, "Translation".

35 The two most important editions of the text are that by ʿAzzām, which is based on a manuscript dated to 618 / 1221 (see ʿAzzām's introduction, 17), and that by Cheikho, which is based on a manuscript dated to 739 / 1339 (see Cheikho's introduction, 24-26).
F. de Blois, *Burzoy's Voyage*, 4, justly writes that "one gains the impression that ʿAzzām's manuscript represents a rather drastically abridged version of *Kalīlah wa Dimnah* and that in Shaykhū's more extended version a smaller amount of authentic material has been omitted."
For an excellent French rendering by A. Miquel, based mainly on the text edited by ʿAzzām see Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Le Livre*. For English translations, see Irving, *Kalilah and Dimnah* and Jallad, *The Fables*.

36 On Borzūya/Burzōē, see de Blois, *Burzoy's Voyage*, and Khaleghi-Motlagh, "Borzūya."

37 On the transcultural and transreligious travel of the book, see de Blois, *Burzoy's Voyage*, 1-17, Riedel, "Kalila wa Demna", Kinoshita, "Translatio/n", and Kristó-Nagy, "Wild Lions".

interpolated his own ideas and one or two chapters into it, and obviously modified what was needed for rendering the text acceptable to a Muslim readership. Similarly to *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, most of the material of the two most renowned 'original' *adab* works attributed to him, the *Kitāb al-Adab al-kabīr* (*The Great Book of Manners*) and the *Kitāb al-Adab al-ṣaghīr* (*The Small Book of Manners*),[38] is mainly translated, with possible interpolations and rearrangements, with an added introduction, and, in the case of the *Kitāb al-Adab al-kabīr*, an added conclusion.[39]

The phenomenon of (the descendants of) the vanquished teaching (the descendants of) the conquerors is anything but infrequent in history. An example is the case of Livius Andronicus labelled the 'father of Roman literature'. He translated the *Odyssey* to Latin, and by his translations and compositions he introduced epic, playwriting and lyric to Roman literature. He was a Greek prisoner of war, and probably the tutor to the family of a Roman consul,[40] similarly to ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, who was a private tutor[41] and wrote an educative letter for the Umayyad crown prince, son of Marwān II b. Muḥammad, and to Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, who was a tutor of at least one young member of the ʿAbbāsid family.[42] Quintus Ennius, also regarded as the 'father of Roman literature' descended from a noble family of a people vanquished by the Romans, the Messapians. According to a report about him he said: "*Quintus Ennius tria corda habere sese dicebat, quod loqui Graece, Osce et Latine sciret.* ('Quintus Ennius used to say that he had three hearts, since he spoke Greek, Oscan and Latin.')".[43]

Reportedly, Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ was also from the nobles of the vanquished,[44] and he was plurilingual. He was an expert in several Iranian languages and writing systems in addition to his Arabic that excelled that of the Arabs.[45] The explanation of the meaning of the name of the Dari language for example goes back to him.[46] Many of his colleagues were not only bi-, but tri- or plurilingual and cultural, as, in spite of their familiarity of the dominant traditions of the Sāsānian or the Byzantine as well as of the Islamic empire, their ethnic, linguistic and religious background did not necessarily correspond to any of them.

The historical and socio-cultural background of Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's translations and of their lasting success was the growing importance of non-Arabs in the Islamic empire. The integration of the different ethnicities and traditions was vital for the survival of the Islamic empire and for the evolution of Islamic/ate culture. The very success and the continuous character of the integration of new elements into the Islamic culture (which new elements were often older than Islam, though newly integrated into it) blurs the distinction between Islamic and Islamicate.[47]

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38 See Kristó Nagy, "On the Authenticity".
39 See Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée*, 181-185.
40 See Howatson, *The Oxford Companion*, 342-343, and Martin, *Catullus*, 11-12.
41 See al-Qāḍī, "The impact of the Qurʾān," 286.
42 See Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée*, 65 (n. 126), and 217.
43 See Yntema, Material Culture, 160.
44 See above.
45 See al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-Fihrist*, I/1, 31^{12}-34^{9}.
46 See *ibid.* and Lazard, "Darī."
47 For Hodgson's original definition of the term 'Islamicate', see Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, I, 57-60.

The *mawālī*'s participation in the armies of the ʿAbbāsid/Hāshimite revolution was crucial.[48] The defeat of the dominantly Arab armies of the Umayyads heightened the strength and self-confidence of the non-Arabs and their expectations had to be taken into consideration while shaping the ʿAbbāsids' ideology and practice.[49] The ethnic mixing between Arabs and non-Arabs in the empire was present in the ʿAbbāsid ruling family itself; for instance the caliph al-Manṣūr's mother was a Berber slave girl.[50]

Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ composed his *Risāla fī l-Ṣaḥāba* (*Letter about the Entourage/Retinue [of the Caliph]*) after the victorious ʿAbbāsid/Hāshimite revolution against the Umayyads. This epistle sets up a post-revolutionary program outlining the necessary steps for the consolidation of the new dynasty. It is addressed to the ʿAbbāsid ruler, designated as *Amīr al-Muʾminīn* (The Commander of the Faithful), Caliph, and *Imām*.[51] As the text goes through the key points that the ruler has to deal with, Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ discusses the mixture of the inhabitants of the two main cities Iraq, al-Kūfa, al-Baṣra, whom he saw as the new social base and intelligentsia of the dynasty[52] – himself being one of them –[53] with the Khurāsānians, who constituted the military backbone of the revolution, and the mixture between the Arabs and the Iranians (*al-ʿajam*) – himself being one of them –[54].[55] The chapter of "The hermit and his guest,"[56] which was interpolated, most likely by Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, into *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, might envelop a hidden message, which reflects that even the attitude of the non-Arabs toward this general tendency of fusion was equivocal. This fable can be interpreted as a coded warning, coming from a non-Arab, against the mutual integration between Arabs and non-Arabs.[57]

Remarkably, both the *Risāla fī l-Ṣaḥāba*,[58] and the end of the fable of "The hermit and his guest" give explicit aristocratic advice to the ruler that he should stop the rise of the lowly to the positions of the lofty.[59] Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ does not propagate 'permanent revolution'; his goal is to stop the wheel of revolution, and to fortify the new establishment.

Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ advised rulers on how to make decisions, but also counselled his colleagues on how to survive the burden of guiding the decision makers. High profile secretaries coming from non-Arab families and arriving at the top of the imperial

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48 See for instance Qaḥṭaba's speech mentioned above.
49 See Gutas, *Greek Thought*, especially chapters 2 and 3.
50 See Kennedy, "al-Manṣūr", 427.
51 On this epistle see Goitein, "A Turning Point", Arjomand, 'Abd Allah Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, and Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée*, 213-266 (including also references to further relevant studies). The most recent studies include London, "The Abbasid", and Yousefi, "Islam Without Fuqahā'".
52 Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Risāla fī l-Ṣaḥāba*, §§ 30-31, for an English translation, see Lampe, *Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ*, 102-103. See also Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée*, 243-244.
53 Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Risāla fī l-Ṣaḥāba*, § 45, Lampe, *Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ*, 112, see Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée*, 251-252.
54 A fact he does not mention.
55 Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Risāla fī l-Ṣaḥāba*, § 30, Lampe, *Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ*, 102, see Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée*, 243-244.
56 Cheikho, *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, 243-244, ʿAzzām, *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, 297-299, Irving, *Kalilah and Dimnah*, 187-188, Jallad, *The Fables*, 229-230.
57 See Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée*, 145-147, and *idem.*, *The Crow*. Also see below.
58 Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Risāla fī l-Ṣaḥāba*, §§ 44-49, Lampe, *Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ*, 112-117.
59 See Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée*, 252-253 and 158-159. See also Arjomand, "'Abd Allah Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ'", 31-32.

administration were amongst the most talented and most ambitious minds of their times. They had, however, to try to keep a modicum of humility, for even if they had converted to Islam, they were still only *mawālī*, that is clients (in the Roman sense of the word *cliens*), of their Muslim 'patrons' 'at the hands of whom' they converted. Thus their status remained always subject and their blood cheaper, in both the literal and figurative senses of the expression,[60] than that of their Arab patrons, who themselves were full-blood Arabs often only on their father's side.[61]

These secretaries were not renaissance artists showing off their individual originality, but second class citizens who were perilously close to the turning axis of the blood mill of power.[62] They sought to let their lords discover their expertise and usefulness but not their personality and ego. Poets were different, for in the Arab tribal tradition, characterized by strong solidarity of strong individuals, they expressed not only the values of their community but also of their own. After the conquest, poets continued to praise their patrons and themselves promoting and immortalizing both. Secretaries, however, even when expressing their own ideas, had better hide themselves behind authorities of the past or any imaginary covering mask, such as a legendary wise man or even a beast in a fable.[63]

Their attitude and behavior ranged between that of two jackals, heroes of *Kalīla wa-Dimna*. The first of the two jackals is Dimna, the archetype of the amoral arriviste, who intrigues without any scruples and has no other principle than his personal success.[64] His opposite is the wise ascetic jackal, who, according to another fable of the collection,[65] accepts the responsibility of advising and serving the ruler in spite of his preference for ascetic life. His Bodhisattva-like behavior – he abandons his ascetic life leading to a personal liberation for the sake of helping others – arouses of course the envy of all the other Dimna-like courtiers who do their best to ruin him.

The ideal exhibited in Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's writings is that of the wise adviser ready for the life-threatening challenge of associating himself to power.[66] According to the descriptions about his behavior, however, he clearly derived some pleasure not just from fulfilling this mission, but – perhaps unconsciously – from challenging and surpassing the native Arabs in their own games such as generosity and eloquence as well as in demonstrating the cultural superiority of his refined Persian heritage.[67]

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60 On the *mawālī*, see Crone, *Roman*, and Wensinck, Crone, "Mawlā".
61 See Kristó-Nagy, "Conflict and Cooperation", 65-66.
62 See Kristó-Nagy, "Conflict and Cooperation", 70-75.
63 See London, "How to Do Things with Fables." London argues that it was not simply safer but more politically effective to advise elites through the medium of the fable.
64 See the chapters of "The lion and the bull" and "Dimna's trial", Cheikho, *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, 53-124, ʿAzzām, *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, 49-124, Irving, *Kalilah and Dimnah*, 1-71, Jallad, *The Fables*, 79-131. On Dimna's trial see Hámori, "Shameful and Injurious", Jany, "The Origins", Monroe, "Some Remarks", Ruymbeke, "Dimna's", and Kristó-Nagy, "Wild Lions".
65 The chapter of "The lion and the ascetic jackal", Cheikho, *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, 217-227, ʿAzzām, *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, 257-270, Irving, *Kalilah and Dimnah*, 160-170, Jallad, *The Fables*, 193-199 and Kristó-Nagy, "Wild Lions".
66 On the dangers of dealing with those in power and the unprincipled careerists around them in Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's oeuvre see Hámori, "Shameful and Injurious", 189-212, Kristó-Nagy, "Who Shall Educate", *idem.*, Wild Lions, and *idem.*, *La pensée*, 159, 201-207, 223-224, 252 and passim.
67 See the chapter "Sa personalité", in Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée*, 65-73.

Of course jackals remained jackals and lions remained lions, not at all more sublime in mind but stronger in power and anger. Thus, while advising or educating their patrons, secretaries needed to be extremely cautious and circumspect. For Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, translating and composing was a way to save the cultural legacy of his ancestors and to make his own contribution to it. Literature and translation were also educative devices.

Dealing with powerful 'disciples,' Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ was aware that his approach must be the most indirect possible. The goal of a section of his *Kitāb al-Adab al-kabīr* is to advise the ruler. It can be described as a *mirror for princes*.[68] Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ concludes it by explaining that all that the ruler needs can be summarized in strengthening his power and adorning it amongst the people.[69] The next section, however, advises those who are in the ruler's entourage. It can be described as a *mirror for courtiers*. While the previous one prescribes how rulers should act, this one describes, in an astonishingly outspoken manner, how they do act.[70] The conclusion of this *mirror for courtiers* includes a sentence that summarizes Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's thoughts about educating those in power: "Teach them, but let them think/show them/ that you are learning from them; educate them, but as if they were educating you."[71]

While the political elites of the Islamic empire realized the importance of the political theories of the empires they succeeded,[72] they also needed them as applied in their imminent political needs. Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ also served his patrons by integrating key Sāsānian political concepts into actual political texts, blending them with Islamic ideas and formulas. He reused and actualized the ideas, formulas, structures, examples and images he found in texts he read and translated.

The Letter of Tansar was composed in Pahlavi by the Zoroastrian high priest Tansar[73] defending the policies of the founder of the Sāsānian dynasty, Ardashīr (r. c. 224-220 CE). This letter was translated into Arabic by Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ.[74] Tansar elaborates on justifying Ardashīr's reforms as a return to the real "tradition of the ancients."[75] The title of Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's *al-Yatīma* can be translated as *The Peerless Pearl*. It is a propagandistic epistle or speech[76] with a similar goal and style as the *Letter of Tansar*, urging allegiance to a new,

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68 See Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Kitāb al-Adab al-kabīr*, 185-91, Tardy, 'Traduction', 185-91, §§ 3-32; this *mirror for princes* section is translated into English in van Gelder, *Classical*, 170-5.

69 Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Kitāb al-Adab al-kabīr*, 54³⁻⁶, Tardy, Traduction, 191, § 32, and van Gelder, *Classical*, 175.

70 See Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Kitāb al-Adab al-kabīr*, 54-70, Tardy, 'Traduction', 191-200, §§ 33-73. On the whole work, see Hamori, Prudence, *idem*, Shameful, and Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée*, 181-210.

71 تُعلِّمهم وأنت تُريهم أنك تتعلم منهم، وتُؤدِّبهم وكأنهم يؤدبونك
    Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Kitāb al-Ādāb al-kabīr*, 70⁸⁻⁹. This key sentence is present only in two of the sources used by Kurd ʿAlī to establish his edition, see *ibid*., 39 and 70, n. 11. This fact indicates either that it was interpolated into the text or that it was omitted from it. See also Tardy, *Traduction*, 200, § 73.

72 See Belhaj and Kristó-Nagy, "Ancient Greek Philosophy".

73 For Tansar, see Boyce, *The Letter of Tansar*, 5-11, see also Kreyenbroek, "Hērbed."

74 Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's Arabic rendering is lost but it was translated into Persian by Ibn Isfandiyār in the seventh / thirteenth century. See Boyce's introduction to her English translation of the text, 2-3. See also Melville, "Ebn Esfandīār."

75 Boyce, *The Letter of Tansar*, 36 up to 40, as well as 47 and 66-68.

76 Its author calls himself a "speaker" and addresses his audience as "listeners". For the Arabic text and its French translation, see Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée*, 372-375. See also, *ibid*, 105-106 and 269.

reforming ruler. A long fragment of this text of proverbial excellence subsists.[77] In this fragment Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ combines the depiction of the decline of society and the advent of a new, savior-ruler with the scheme of describing the 'times' as being of four sorts. In the best one, the shepherd is righteous as well as his flock, in the second, the shepherd is righteous but the flock is corrupt, in the third, the shepherd is corrupt but the flock is righteous and in the fourth, both the shepherd and the flock are corrupt.[78]

In *The Letter of Tansar*, we find a contrast between the present righteous ruler and his corrupt flock.[79] According to the *Yatīma*, the time before the rise of the new ruler was that of corrupt rulers and corrupt flock, but his rule presents a hope that his righteousness will help the flock to turn to righteousness as well.[80] It is important to note how difficult it is to translate the verb *aṣlaḥa* often used by Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ. It refers to righteousness but also to welfare and it is difficult to decide whether it means to turn people to righteousness or to *re*turn them to it.

Interestingly, in the description of the decadence of the past in *The Letter of Tansar*, we encounter an incorporated quotation from the Qurʾān.[81] In the *Yatīma* such references are ubiquitous.[82] Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ sought to amalgamate the tradition of the vanquished with that of the conquerors. Unfortunately, we do not have the entire text, but apparently the *Yatīma* also made a parallel between the new caliph and the prophet of Islam, who arrived to save his community and the entire humankind of the (pre-Islamic) time of the *jāhiliyya*, ignorance.[83]

Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ was not the first *kātib* to use Qurʾānic terms, imagery and concepts. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd[84] advised already the *kuttāb* to know the Qurʾān,[85] and he himself was a master of emulating it. He did so especially in his letters of condolence and his ideological works, such as public orations written on behalf and in the interest of the Umayyad dynasty and their last ruler Marwān II b. Muḥammad.[86] The *Yatīma* is clearly a similar oration on behalf of an ʿAbbāsid ruler.[87]

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77 It has been preserved together with the *Risāla fī l-Ṣaḥāba* in the *Kitāb al-Manthūr wa-l-manẓūm* by Aḥmad b. Abī Ṭāhir Ṭayfūr. Muḥammad Kurd ʿAlī published it (see Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *al-Yatīma* 107-111), but to my knowledge it has been analysed only in Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée*, 267-277. For the Arabic text and its French translation, see *ibid*, 372-404.

78 Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *al-Yatīma*, 109⁶-110⁶. Variants of this scheme appear also in the third book of the Dēnkard, see *Le troisième livre*, 355, § 398 and also in a famous Greek novel in letters: the (fictitious) correspondence between Aristotle and Alexander the Great, translated into Arabic probably by Sālim Abū-'l-ʿAlā (alone or with others), see Maróth, *The Correspondence*, 25 of the edition of the Arabic text, 87 of Maróth's study, see also above n. 25.

79 Boyce, *The Letter of Tansar*, 42.

80 Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *al-Yatīma*, 110⁶⁻¹⁵, see also 110¹⁻⁵.

81 Boyce, *The Letter of Tansar*, 61.

82 See al-Qāḍī, "The Impact of the Qurʾān".

83 Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *al-Yatīma*, 110⁶⁻¹⁵.

84 See above.

85 See al-Qāḍī, "The Impact of the Qurʾān", 287.

86 See al-Qāḍī, "The Impact of the Qurʾān", 300-312. The entire paper is highly relevant to the work of Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ. Jennifer London compares the rhetorical styles of early Arabic secretaries in her second chapter of *Fighting for Inclusion in Autocracy*, tracking similarities and differences between the styles of ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd and Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ and how they served to integrate aspects of their non-Arab identities at court.

87 The text itself indicates that it was meant to be delivered in speech, see above p. 172, n. 76, Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée*, 106, 269, and for the Arabic Text and the French translation, see 374-375, §2.

Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's texts are replete with Qurʾānic references, when this enhances their efficiency. The entire ideological argumentation of the *Yatīma* is religious, in view to be ideologically persuading for a Muslim readership (or rather audience). The *Amān*, letter of safe conduct for ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlī,[88] is full of Qurʾānic references, for it was meant to be or legally binding for a Muslim 'contracting' party (the caliph al-Manṣūr). The short *Taḥmīd*, glorification of God, which is conserved under Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's name and could be an introduction to an official document, is a pastiche of Qurʾānic phrases,[89] and the formalistic letters of condolence as well as letters of request and letters of gratitude attributed to Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ[90] are also similar to ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's 'Qurānistic' style. In the *Risāla fī l-Ṣaḥāba*, however, the usage of this style is limited to the points where it is needed,[91] and in Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's translations and *adab* works (two categories that are difficult to distinguish from each other)[92], such references are very rare.

For making references to the Qurʾān, Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ did not have to believe in it.[93] In his theoretical works, Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ presented religion as a political instrument. According to an advice of the *Kitāb al-Adab al-kabīr*, a reign based on religion is stronger than one based only on *ḥazm*, firmness, because religion gives the subjects what they need, and obliges them to do what they have to, and this satisfies them and helps them to accept their situation.[94] This advice by Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ accords with an often quoted Sāsānian maxim adopted by Islamicate political thought. We read in *The letter of Tansar*, translated by Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ: "For Church and State were born of one womb, joined together and never to be sundered. Virtue and corruption, health and sickness are of the same nature for both."[95]

In his practical works Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ used religion in the same pragmatic spirit. He worked for governors and commanders in the service of the Umayyads, but after the fall of the dynasty he served their victorious enemies as an eminent adviser and propagandist. He used 'Qurānistic' style in order to promote his ideas and interests to his actual or targeted

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88 See above.

89 For the Arabic text and a French translation, see Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée*, 406-411, and for an analysis see *ibid.* 279-283.

90 For the Arabic text and a French translation, see Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée*, 412-436, and for an analysis see *ibid.* 279-283.

91 For religious references in the *Risāla fī l-Ṣaḥāba*, see §§ 1-22, 25, Lampe, *Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ*, 84-97, 98, see also below.

92 See above.

93 See for instance Samir, "The Earliest Arab Apology", 69-70, 108-109 on the Qurʾānic allusions and influence discernible in the earliest Arab apology for Christianity.

94 See Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Kitāb al-Adab al-kabīr*, 49[5–12], for a French translation, see Tardy, *Traduction*, 188, § 17, and for an English translation of this passage, see van Gelder, *Classical*, 173. See also Mahassine, "Deux genres", and Kristó-Nagy, "Reason", 293-299.

95 Boyce, *The Letter of Tansar*, 33-34. Ibn Qutayba cites both sayings, see Ibn Qutayba, *ʿUyūn al-akhbār*, ed. by Brockelmann, I, 18[10-15] and *ʿUyūn al-akhbār*, ed. by al-ʿAdawī, I, 2[10-15] and see Ibn Qutayba, *ʿUyūn al-akhbār*, ed. by Brockelmann, I, 21[11-12] and Ibn Qutayba, *ʿUyūn al-akhbār*, ed. by al-ʿAdawī, I, 5[4]. We also find variants of both sayings in one of the fundamental texts of Pahlavi wisdom literature, the third book of the Dēnkard, see *Le troisième livre*, 274-275, § 273 and 65, § 58. (On the Dēnkard, see Ph. Gignoux, "Dēnkard".) A variant of the second maxim is present also in another emblematic Sāsānian text, the *ʿAhd Ardashīr*, edited by Grignaschi 49[5-6]. For Grignaschi's French translation, see *ibid.*, 70. See also his note 10 on p. 84 and Shaked, "From Iran to Islam".

Muslim patrons, as in the case of the *Risāla fī l-Ṣaḥāba*, or the ideas and interests of his actual patrons to a Muslim audience supposedly receptive to this sort of language, as in the case of the *Yatīma*, and the *Amān*. Service is not friendship, however, and while the sacredness of the relationship between friends, literally 'brothers', *ikhwān*, is a major topic of Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's writings, *Kalīla wa-Dimna* describes the loyalty he expected from rulers as that of a whore: "Regarding their infidelity to their companions and their nonchalance of those they lose, they are like whores; when a client goes away another comes in his place."[96] The *mirror for courtiers* section of his *Kitāb al-Adab al-kabīr* does not describe rulers more favorably, and al-Jahshiyārī's account of Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's murder demonstrates that he was quite right not to overestimate the value of the protection his patrons granted to him.[97] Given the nature of this relationship, it is not astonishing that the ideology used to sanctify the power of his patrons was not necessarily sacred to him. According to the reports of subsequent generations, corresponding perfectly to at least two texts attributed to him, Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ also knew the *Qurʾān* very well when he aimed to ridicule it.[98]

The practical know-how of the *kuttāb* comprehended the ways of successfully governing the subjects of the empire, including the ideology, symbols, and rituals that made a rule natural for them. In another long fragment of the *Yatīma*, full of Qurʾānic references, Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ compares the ruler to natural phenomena, such as the rain, the wind, the winter, the summer, the night, and the day. Similar to these phenomena, the rule of the ruler is a beneficial gift of God to humankind, in spite of the suffering caused to some of them. Without this suffering Earth would be the Paradise that it is not.[99]

In a third, short fragment, Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ expands upon the difference between *dīn*, religion and *raʾy*, opinion/view.[100] In the *Risāla fī l-Ṣaḥāba*, Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ elaborates on the question of *dīn*, religion, and *ʿaql*, reason. Both are gifts of God to humankind, and the ruler's responsibility is to enforce the rules given by religion as well as to apply his reason in questions that religion has not defined.[101]

In a similar way to *The Letter of Tansar* and the *Yatīma*, the *Risāla fī l-Ṣaḥāba*[102] describes the new ʿAbbāsid ruler as a hope for the reestablishment of good order, after the

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96 إنما مَثَلهم في قِلَّة وفائهم لأصحابهم وسخاء أنفُسهم عمن فقَدوا منهم مَثَل البَغيّ كلما ذهب واحد جاء آخر مكانه
ʿAzzām, *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, 77[8]-78[2]. I aim to explore the history of the sexual content of *Kalīla wa-Dimna* and its bowdlerization in a separate paper.

97 See above, n. 13.

98 See above, and below, the section, "Imperial religion, heretical resistance."

99 This passage is preserved in different variants by Ibn Qutayba, *ʿUyūn al-akhbār*, ed. by Brockelmann, I, 19[16]-21[11] and Ibn Qutayba, *ʿUyūn al-akhbār*, ed. by al-ʿAdawī, I, 3[19]-5[3] (according the editor of this edition, see IV, 249, the fragment is quoted from al-Thaʿālibī's *al-Yatīma al-dahr*, but this is impossible, as al-Thaʿālibī was born in 350 / 961 and Ibn Qutayba died in 276 / 889), al-Ṭurṭūshī, *Sirāj al-mulūk*, 42[28]-43[12], al-Thaʿālibī, *Thimār al-qulūb*, 199[18]-200[18], § 276, al-Thaʿālibī, *Ādāb al-mulūk*, 57[3-15] and al-Zamakhsharī, *Rabīʿ al-abrār*, IV, 230[3-15].

100 This fragment is conserved in Yūsuf b. ʿAbd al-Barr, *Jāmiʿ bayān al-ʿilm*, II, 33 quoted in Nallino, "Noterelle," 132, reedited Nallino, *Raccolta*, 177. See also Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée*, 272, and for the Arabic text and its French translation, see *ibid*, 390-391.

101 Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Risāla fī l-Ṣaḥāba*, §§ 18-22, Lampe, *Ibn al-Muqaffaʾ*, 95-97. We find a similar idea in Boyce, *The Letter of Tansar*, 42. See also Kristó-Nagy, "Reason", 293-299.

102 Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Risāla fī l-Ṣaḥāba*, §§ 1-9, Lampe, *Ibn al-Muqaffaʾ*, 84-89. Interestingly neither the name of the new caliph, nor that of the Umayyads is explicitly mentioned in the introduction of the text.

corrupt age of his predecessors, the Umayyads. In addition to the implicit reference to the Sāsānian ideas presented in the *Letter of Tansar* and the covenant-break-covenant scheme of the Qurʾān, Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ explicitly quotes the latter, referring to the story of the prophet Joseph.[103] The political program articulated in the *Risāla fī l-Ṣaḥāba* is a very concrete action plan for the construction of the new polity. In spite of its absolutely practical objective it is built on Sāsānian theory (and practice), adapted to Islamic concepts and decorated with references to the Qurʾān[104] and to Arabic poetry.[105] The result is Islamicate political thought.

The very structure of the *Risāla fī l-Ṣaḥāba* is founded on an idea that we find in Arabic sources as attributed to Sāsānian authorities. According to this concept the vigor of a kingdom rests on performing the law and religion and this depends on the king, whose strength depends on the army. The army needs its pay, which comes from the land tax. The amount of the land tax is contingent on the prosperity of the agriculture. The key of the prosperity of the agriculture is justice and it is in the hands of the king, who has to instruct and control his tax officers through his ministers.[106]

In contrast with the four estates (clergy, military, scribes-administrators, producers) model, described in *The Letter of Tansar*, the scheme above does not deal with the priesthood.[107] In the formative period of Islam, the absence of any official priesthood favored the *kuttāb*, whose highest ranking representatives, the *wuzarāʾ* (in singular: *wazīr*) were bidding for the effective supremacy over the ʿAbbāsid empire. They were in competition and collaboration with the military elite and with another group of learned

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103   Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Risāla fī l-Ṣaḥāba*, § 3, Lampe, *Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ*, 85-86.

104   See the previous note, and Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Risāla fī l-Ṣaḥāba*, § 19, Lampe, *Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ*, 96.

105   Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Risāla fī l-Ṣaḥāba*, § 46 Lampe, *Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ*, 113-114.

106   See a saying attributed to a Sāsānian chief priest and another to a Sāsānian king, Anūshirwān (Khosrow I, r. 531-579 CE) cited in the preliminary remarks of Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddima*, I, 64[6-17], available on-line at http://archive.org/stream/prolgomnesde01abda#page/65/mode/2up, for an English translation see Rosenthal, *The Muqaddimah*, I, 80-81. (See also Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddima*, II, 94[8]-95[18], available on-line at http://archive.org/stream/prolgomnesde02abda#page/94/mode/2up, and Rosenthal, *The Muqaddimah*, II, 104-106.)
     Ibn Khaldūn quotes these sayings from al-Masʿūdī's *Murūj al-dhahab*. See al-Masʿūdī, *Les prairies d'or*, ed. and French trans. by Barbier de Meynard and Pavet de Courteille, II, 172[4-9], available on-line at http://archive.org/stream/lesprairiesdor02masuuoft#page/172/mode/2up, and 210[4-7], available on-line at http://archive.org/stream/lesprairiesdor02masuuoft#page/210/mode/2up, and al-Masʿūdī, *Les prairies d'or*, ed by Barbier de Meynard and Pavet de Courteille, reviewed and corrected by Pellat, along al-Masʿūdī, *Les prairies d'or*, trans. into French by Barbier de Meynard and Pavet de Courteille, reviewed and corrected by Ch. Pellat, I, §§ 597 et 631.
     It is worth noting that al-Masʿūdī's source might be Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's translation of a Pahlavi work (see below, the section, "Historiography and Identity"). See also Kristó-Nagy, "Who Shall Educate", 287-289.
     Immediately after the words attributed to Anūshirwān, Ibn Khaldūn also cites the pseudo-Aristotelian theory of the 'circle of justice' and mentions Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ as an author who dealt with such topics. See Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddima*, I, 64[17]-65[18], available on-line at http://archive.org/stream/prolgomnesde01abda#page/65/mode/2up, 51[14]-52[6], for an English translation see Rosenthal, *The Muqaddimah*, I, 81-83. See also London, "The 'Circle of Justice'," *idem*, "The Abbasid," and her forthcoming book including an analysis of Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's invocations of this model of the just world, London, *Fighting for Inclusion in Autocracy*.

107   Boyce, *The Letter of Tansar*, 37-38. See also Kristó-Nagy, "Conflict and Cooperation," 76-77.

men, the *'ulamāʾ* (in singular: *'ālim*), whose expertise was in religion and law, Islam and the *Sharīʿa*. Each of these social segments: the military, the *kuttāb*, and the *'ulamāʾ* included large numbers of non-Arabs, and in spite of the difference in their expertise and sources of authority, in the long term *kuttāb* and *'ulamāʾ* tended to converge.[108]

One of the key concepts of Sāsānian political thought that Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ adapted to Islamdom is that the state is built on those who provide its sustenance, *i.e.* the peasants, and on those who provide its defense, the military. The role of the ruler and his administration is to maintain justice and balance between the peasants and the soldiers, because without constraint the peasants would not give anything to the soldiers and without discipline the soldiers would take everything from the peasants.[109] Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ strenuously warned against a system[110] that led later to the decline of agriculture across Islamdom, when the state was unable to fulfil its role as defined by the Sāsānian concept delineated above: instead of managing in a 'just' manner the collection of taxes from the peasants and distributing to the soldiers their pay, it allowed the officers to take their income directly from the peasants. This system still let the state control the soldiers, who did not become the owners of the lands – designated to them for a confined period – but ruined the peasants. In contrast, the medieval Western European modes of territorial control induced the lords to take care of their lands, but impeded the central power. The prosperity of agriculture and the weakness of central control contributed to the revival and the independence of cities and ultimately helped the emergence of the middle class, a crucial factor in the specific evolution of the West.

In Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's vision, the welfare of the state depends on another kind of 'middle class', that of the administrators. According to the Sāsānian model, the structure of the state is hierarchical, with the ruler at the top of all hierarchies, military, religious, administrative, and legal alike. Ideally, this unique status of the ruler elevates him over society and puts him above all conflicts and all competition within its state, making him impartial, just and responsible only to God.[111]

In Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's version of this model, this hierarchy is presented as rigid and the rule of the ruler as absolute, but it is not without control. His decisions and actions are bound by the rules of religion and prepared and effectuated by his advisers/administrators. Thus, in a hidden way, leading society is the responsibility of the intellectuals, who have mastery over the producers and the military. The role of religion is to sanctify and cement the structure of the state built on production, defense and administration.

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108   See Kristó-Nagy, "Conflict and Cooperation," 66-69.
109   See the *Kārnāmaj Ānūshirwān*, I, 203[6]-205[5]. For a French translation, see Grignaschi, "Quelques spécimens," 26-27. See also a text conserved under the name of Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ (published in Grignaschi, "Quelques specimens"), the *Kitāb al-Tāj fī sīrat-Ānūshīrwān li-ʾbn al-Muqaffaʿ* (*The Book of the Crown on the Life of Anūshīrwān by Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ*), 104[1-3] and 105[14-18], for Grignaschi's French translation, see 129-130 and 131.
110   Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Risāla fī l-Ṣaḥāba*, § 23, see also §§ 51-53, Lampe, *Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ*, 97-98, and 118-120.
111   See Al-Azmeh, "Monotheistic kingship."

Historiography and identity

Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's translations of Pahlavi historiographical works are lost, but they were certainly highly influential and some of their material was incorporated into later compositions.[112] It is worth noting that the historiographical translations of Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ and of his *kuttāb* predecessors, peers and followers were amongst the first historiographical texts in Arabic.[113] It is to be recognized that these translations formed part of his educational and civilizational program for the elite of Islamicate society. Like the fables of *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, the accounts of his historiographical translations were also designed to provide examples and models for the rulers and courtiers of Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's time and their posterity. Due to the fact that many works of Pahlavi historiography had a legendary character and the tales of *Kalīla wa-Dimna* also contain such historical legends, classifying such works of Late Antique Pahlavi and early Arabic prose literature into rigidly distinct genres would disregard their nature. They belonged to the educative and entertainment literature.[114]

As a result of Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's and other Iranian authors' translations of Pahlavi historiographical works into Arabic, Sāsānian history was introduced into Islamic universal histories. This was not the case with ancient Greek, Roman, Byzantine or any other history, with the exception of biblical stories studied because of their relevance to the narratives of the Qurʾān, and of some histories of the pre-Islamic Arabs including the Kingdom of Yemen. This inclusion of Iranian history into Islamic historiography helped Iranian Muslims to integrate in to Islamic society while maintaining their distinct identity.[115] Thus the translation of these historiographical works may have been a factor in the survival of the Iranian entity, which provided a pattern for other ethnicities keeping their distinct identity and language after their conversion to Islam.

As Arabic is a Semitic and Persian is an Indo-European language, it is possible that it was the substantial difference in language that caused the survival of different cultural entities. Greek, however, was also a largely spoken and written language on territories conquered by the Arabs,[116] nevertheless, it vanished slowly as a spoken language and cultural identity. It seems that at least in some cases it is rather the cultural (religious) identity that maintained the languages, as in the case of the Syriac, Coptic, Hebrew, or even

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112 The most famous of these works is the *Khudāynāme* (*Book of the Kings*), see Gabrieli, "L'opera," 208-213, Yarshater, "Iranian National History," 359-360, Savant, *The New Muslims*, see 39-47, (55-56, 118), 156-169, and most recently Hämeen-Anttila, "Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ."

113 Such translations were produced already during the rule of the caliph al-Hishām b. ʿAbd al-Malik (see above p. 166). According to a report by al-Masʿūdī, he saw a book that contained information not included in the *Khudāynāme*, the *Āʾīn-Nāma* (whose translation was also attributed to Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, see Gabrieli, "L'opera," 213-215, and Tafażżolī, "Āʾīn-Nāma") and the other such books. It was based on the pictures of all the Sāsānian rulers and their biographies found in their treasuries, translated from Persian into Arabic for the caliph al-Hishām b. ʿAbd al-Malik in the middle of the Jumadā al-Āhira of 113 / August 731, see al-Masʿūdī (written as al-Masûdî), *Kitâb at-Tanbîh*, 106^5-107^5, for a French translation, see al-Masʿūdī (written as Maçoudi), *Le livre de l'avertissement*, 150-151, accessible on-line at https://archive.org/stream/lelivredelaverti00masuuoft#page/150/mode/2up.

114 According to Hämeen-Anttila, "Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ," the *Khudāynāme* was of different character.

115 I concur with Kennedy, "Survival of the Iranianness", see especially 22-23, who formulated a similar argument.

116 See Gutas, *Greek Thought*, 17-20 and 23.

Pahlavi. A saved, adjusted and glorified history[117] might have been crucial for the survival and revival of Persian identity. If it seems to be paradoxical that some of the principal creators of Arabic prose literature were Iranians,[118] it is even more interesting that by translating into Arabic they contributed to the survival and revival of the Persian culture and language.

Conquering the conquerors is always a long process, and the attitude of the first bridge builders is often ambivalent. As humans are characterized by relatively low individual and high group aggression, in wars and conflicts, individual affinities tend to be overwritten by the dichotomy of 'us' and 'they'.[119] The very identification of Arabs as Arabs and the Iranians as Iranians, labelled *al-ʿajam*, 'Barbarians', by the Arabs was mainly caused by this dichotomy of the conquest, which tended to forge from a multitude of identities two main categories, that of the conquerors and that of the vanquished. For those inhabitants of the newly conquered lands who were at odds with the previous conquerors, it was easier to join the new ones. But for those who were satisfied with the previous establishment, or indeed belonged to it, this was more difficult. They had to lose or reinterpret and renegotiate their status. For the likes of Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, the Sāsānian empire as ruled by Ardashīr, Anūshirwān, and the other Kings of Kings, provided an alternative myth of a golden age as a basis for a new identity, simultaneously in contrast to and in fusion with the myth of the golden age of Muḥammad and the identity based on it.

Imperial religion, heretical resistance

What is most perplexing for scholars studying Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's oeuvre and personality is that while he made perfect use of Islamic concepts and *Qurʾān*ic constructions in his official texts – *i.e.* those texts he authored as a *kātib* writing as part of his service to his Muslim lords, not as a *kātib* writing to his peers – we also know fragments of writings attributed to him that polemical against Islam. These passages fiercely criticize the Qurʾān, the character, the image and the concept of its God, as well as the deeds of its prophet and followers. In accordance with the contents of these fragments, most pre-modern Muslim authors writing about Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ agreed that he was a *Zindīq*, i.e., a dualist heretic. I argue that contrary to the opinions expressed in most of the modern scholarly literature, the contradictions between different writings attributed to Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ do not invalidate their authenticity, inasmuch as they reflect the complex and contentious social, ethnic, and religious contexts of the post-conquest society he lived and acted in.

Even in his writings that are commonly accepted as authentic and seem to be perfectly conformable to Islam we can detect anti-Islamic and anti-Arab feelings meant to be deciphered by those who share them. If they are not understood today it is because those who were supposed to comprehend them died long ago. They were Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's true confreres, those professional politico-bureaucratic intellectuals of non-Arab origin who were recent and often rather insincere converts to Islam and regarded their Arab 'patrons' as barbaric oppressors.[120] The anti-Arab and anti-Islamic message of the chapter of "The

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117   See Savant, *The New Muslims*.
118   See above.
119   See Kristó-Nagy, "Violence," 5-10.
120   For editions, translations and studies of the anti-Islamic texts attributed to Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ see, Guidi,

hermit and his guest" interpolated into *Kalīla wa-Dimna* by Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ has remained uncomprehended by modern scholarship, while it was probably quite transparent for those contemporaries of Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ who were meant to understand it.[121] The same applies to the double language used in the prologue of the *Kitāb al-Adab al-kabīr*.[122] In *Kalīla wa-Dimna* and the *Kitāb al-Adab al-kabīr*, the official and the intimate spheres of Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's writings overlap, linking the two seemingly incompatible faces of the same author.

The situation in the post-conquest society after the expansion of Islamdom can be compared in many ways to that of the post-conquest society after the Soviet invasion in Eastern Europe. The invading armies settled – the camps of the Muslim army were called *amṣār* (in singular: *miṣr*), and like the camps of the Roman army before, they also often became new metropolises, such as al-Kūfa, al-Baṣra, Cairo, Qayrawān *etc*. – and the intellectuals who wanted to serve the interests of their people or of themselves, had to write conformably to the ideology of the invaders – communism or Islam – whether they liked it or not. Those who did not embrace the new paradigm wholeheartedly expressed themselves using a double and ambiguous language assimilated to the constrained framework but still conveying their ideas. The early Islamicate state was of course incomparably less totalitarian than that of the Soviets, and it did not pretend at all to claim the adherence of all of its subjects to its ideology, which was much less elaborated than the dominant religions and the imperial traditions of the vanquished. For this reason, Muslims tolerated criticism astonishingly well and the formative period of Islamicate society is one of the most effervescent in the cultural history of humankind. Insulting Islam while working for Islamic authorities was, however, never very safe and scarcely helpful in promoting one's career.

The fact that many of these *client* (*mawlā*) secretaries (*kuttāb*) were accused of being dualist heretics (*Zanādiqa*, in singular: *Zindīq*) is significant. It indicates their attachment to the dualism of the religions of pre-Islamic Iran, but even more a mental disposition similar to those who were attracted to the radically dualist Gnostic and Manichean currents that were officially persecuted in both the Roman/Byzantine and the Sāsānian empire.[123]

Radical dualism was a very appealing worldview for those social groups who felt oppressed, considered the world being ruled by the forces of Darkness and identified themselves with the community of the light seeking liberation. Monotheism has a more optimistic view of the world, on the established social order and on its rulers. It depicts the universe as being created and maintained by the absolute good: God. This vision reflects

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La lotta, van Ess, "Some Fragments," van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft*, V, 104-108, Urvoy, *Les penseurs libres*, 29-66, Urvoy, "La démystification." See also Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée*, 287-340 (for the analysis) and 438-460 (for the texts and their French translation), as well as *idem.*, "A Violent."

121 This is the even the case of studies by such eminent scholars as Nöldeke, Gabrieli and de Blois, see Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée*, 145, n. 398, and *idem.*, "The Crow." See above.

122 See Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée*, 189-191.

123 On the question of the *Zandaqa*, see Vajda, "Les zindîqs," Gabrieli, "La « zandaqa »," Browder, *Al-Bīrūnī*, Stroumsa and Stroumsa, "Aspects," Giorgi, *Pour une histoire*, Chokr, *Zandaqa* (I strongly disagree with Chokr's more or less openly apologetic approach and his opinion on Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, see above, n. 20), van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft*, I, 416-456, de Blois, "Zindīk", Reeves, *Prolegomena*, Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée*, 41-44, 69, 74-79, 113-125, 140-141, 281-282, 287-340, *idem.*, "A Violent," and *idem.*, "Denouncing." For a summary of the Muslim perceptions on Manichaeism see Waardenburg, "The Medieval Period," 37-40 with the corresponding notes on 62-63.

and sanctifies the hierarchical structure of power topped by the ruler, 'the shepherd of his flock' – an image that was used already by the Babylonians,[124] and is central Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's *al-Yatīma* –[125] and 'the shadow of God' – a trope that "goes at least as far back as the Assyrians"[126].[127]

During the first century after the Islamic conquest, Muslims were a small minority in their new empire, hence they could not continue the Roman/Byzantine and Sāsānian persecutions against the Manicheans and the related groups. Islam was a new religion far from being equipped to resist the well-developed criticisms of monotheism by the dualists. Consequently, the *Zandaqa* penetrated even the Muslim community, mostly through *cliens* secretaries, who felt oppressed by but spiritually superior to their Arab rulers. Their attitude provoked the first inquisition and persecution in Islamdom (mainly between 163 / 779 and 170 / 786), as well as the formation of the first Islamic theological school, the *Muʿtazila*, which emphasized most of all the *tawḥīd*, the unity of God, in controversy with the Trinity of the Christians and even more with the dualism of the *Zanādiqa*. *Zandaqa* was erased but it had an immense influence on the evolution of Islamic theology and many of the *Gnostico-Manicheistico-Zindīq* attitudes survive in the *Shīʿī* vision of the world.[128]

Conclusion

Often of non-Arab origin, the *kuttāb* (scribes, secretaries, advisers, and administrators) played a crucial role in integrating the heritage of antiquity into Islamic culture. Their contribution to the formation of pre-modern humanism, Islamic polity, literature, art, and culture was fundamental. They depended on their patrons' might, which they both channeled and challenged. They could, effectively, negotiate for a share of resources, since the military elites needed their organizational and communicational expertise to maintain power. They formed a 'secular' intellectual elite, in ambiguous relationship with the official ideology of the state, Islam, and with their lords and with the emerging religious elite of the new religion.

This study aimed to present these tensions through a study of the life and memory (career and image) of the *kātib* par excellence, Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, and the works attributed to him. Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ was one of the most important creators of Arabic prose. With his peers he introduced into Arabic literature the heritage of Sāsānian historiographical, fiction, advice (*adab*) and epistle (*risāla*) writing. He authored theoretical and practical compositions concerning politics, ethics and religion, mirrors for princes and mirrors for courtiers. His translations of key Sāsānian texts include *Kalīla wa-Dimna* and *The Letter of Tansar*, and his original writings, such as *al-Yatīma* (*The Peerless Pearl*) – which has been completely neglected by research – and his *Risāla fī l-Ṣaḥāba* (*Letter about the Entourage/Retinue [of the Caliph]*), are crucial for understanding how this heritage was applied in the context of

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124   See Belhaj and Kristó-Nagy, "Ancient Greek Philosophy."
125   See above.
126   According to Al-Azmeh, "Monotheistic Kingship," 9.
127   See Kristó-Nagy, "Denouncing."
128   See Kristó-Nagy, "Denouncing." See also Crone, *Medieval*, especially pp. 80-82 and Amir-Moezzi, "Shiʿite Doctrine."

the Islamic empire, and more specifically in the turbulent times around the ʿAbbāsid revolution.

Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's oeuvre presents an attempt to use different literary devices and genres in order to educate the elites of society, and demonstrates the awakening of the consciousness of intellectuals amongst the vanquished following the trauma of the Islamic conquest, their search for redefined identity, and their contribution to Islamic civilization. His seemingly contradictory religious stances – on the one hand his adherence to the dualist *Zandaqa*, reflected in the reports about him and texts attributed to him fiercely criticizing Islam, monotheism, and the Arabs, and on the other hand his conversion to Islam, and the pro-Arab views attributed to him,[129] also reflect, *whether authentic or not*, the dialectic of resistance against and integration into the new system.

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129   See al-Tawḥīdī, *Kitāb al-Imtāʿ wa-l-muʾānasa*, I, pp. 70[11]-73[6], and Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée*, 66-68.

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