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CHAPTER 9

SHI'A FESTIVALS

*If your wicked enemy sheds your blood
Your blood makes you honorable (surkh-ru) on the Day of Judgement
The heart bleeds that you were killed and, like a candle,
None but your enemy was at your head.*

Sayyid Sharif al-Husseini

...

*Men weep for you (Imam Hussein) today in many lands
And on their breasts in bitter anguish beat,
And in sad, mournful tunes, the tales repeat
Of how you lost your lifes upon the sands (of Karbala).
You nobly spurned the tyrant's (Yezid's) base demands
And chose death to prevent you soul's defeat,
Became a martyr with steadfast feet
For these well may one weep who understands
This sorrow at your death, despite the years
Is still as fresh, which time has failed to quell,
In every heart this day new pain appears
And of your sufferings men each other tell
They see a vision through slow-falling tears
Of that lonely battle where thirsting you fell.*

Amin Khorasani

...

*Those who, when misfortune befalls them say "We
ones on whom God bestows His Blessings (Salawat) and His Mercy;
and truly they are the ones who are rightly guided.*

Qur'an II: 156-157

*History bears powerful testimony to the fact that in the
midst of suffering (Imam) Hussein continued to recite the above-
quoted Qur'anic verse. (Qura'n II: 156-157)*

Therefore Imam Hussein is entitled to Salawat (Blessings); and we are justified in invoking Salawat on him. Peace be upon him (Imam Hussein).

Shi'a Blessing on Imam Hussein:

Truly, to those who deny the signs of God, and unjustly kill the Apostles, and kill those among men who enjoin justice, give tidings to them of a painful chastisement. Qura'n III:21.

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Until the Iranian revolution, there existed almost total ignorance in the Western World in regards to Shi'ism. In the English-speaking world this is surprising, as Shi'ites were numerous in the India of the British Raj, and indeed the Anglo-Indian expression "Hobson-Jobson" derives from the Shi'aa lament "Ya Hasan, Ya Hussein". It is perhaps not surprising that a similar ignorance exists or existed in Spain, though there is a certain irony here.

Fortunately, since the Iranian Revolution many books on Shi'ism have become available in English. Many are listed in the notes to the preceding chapter, though many of these works may be a bit too specialized for most people.

An eloquent, concise and comprehensive introduction to Shi'ism is the book by Allamah Sayid Muhammad Husayn Tabataba'i, published in Great Britain under the title Shi'ite Islam and in Iran under the title Shi'a. For a collection of essays dealing with specific aspects of Shi'ism, I recommend Shi'ism: Doctrines, Thought and Spirituality, edited by Seyyed Hossein Nasr. For a Shi'a viewpoint on early Islamic history, I recommend The Origins and Early Development of Shi'i Islam by S.H.M. Jafri. For the basic prayers and religious practices of Shi'ism, I recommend Know Your Islam by Yousuf N. Lalljee. For a general overview, I recommend: An Introduction to Shi'i Islam by Moojan Momen.

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Here we do not pretend to give a full, comprehensive account of all Shi'a holy days, because, obviously, Sunni and Shi'a Islam have a great many holy days in common. Nor shall we discuss such holidays as Nauruz and Mihrajan (Avestan: Mithrakana), which, though they have to a great extent become associated with Shi'ism, in reality they are Persian festivals with roots in pre-Islamic times.

Below is a list of Shi'a festivals, according to the Islamic lunar calendar:

Muharram:

- 1-10.): Martyrdom of Hussein, the 3rd Imam, at Karbala.
- 9 & 10.): Tasu'a and Ashura, culmination of Karbala commemoration.
- 11.) Death of 4th Imam, Zain al-Abidin.

Safar:

- 3.) Birth of 5th Imam, Muhammad al-Baqir.
- 7.) Birth of 7th Imam, Musa al-Kazim.
- 20.) Arba'in (40th day after death of Imam Hussein)
- 28.) Death of Prophet Muhammad and 2nd Imam, Hasan.
- 30.) Death of 8th Imam, Ali ar-Ridha (Called Imam Ali Reza in Persian).

Rabi' I:

- 8.) Death of 11th Imam, Hasan al-'Askari.
 - 9.) Death of Umar, the 2nd Caliph (a joyful occasion for Shi'as).
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17.) Birth of Muhammad (Sunnis celebrate this on 12th and of 6th Imam, Ja'afar as-Sadiq.

Rabi' II:

8.) Birth of 11th Imam, Hasan al-Askari.
Jamadi I:

5.) Birth of Zainab, sister of Imam Hussein.

13.) Death of Fatima.

Jamadi II:

20.) Birth of Fatima.

Rajab:

3.) Death of 10th Imam, Ali al-Hadi.

10.) Death of 9th Imam, Muhammad at-Taqi.

13.) Birth of 1st Imam, Ali ibn Abi Talib.

15.) Death of Zainab sister of Imam Hussein.

25.) Death of 7th Imam, Musa al-Kazim.

27.) Eid al-Maba'th (commemoration of the start of the Prophet's mission).

Sha'ban:

3.) Birth of Hussein, 3rd Imam.

5.) Birth of 4th Imam, Zain al-Abidin.

8.) Occultation of 12th Imam, al-Mahdi.

15.) Birth of 12th Imam, Al-Mahdi.

Ramadhan.) Month of fasting and frequent religious gatherings.

15.) Birth of 2nd Imam, Hasan.

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19.) Stabbing of 1st Imam, Ali ibn Abi Talib.

21.) Death of 1st Imam, Ali ibn Abi Talib.

Shawwal:

1 .) Eid al-Fitr, end of Ramadhan fast.

25.) Death of 6th Imam, Ja'afar as-Sadiq.

Dhu'l-Qad'a:

11.) Birth of 8th Imam, Ali ar-Ridha (called Imam Ali Reza in Persian)

29.) Death of 9th Imam, Muhammad at-Taqi.

Dhu'l-Hijja:

7.) Death of 5th Imam, Muhammad al-Baqir.

10.) Eid al-Qurban (Feast of Sacrifice).

15.) Birth of 10th Imam, Ali al-Hadi.

18.) Eid al-Ghadir (commemorates Muhammad's designation of Ali ibn Abi Talib as his successor at Ghadir Khumm).

In the preceding chapter we spoke of the close parallels between Holy Week celebrations in Spain and certain Shi'a holy days, especially Ashura. However, if the reader knows little or nothing of Shi'ism and especially Shi'a holy days, he may find himself a bit lost.

As we have seen above, the Shi'a calender is quite full of holy days. This is true even if we omit the holy day which Shi'as share with Sunnis.

Some of these holy days are public holidays in Iran. Other than these, there are, of course, many variations concerning the celebration of holy days. Here we have a parallel with saint's days in Catholic and Eastern Orthodox countries (yes, my saint's day or name day is September 29 by the Catholic calendar, November 8 by the Eastern Orthodox calendar). For example, in Meshed Iran, the anniversaries of the birth and death of Imam Ali Reza, 8th Imam, are of great importance because the Meshed is the site of the tomb of Imam Ali Reza. An example of a local holy day may be found in Qum, Iran. The dates of the birth and death of Fatima bint Musa, sister of Imam Ali Reza, are not widely celebrated among Shi'as. However, said dates are indeed celebrated in Qum, which is the site of the tomb of Fatima bint Musa. There are no doubt innumerable other examples of local holy days in the Shi'a world. The above is an obvious and well known example, but there are countless others in which a certain locality will have a special devotion to one of the Imams, or to some other figure in Shi'a history. Women, obviously, have a special devotion to Fatima bint Muhammad, and to a lesser extent, to Zainab, as Catholic and Eastern Orthodox women have a special devotion to the Virgin Mary and certain female saints. Finally, a man named after one of the Imams or a woman named after Fatima or Zainab is very likely to celebrate the birth and death of his

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or her namesake, much as Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Christians their "name day" or "saint's day".

I wish to thank my good friend Syed-Mohsin Naquvi for providing information on Shi'a festivals which would otherwise not be accessible to me at present.

The 20th of the month of Safar is the 40th day after the martyrdom of Imam Hussein, known as the Chehlum of the Imam. In many cities in Iran and the Subcontinent processions are held on this day, and special efforts are made to visit the tomb of the Imam in Karbala.

The 28th of the month of Safar is the anniversary of the death of both the Prophet Muhammad (on whom be peace) and of the martyrdom of Hasan ibn Ali, the Second Imam (on whom be peace). Celebrations are held in mosques and Imambarahs on this day.

The 8th of Rabi al-Awwal is the last day of mourning for the martyrs of Karbala, and also the anniversary of the martyrdom of the 11th Imam, Hasan al-Askari. Gatherings are held on this day, and stories from the life of the 11th Imam are told.

The next day, 9th of Rabi al-Awwal is the anniversary of the day on which Umar Sa'ad, commander of Yezid's army at Karbala, was executed in Kufa by Mukhtar ibn Abu Ubayda at-Thaqafi.

The 17th of Rabi al-Awwal is celebrated, although not in the same ways, by both Sunnis and Shi'as, as it is the anniversary of

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the birth of both the Prophet Muhammad and the 6th Imam, J'afar as-Sadiq.

The 2nd of Jumada ath-Thani is the anniversary of the martyrdom of Fatima Zahra, while the 20th is her birthday. Thus, the whole month of Jumada ath-Thani is dedicated to Fatima Zahra, and gatherings are held in her honor. In Iran the 20th of Jumada ath-Thani is celebrated as "Mother's Day", and children are encouraged to give gifts to their mothers on this day.

The 22nd of Rajab is dedicated to the 6th Imam, Ja'afar as-Sadiq. On said date NAZR is held in nearly all Shi'a homes in Iran and the Subcontinent. As we shall see below, NAZR is of special interest to us. Once again, I wish to thank my good friend Syed-Mohsin Naquvi for providing details of this concept.

In Arabic NAZR may mean either "to warn" or "to make a spiritual vow"; it is only this last meaning which has passed to Persian and Urdu.

Nazr is not peculiar to Shi'a Islam. During the Middle Ages spiritual vows were common in all Christendom, and they continue to be common in Spain, as anyone who has lived there or is familiar with Spanish literature knows. Four examples used to illustrate the meaning of "Nazr" as "spiritual vow" are of special interest to us, two because of Gospel parallels, the other two because they directly concern the Holy Imams.

The first example concerns Ste. Anne, mother of the Virgin Mary, as the Qur'an says:

"When a woman of Imran (Biblical "Joachim") said: "My Lord, surely I vow to Thee what is in my womb, to be devoted to Thy service, accept therefore from me, surely Thou art the Hearing, the Knowing." Qur'an XXV:3.

However, when the child was born it was a girl (the Virgin Mary) and the family was puzzled as to how to send a girl to the Temple. However, they fulfilled the vow they had made to God. The Virgin Mary was dedicated to serving in the Temple under the guardianship of Hazrat Zakariyya (Zechariah, father of St. John the Baptist). Later, of course, she became the mother of Jesus.

Also in the Qur'an is told that when Jesus was born without a father and the Jews were asking of the Virgin Mary how this could be, she replied:

"So eat and drink and refresh the eye. Then if you see any mortal, say: 'Surely I have vowed a fast to the Beneficent God (inni nazartu lir-rahmaani sawman).

So I shall not speak to any man today.'" Qur'an XIX:26

In the Qur'an we also read:

They fulfill vows (yufoona bin-nazri) and fear a day of evil which shall be spreading far and wide.

And they give food out of love for Him to the poor and the orphan and the captive.

We only feed you for Allah's sake; we desire from you neither reward nor thanks:

Surely we fear from our Lord a stern, distressful day.

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Therefore Allah will guard them from the evil of that day and cause them to meet with ease and happiness.

And reward them, because they were patient, with garden and silk. (Qur'an LXXVI:7-12)

The hadith literature shows that the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be unto them) gave living proof of the importance of "Nazr" more than once. The following story is recorded in many early sources.

Once the Imams Hasan and Hussein, who were at that time five and four years old, fell ill. When the Prophet of Islam (Muhammad) missed them in the mosque, he came to Fatima Zahra's house to inquire about them. When he was told that they were sick, he suggested that both parents should take a spiritual vow (Nazr) for the children's recovery. So both Imam Ali and Fatima Zahra prayed to Allah for the recovery of Hasan and Hussein (peace be unto them all) and took a vow to fast for three consecutive days when their health had improved. The children soon recovered.

Both parents set about fulfilling their spiritual vow and fasted. When the children saw that, they also decided to fast with their parents and so did the house maid, Fiddha.

But that day there was no food in Fatima Zahra's house even for the breaking of the fast. So Imam Ali (ibn Abi Talib) went out looking for work. He could not find any.

But he was able to get three measures of wool to be spun in exchange for three measures of barley. Fatima Zahra spun the wool all day. She was only able to spin one measure of it. So she took only one measure of barley, ground it into flour and prepared five loaves of bread. While they were all ready to break their fast, someone knocked at the door saying:

"O people of the House of the Prophet (Ahl al-Bayt), I am a poor man and I have nothing to eat, is there anything you could do to feed me?"

At this Imam Ali stood up, went to the door and gave his loaf to the man. Fatima Zahra did the same.

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Watching this, both children also gave their loaves, as did the maid. They broke their fast with water and retired.

The next day Fatima Zahra spun another measure of wool. So she separated one measure of barley, ground it into flour and prepared five loaves once again. As they were ready to break their fast, once again a voice called out from the door:

"O people of the House of the Prophet, I am an orphan, I am hungry, could you feed me?"

Hearing this, Imam Ali stood up and gave his loaf to the man, so did Fatima Zahra, the children and the maid. They all, once again, broke their fast with water and retired.

Came the third day, Fatima Zahra spun the rest of the wool, took the remaining barley, ground it into flour and prepared five loaves. As they were ready to break the fast, a voice called the door saying:

"O people of the House of the Prophet, I am a prisoner, I am hungry, could you feed me?"

Hearing this, once again Imam Ali stood up and went to the door and gave his loaf to the prisoner. Fatima Zahra, the children and the maid did likewise.

Every time the person at the door would want to express his gratitude for the kindness, Ali would say:

"No, no, we are not looking for any reward from you for this act, we are doing it out of Allah's love."

Now, the children had just been quite ill. And they had not eaten anything in three days. The Prophet of Islam once again entered the house asking about the children. When he looked at them they were shaking like autumn leaves (the exact words of the report). Fatima Zahra told him what had been happening with the family.

At that time The Archangel Gabriel came down with a gift from Allah to the Prophet. That gift was the verses 7-12 of Surah LXXVI, which we have quoted above.

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The above story tells us that the Prophet of Islam

recommended to any family that when and if you are facing a difficult situation or are distressed, you should do Nazr. In other words, take a spiritual vow that when the difficulty has passed you will, for example, (there are, of course, other possibilities) offer special prayers or invite friends and relatives for food that has been dedicated to the Ahl al-Bayt.

The family of Fatima Zahra (peace be unto them all) fulfilled their Nazr, but when a more needy person came they gave their food to him with any regards to their own needs. The Qur'an has made it incumbent on all Shi'as to love the Prophet of Islam and his holy family (Ahl al-Bayt) and to fashion their own lives on those of the Ahl al-Bayt.

"Say (O Prophet), I do not ask of you any recompense for this (the mission of Islam), except that you would love my near ones." (Qur'an XLII:23)

There is a hadith attributed to the 6th Imam, Ja'afar as-Sadiq (peace unto them all). Once the Imam was walking in the streets of Medina with some of his companions. He suddenly stopped and asked the the date. His companions said that it was the 22nd of Rajab. The Imam then said:

"If anyone of you is facing a difficulty of any kind, you should prepare some sweets and set them in a clay pot and dedicate that in a Nazr to my person. You should then pray to your Lord using my

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WASEELA. Allah will, if such be His Holy Will, remove your difficulty. However, if your problem is not

resolved then you should come to me on the Day of Judgement and complain to me."

Nazr is not an obligatory act in Shi'a Islam, but rather it is done when a Shi'a Muslim feels a need for such a thing.

However, once such a spiritual vow is taken by a Shi'a Muslim, it becomes obligatory for him to fulfill it if his wish is granted by Allah. The story concerning Ste. Anne illustrates this. Ste. Anne had to dedicate the Virgin Mary to the Temple even though she was a girl and it was against all accepted tradition to let a girl be dedicated to the service of the Temple.

As we said above, the exact concept of Nazr was known and widely practiced in all Christendom during the Middle Ages, and continues to be known and practiced in Spain to this day. Whether or not the persistence of Nazr in Spain is yet another example of the lingering influences of Shi'ism in Spanish society we are not in a position to say.

The 28th of Rajab is the day on which Imam Hussein left Medina for Kufa. He would be butchered at Karbala six months later. This event, therefore, becomes the starting point of the Tragedy of Karbala.

The month of Sh'aban is another month of great celebrations for the Shi'a community. The 1st day of Sh'aban is the birthday of Hussein's sister, Zaynab bint Ali, while the 3rd day of Sh'aban is the birthday of Imam Hussein. Great celebrations, mainly poetry recitals and lectures, are held on these days. During the great period of the Kingdom of Avadh in the 18th-19th century a great trust fund was created. To this day, this fund has been financing annual celebrations on the 3rd of Sh'aban in the city of Lucknow.

As a matter of tradition, Shi'as do not hold wedding parties during the two months of mourning, i.e., Muharram and Safar, nor in the months of Shawwal and Dhu al-Q'adah. These four months are known as empty months, even though there is no firm warrant for this in the Hadith literature.

Some, though not all, Shi'as celebrate the 1st day of the month of Dhu al-Hijja as the anniversary of the wedding of Fatima Zahra and Imam Ali.

The 9th day of Dhu al-Hijja is a day of mourning. On this day, the emissary of Imam Hussein, his cousin Muslim ibn Aqil, was butchered in Kufa on the orders of Ibn Ziyad. Gatherings are held on this day.

The 18th of Dhu al-Hijja is the anniversary of the events of Ghadir Khum. On this day at Ghadir Khum the Prophet of Islam

announced before 120,000 Muslims returning from the Hajj that he had named Imam Ali to be his successor as Mawla of all Muslims.

Below is a selection from the Ziyarat or "Recitation" for the day of Ghadir Khum:

Peace be upon you,
O my master, Amir al-Mu'minin (Ali ibn Abi Talib)!
O the trustee of Allah in His earth,
His representative among His creatures,
And His convincing proof for His servants . . .
Peace be upon you,
O the upright religion of Allah and His straight path.
Peace be upon you, O the great news about whom they
Disputed and about whom they will be questioned.
I bear witness, O Amir al-Mu'minin,
That the person who doubts about you
Has not believed in the trustworthy Messenger,
And one who equates you to others has strayed
From the upright religion which
The Lord of the universe has chosen for us and
Which He has perfected through your wilayat
On the day of Ghadir Khum.(1)

The 24th day of the month of Dhu al-Hijja is the anniversary of the event of Mubahala. Though also celebrated by Sunnis, the 24th of Dhu al-Hijja has a special significance for Shi'as.

On the 24th of Dhu al-Hijja, the Christians of Najran came to the Prophet of Islam and challenged some parts of the verses of the Qur'an which deal with Jesus and the Virgin Mary. As no agreement on all points was reached, the Christians of Najran were invited to a Mubahala (imprecations of Allah's punishment on those who knowingly tell lies). This is recorded in the Qur'an:

"Come, let us bring our women and your women, our children and your children, ourselves and yourselves, and then pray for Allah's curse to be palced on the liars." (Qur'an III:61)

On the morning of this date, the Prophet Muhammad appeared with Imam Hussein in his arms, Imam Hasan holding his hand, Fatima Zahra behind him and Imam Ali behind Fatima Zahra. The christian leaders looked at them and said to one another:

"We are seeing faces which if beckoned to the mountains, they would rise from their bases."

Saying this, they declined to participate in the imprecations and returned to Najran with the promise of paying Jizya.

The 18th and 24th of Dhu al-Hijja are celebrated with great fervor among the Shi'as, because the events of which they are the anniversaries form the hallmark of Shi'ism by which the superiority of the those of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) and their leadership in both spirituality and temporal affairs is established. It is the event of Mubahala which publicly idenitifies the members of the group known in the Qur'an as the Ahl al-Bayt and separates them a6 a special elite in Islam apart from the wives of the Prophet as well as from the Companions.

In the 6th century AD Yemen was ruled by kings of the Himyarite Dynasty. One of these Himyarite kings was Dhu Nuwas, who was Jewish by religion. Around 518 AD, Dhu Nuwas conducted a

brutal persecution against the Christians of Najran. In both the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox calendars, October 24th is the day dedicated to the martyrs of Najran. According to Byzantine sources, Dhu Nuwas blockaded Najran. Impatient of a long siege, he offered amnesty in return for surrender. The aged Prince al-Harith ibn K'ab, (known in Byzantine sources as "St. Arethas") warned the people not to trust Dhu Nuwas, but they surrendered nevertheless. Dhu Nuwas pillaged Najran, exhumed and burned the body of Bishop Paul, (actually, the bodies of two bishops named Paul) and set fire to the church. Dhu Nuwas then cast 427 priests, deacons, monks and nuns into a ditch filled with burning materials, decapitated St. Arethas and 200 others of the nobility, and massacred more than 4000 of the common people who refused to renounced Christianity in favor of Judaism.(2) The figures concerning clergy and nobility martyred may be near the truth, particularly if one assumes that the families of the priests, deacons and nobles were martyred along with them, and are included in the figures of 427 for priests. deacons, monks and nuns and 200 for the nobility. As we shall see below, there are Islamic sources which indicate that such was indeed the case. The figure of four thousand for common people martyred by Dhu Nuwas would seem to be an exaggeration.

A discussion of the history of Christianity in Yemen and Hadramaut is not relevant for our purposes. In spite of its proximity to Yemen, Najran was an Arab city, that is, its language was Arabic, not Himyarite or "South Arabian". The pre-Islamic Arab dynasties, the Lakhmids of Hira and the Ghassanids of Ghassan, were also Christian, and St. Isaac the Syrian, was, in reality, an Arab from Qatar. He was known as "the Syrian" only because he wrote in Syriac.

We have a very early document in Syriac concerning the martyrs of Najran. This is a letter by Simeon, bishop of Beth-Arsham on the east bank of the Tigris, though the letter itself was written in Gbita, now Al-Jabiya in Jordan, which was capital of the Ghassanids. To whom the letter was originally directed is not clear.

Bishop Simeon gives the date of this letter as July, 519, and says that the martyrdom of the Najran Christians occurred in November, 518. Thus the date of 523 for the martyrdom of the Najran Christians, given in some (not all) later Byzantine sources, must be wrong.

In said letter, Bishop Simeon repeatedly says that his sources are lettered in the "Najranite language" (I.e., Arabic)(3) and the accounts given by refugees from Najran. Hence, Bishop Simeon's letter is based on first-hand accounts, not hearsay.

Simeon's letter mentions the burning alive of many Christians of Najran by the Jewish king of Yemen Dhu Nuwas. It also recalls that the bones of two bishops of Najran, Paul I and Paul II, were disinterred by Dhu Nuwas and burned. There are detailed accounts of individual martyrdoms, including that of Harith ibn K'ab ("Harith bar K'ab" in Syriac), known as "St. Arethas" in later Byzantine sources. Also, there is an account concerning a precocious three year old boy who defies Dhu Nuwas; we shall see later why this is of special interest. Also given is a partial list of priest, deacons, monks and nuns who were martyred. Finally, Bishop Simeon gives two thousand as the total number of the martyrs of Najran.(4) As we have seen, the number two thousand may be near the truth, or at least it is not a gross exaggeration.

Bishop Simeon's letter is interesting for a number of reasons. later Byzantine accounts of the martyrs of Najran follow Bishop Simeon rather closely, which indicates that they are based on very early, first-hand accounts, not hearsay. It is likely that there were other very early accounts of the martyrs of Najran which have not come down to us or at least have not yet been discovered, but which were known and used by the composers of later Byzantine martyrologies. Also, it is notorious that eye-witnesses very often give differing accounts of the same events.

This is especially true in the case of something as horrifying as the martyrdom of the Christians of Najran, which would certainly have traumatized all who witnessed it.

Tabari gives a rather detailed account of the introduction of Christianity to Najran, confirming that it was brought there from Syria. His account of the persecution of the Christians of Najran by Dhu Nuwas is brief:

"He (Muhammad ibn Ishaq) related: Dhu Nuwas marched against them (the Christians of Najran) with his forces of the Himyarites and the tribes of Yemen. He gathered the people of Najran together, and summoned them to (convert to) the Jewish faith, offering them the choice between that and being killed. They chose being killed, so he dug out for them the trench (al-ukhdud). He burnt some of them with fire, slew some violently with the sword and mutilated them savagely until he had killed nearly twenty thousand of them."(5)

Note that Tabari's brief account of the martyrdom of the Christians of Najran is generally in accord with both the very early Syriac and later Byzantine versions, though Tabari's figure of twenty thousand for the number of the martyrs of Najran is obviously much too high.

Even if one accepts the figures given in later Byzantine versions, twenty thousand is obviously a gross exaggeration. However, whatever the real figures, there is no doubt as to the fiendish cruelty of Dhu Nuwas.

Notes Allamah Muhammad Baqir al-Majlisi:

"Almighty Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:
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By the heaven full of constellations

By the day promised
By the witness and the witnessed!
That destroyed were the People of the Ditch,
Of the fires with fuel,
When facing it sat they,
While they witnessed what they did to the believers.
They tormented them for naught both that they believed
in God, the Ever-Prevalent, the Most Praised,
He, unto Whom belongs the Kingdom of Heaven and Earth;
and God is, over all things, a witness.
Verily, those who persecute the believing men and the
believing women, and yet they repent not, for them shall be
the chastisement of Hell and for them is a burning torture.
(Qur'an LXXXV: 1-10)

Ali ibn Ibrahim has narrated that the man who incited the people of Abyssinia to fight against the people of Oman was Dhu Nuwas (pronounced "Zu Nuwas" in Persian), the last of the kings of Himyar (i.e., of the Himyarite Dynasty). He (Dhu Nuwas) had adopted the religion of the Jews and the Himyar Tribe had also become Jews. He had also adopted the name Yusuf for himself. They continued to follow that religion for some time. Then the people informed him (Dhu Nuwas) that there was a group of people in Najran who followed the religion of Jesus. Of course they had remained steadfast in the religion of Isa (Jesus) and were acting according to the commandments of Injil (Gospel). Their leader was 'Abdullah bin Yamin. The flatterers of Dhu Nuwas incited him to attack Najran and destroy them or force them to convert to Judaism. So Dhu Nuwas entered Najran, gathered the people and tried to force them to embrace the Jewish faith. They refused to do so. He applied much force but still the people would not submit. Finally, Dhu Nuwas had pits dug in the ground, filled them with wood and set it on fire. He threw many people into that fire, killed many with swords and tortured some so that they suffered a painful death. Thousands were killed in this way. One of the oppressed, Doos, mounted a horse and fled. The king's men followed him but could not catch him. Then Dhu Nuwas returned to Sana'a (capital of Yemen) with his army. The above verses of the Holy Qur'an refer to that event.

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It is recorded from authentic chains from Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (5th Shi'a Imam) that once Ali al-Muminin (Ali ibn Abi Talib, 1st Shi'a Imam) called a

Christian priest from Najran and inquired from him about the story of the makers of the pits. He narrated it in his own way, according to Ali ibn abi Talib, the Christian priest from Najran told him: 'No, it was not like that. Listen, I will tell you what happened: Allah had sent an Abyssinian (Deacon Jonas, see below) as His Apostle to the people of Najran. This Apostle had to fight against the forces of the king whose name was Dhu Nuwas who was a Jew and wished to force the Christians of Najran to embrace the Jewish faith. Most of the companions of the Apostle (Deacon Jonas) were killed. The king (Dhu Nuwas) took the Apostle (Deacon Jonas) and his surviving believers as captives and gathered them along with the other followers of the Apostle to a certain place. A huge ditch was prepared with fire burning in it and it announced that all those who believed in God Who the Apostle (Deacon Jonas) claimed had sent him were to throw themselves into the burning ditch. Many believers were hurled into the fire.

At last a believer woman with a small baby (aged only one month) in her arms was brought before the king, who was informed that the woman refused to obey his order. So she was asked whether she was prepared to obey the king or was prepared to be burned alive. They intended to fling her into the fire. On looking at her child, the woman hesitated, but as she came near the fire, her love for her baby held her back.

The baby, by God's command cried out to his mother, saying: "Mother! Jump thou along with me into the fire, for this is too small a test in the way of the Lord."

The woman jumped into the ditch of fire along with her baby. But by God's command, the Apostle (Deacon Jonas), all the believers, the woman and the baby were safe in the ditch, unhurt by the fire."(6)

It would seem that the woman and baby mentioned above were the wife and child of a priest or deacon.

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The above account may seem to contradict the evidence that

Christianity was brought to Najran from Syria. However, such is not really the case. Yemen and Najran are, after all, not far from Abyssinia. In the letter of Bishop Simeon is a partial list of the Christian clergy of Najran martyred by Dhu Nuwas. Most of the names in said list are those of native Najranites, with a certain number identified as Syro-Byzantines, with one listed as a "Persian" i.e., a subject of the Sassanian Emperor. However, in said list one also encounters the name of "Jonas, the Cushite Deacon".(7) After several generations the Cushite martyr Deacon Jonas may have come to be identified as one who brought Christianity to Najran.

Thus, the martyrs of Najran are recognized in the Qur'an as true martyrs in the cause of God.

In spite of the impression which one might get from the events of Mubahala, the account of Muhammad al-Baqir, the 5th Imam of the actions of Ali ibn Abi Talib, the 1st Imam, leave no doubts that the Ahl al-Bayt bore no ill will towards the Christians of Najran.

As we said above, except in special cases we have not listed festivals common to both Sunni and Shi'a Islam, nor to dates which only celebrate the anniversaries of the births and deaths of the Imams.

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In Catholic and Eastern Orthodox countries, no holy days really compete with Holy Week. Likewise, in Shi'a Islam, Ashura,

the 10 day of Muharram, anniversary of the martyrdom of Imam Hussein, and the Arba'in of Imam Hussein, forty days later, are by far the most important - or at least those celebrated with most fervor - of holy days. Also, it is Ashura which is most relevant to our topic of Shi'ism in Muslim Spain.

Below is a Ziyarat in honor of Imam Hussein:

Peace be unto thee,
 On Abu Abdullah (Kunya of Imam Hussein)
 Peace be unto thee
 O son of the Holy Prophet (The Prophet Muhammad always called Imam Hussein his son);
 Peace be unto thee,
 O son of Hazrat Ali (ibn Abi Talib), the Amir al-Mu'minin
 Peace be unto thee,
 and the mercy of God and His bounties;
 Peace be unto thee,
 O heir of Adam (the chosen one of God);
 Peace be unto thee,
 O heir of Noah, (the prophet of God);
 Peace be unto thee,
 O heir of Abraham, (the friend of God);
 Peace be unto thee,
 O heir of Moses, (interlocutor of God);
 Peace be unto thee,
 O heir of Jesus (the spirit of God);
 Peace be unto thee,
 O heir of Muhammad, (the beloved of God);
 Peace be unto thee,
 O heir of Ali, (prince of true believers and friend of God)
 Peace be unto thee,
 O son of Muhammad, (the Chosen);
 Peace be unto thee,
 O son of Ali, (the repository of God's pleasure);
 Peace be unto thee,
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O son of Fatima, (the Lady of Light);
 Peace be unto thee,
 O son of Khadija, (the Great);
 Peace be unto thee,

O thou that shall be avenged by God, and O son of one who is avenged by Him, and O unique martyr unavenged and cut into pieces.

I bear witness that thou did establish the worship of God,
and the poor-due,
and bade men to do good,
and forbade them from doing evil;
and obeyed God and His messenger
until the inevitable (death) came to thee.

Wherefore, the curse of God be upon people who slew thee, and the curse of God be upon the people who wronged thee, and the curse of God be upon the people who rejoiced on hearing of it.

Lord, o Abu Abdullah,

I bear witness that thou were a light
from the time of thy revered ancestors.

The stains of ignorance never tainted thee with their uncleansing touch,
and the ignominious garment of disbelief never cast its shadow upon thee.

I bear witness that truly, thou art a pillar of faith and a source of inspiration to the true believers.

and I bear witness that truly, thou art the righteous Imam, virtuous, pious, repository of divine pleasure, pure and holy guide, and divinely guided.

And I bear witness that the Imams who are descended from thee are the word of piety, the banners of guidance, the strong rope of God and the conclusive proof of God unto the whole world.

And I call as my witness God and His angels, prophets and messengers.

That I have faith in thee and I believe in thy resurrection, and I am convinced of the laws of my religion and of the results of my actions:

And that my heart is surrendered to thee, and affairs are in obedience to your command.

The blessings of God be upon you and on your spirits and on your bodies, living or dead, and on those of you who are witnesses and on those of you who are absent, and on matters manifest of secret.

And unto you be peace, and the mercy and the grace of God.(8)

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In the preceding chapter we have spoken at some length concerning the martyrdom of Imam Hussein. A full treatment of this topic would require an in depth study of Shi'a theology and

early Islamic history. The topic is large and complex, and to summarize it would inevitably be superficial and perhaps misleading. For the interested reader I recommend: Redemptive Suffering in Islam by Mahmoud Ayoub, The Origins and Early Development of Shi'i Islam by S.H. M. Jafri, The Rising of Al-Husayn by Shaykh Muhammad Mehdi Shams al-Din and Husayn, the Saviour of Islam by S.V. Mir Ahmed Ali.

For the reader who is interested, Imam Hussein was indeed avenged. Imam Hussein had been martyred at Karbala, near the city of Kufa. Shi'as led by al-Mukhtar rebelled and, shouting, "Revenge for Hussein", took Kufa. Then were punished those who had a part in the death of Imam Hussein. Those who had shot arrows at Imam Hussein were shot full of arrows until they looked like porcupines, those who had struck at him with swords were slashed to ribbons with swords, those who had thrust at Hussein with spears were perforated with lance thrusts. Ubaidullah ibn Ziyad had toyed with the bloody head of Imam Hussein in the castle keep of Kufa. Now the severed head of of Ubaidullah ibn Ziyad was presented to al-Mukhtar. Thus were fulfilled the words of the Qur'an cited in the heading of this chapter.(9)

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Firstly, we shall briefly deal with the pre-Islamic antecedents to the commemoration of the martyrdom of Imam Hussein. The Iranian *taziye*h is often called a "passion play", and so we

will give an example of a passion play. Also, the taziyyeh bears some resemblances to the liturgical dramas of medieval Europe, and we shall discuss these. For reasons which will be made clear, we also give much information concerning the hero Siyavush, some from the Shah Namah of Firdausi, some not.

As we mentioned before at some length, Shi'as often draw a parallel between the martyrdom of St. John the Baptist and that of Imam Hussein; indeed, there is much evidence that Imam Hussein identified with St. John the Baptist. Christian Holy Week celebrations and laments for martyrs must have been known to early Shia's, even in Persia. We have mentioned that the Qur'an honors Christian martyrs, particularly those of Najran.

In the chapter on the epic we mentioned the epic hero Siyavush, his murder by the Turanian king Afrasiyab, and how he was avenged by his son Kai Khusrau.

In his History of Bukhara, Abu Bakr ibn Ja'afar al-Narshakhi spoke of the songs sung by the Zoroastrians of Bukhara in mourning for the hero Siyavush, as recorded by Abu Bakr ibn Jaafar al-Narshakhi in his History of Bukhara:

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"In the books of the Parsis (Zoroastrians) it is recorded that Afrasiyab (King of Turan in the Shah Namah) lived two thousand years, and that he was a magician. It was he who killed his son-in-law, who was called Siyavush. Siyavush had a son called Kai Khusrau who came with a large army to this country (the oasis of Bukhara) to avenge his father. Afrasiyab had made a

fortress of the village of Ramatin. Kai Khusrau besieged the fortress with his army for two years, and opposite it built a village which he called Ramush because of its lovely surroundings. This village is still inhabited. He built a fire temple (atashgade) in the village of Ramush, and the Magian (Zoroastrian) priests say that this fire temple (atashgade) is older than the fire temples Bukhara. After two years Kai Khusrau captured Afrasiyab and killed him. The tomb of Afrasiyab is located inside a gate of Bukhara at the gate of ma'bad on that large hill which is adjacent to the hill of Khwaja Imam Abu Hafs the Great. There are special songs of the people on the killing of Siyavush. The musicians call these songs Kin-i-Siyavush (see Gaelic: coinn, pronounced: "keen", meaning **mourning** or **lamentation**; Welsh: cwyno, pronounced: keeno, which means **lament**)(10)

The above indicates, among other things, that prior to the time of Kai Khusrau the oasis of Bukhara was Buddhist, with no Zoroastrian fire temples. The name "Bukhara" is thought to be derived from the Buddhist-Sanskrit vihara, meaning a Buddhist monastery or temple. In Sogdian sources "Bukhara" is called **BRGR**, vocalization unknown.(11) Kai Khusrau may be legendary or mythological, but the reference to his building the first Zoroastrian fire temple in Bukhara is no doubt a folk memory of a real event., though who it really was who built the first Zoroastrian fire temple in Bukhara is forgotten. Presumably it was a Sassanian Emperor, as the Kushans, who held Bukhara before

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the Sassanians, were Buddhist. Perhaps Kai Khusrau has become confused with a Sasanian Emperor named Khusrau who took Bukhara from the Kushans and built the first Zoroastrian fire temple there.

Note that the Persian word kin, which literally means "revenge", but in this context obviously means "mourning" or "lamentation" is phonetically identical to the Gaelic coinn, pronounced "keen", which means **mourning** or **lamentation**, and is very nearly phonetically identical to the Welsh cwyno, pronounced "keeno", which means **lament**.(12)

Narshakhi continues:

"Concerning the marvels of that (Citadel of Bukhara), Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Nasr said that Abu'l-Hasan Nishapuri in the Treasury of the Sciences has mentioned that the reason for the building of the Citadel of Bukhara was that Siyavush ibn Kaikaus fled from his father, crossed the Oxus, and came to Afrasiyab. Afrasiyab treated him kindly and gave him his daughter for a wife. Some have said that he gave him all his domain. Siyavush wanted to leave some memorial of himself in this district which had been given on loan to him. So he built the Citadel of Bukhara and usually resided there. But when he and Afrasiyab became estranged, Afrasiyab killed him. He (Siyavush) was buried in this citadel in a place (located) as you come from the Eastern Gate inside the gate of the straw sellers, which is called the Gate of the Ghuriyan. The Magians (Zoroastrians) of Bukhara for that reason esteem this place; they call his grave the Shrine of Siyavush. Every year before the rising of the sun, on New Year's Day (Now Ruz), every person brings a cock there and kills it and makes a vow in memory of him. The people of Bukhara have lamentations concerning the killing of Siyavush which are known all over. Musicians have made songs put of them and they sing

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them. Singers call them the "Lamentations of the Magians (Zoroastrians)."(13)

As we noted earlier, the cock has religious significance for various Indo-European peoples, including Celts and Slavs as well as Iranians.

Below is the story of Siyavush as related in the Shah Namah, translation by Dick Davis.

"One day at cockcrow Tus, Giv, and a number of other knights rose out from their king's court; taking along cheetahs and hawks, they set off for the plain of Daghui to hunt for wild asses (onagers). After they had brought down a great quantity of game, enough for forty days, they saw that the land before them was black with Turkish tents. In the distance, close to the border between the Persian and Turkish peoples, a thicket was visible, and Tus and Giv, followed by a few others, rode over to it. To their astonishment, they discovered a beautiful young woman hiding there, and Tus said to her, "How is it a girl as radiant as the moon is in this thicket?" She answered, "Last night my father beat me; he came back drunk from a feast and, as soon as he saw me, he drew a dagger and began shouting that he would cut off my head, and so I fled from our home."

The knights asked her about her family, and she explained that she was related to Garsivaz who traced his lineage back to Feridun. Then they asked how it was that she was on foot. She said that her horse had collapsed in exhaustion, that the quantity of gold and jewels she had brought with her, together with her crown, had been stolen from her by bandits on a nearby hill, and that one of them had beaten her with the scabbard of his sword. She added, "When my father realizes what has happened, he will send horsemen out to find me, and my mother too is sure to hurry here to stop me going any further."

The knights could not help but be interested in her, and Tus said shamelessly, "I found this Turkish girl, I rode on ahead of the rest of the group, she is mine." Giv responded, "My lord, did not you and I arrive here together, without the others? It is not

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fitting for a knight to get so argumentative about a slave girl." Their words became so heated that they were ready to cut the girl's head off, but to resolve the matter one of the company suggested they take her to the

Persian king's court, and that both should agree to whatever the king decided.

And so they set out for the court, but when Kay Kavus saw the girl he laughed and bit his lip and said to the pair of them, "I see the hardships of the journey were well worth it, and we can spend a day telling stories about how our heroes went hunting with cheetahs and snared the sun. She is a delicate young doe, and prey like that is reserved for the very best." He turned then to the girl and said, "What family are you from, because your face is like an angel's?" She answered, "My mother is nobly born, and my father is descended from Feridun; my grandfather is Garsivaz, and his tent is always at the center of our encampment." Kay Kavus said, "And you wanted to throw to the winds such a fine lineage, not to speak of your lovely face and hair? No, you must sit on a golden throne in my harem and I will make you the first of all my women." She answered, "My lord, when I saw you, of all heroes I chose you for my own."

*Enthroned within his harem now - arrayed
With rubies, turquoise, lapis, gold brocade -
She was herself an unpierced, precious gem,
A princess worthy of a diadem.*

When spring with all its glorious colors came, Kay Kavus was told that his encounter with this radiant beauty had resulted in the birth of a splendid son. The loveliness of the boy's face and hair was rumored throughout the world; the king, his father, named him Siyavush and had his horoscope cast. But the horoscope was not auspicious; taking refuge in the will of God, Kay Kavus was saddened to see that the stars did not augur well for the boy's future.

Shortly afterwards Rustam came to the court and addressed the sovereign: "It is I who should undertake the education of this lion cub; no courtier of yours is more suited to the task; in all the world you will not find a better nurse for him than I shall be." The king pondered the suggestion for a while and, seeing that his heart had no objection to it, he handed into Rustam's arms his pride and joy, the noble infant

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warrior. Rustam took the boy to Zabolestan and there constructed a dwelling for him in an orchard. He taught him how to ride and all the skills appropriate for a horseman; how to manage bridle and stirrups, the use of bow and lariat; how to preside at banquets where the

wine goes round; how to hunt with hawks and chetahs; what justice and injustice are; all that pertains to the crown and throne; what wise speech is; what warfare is and how to lead his troops. He passed onto him all the arts a prince must know, toiling to teach the boy, and his labors bore good fruit. Siyavush became a prince without a peer in all the world.

Time passed and now the youth was hunting lions with his lariat. He turned to Rustam and said, "I need to see my king; you have taken great pains in teaching me the ways of princes, and now my father must see the skills that Rustam's taught me." Rustam gathered presents for him - horses, slaves, gold, silver, seal-rings, crowns, thrones, cloth, carpets - and whatever his own treasury could not supply he sent for from elsewhere. He had Siyavush splendidly equipped since the army would be observing him, and to keep the boy's spirits up, he accompanied him part of the way. His people decked the road in splendor, mixing gold and ambergris and sprinkling the mixture on him as he passed. Every house and street was decorated and the world was filled with joy, gold coins were scattered beneath the horses' hooves, their manes were smeared with saffron, wine, and musk; in all Iran there was not one sad soul.

Siyavush was welcomed at the court with great pomp and ceremony; festivities were held and Kavus lavished gifts on his son, reserving only the royal crown, saying that the boy was as yet too young for such an honor. But after eight years had passed he made him lord of Kavarestan, the land beyond the Oxus, and the royal mandate was inscribed on silk according to ancient royal custom.

Now when the king's wife, Sudabeh, saw Siyavush, she grew strangely pensive, and her heart beat faster; she began to waste away like ice before fire, worn thin as a silken thread. She sent someone to him saying, "If you were to appear in the royal harem one day it would cause no alarm nor surprise." Siyavush replied:

*"I do not like harems and I will not agree
To plots and intrigues, so do not bother me."*

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At dawn the following day Sudabeh hurried to the king and said, "Great lord, whose like the sun and moon have never seen, whose son is a matchless paragon, dispatch the youth to your harem where his sisters and your women can set eyes on him; we will do him homage and give him presents, and the tree of loyalty will bear

sweet fruit." Kavus replied, "Your words are wise, your love is equal to a hundred mothers' love." He called Siyavush to him and said, "Blood ties and love will not stay hidden long; you have sisters in my harem, and Sudabeh loves you like a mother. God has created you in such a way that everyone who sees you loves you, and those who are your kin should not have to be content with glimpsing you from a distance. Pay a visit to my womenfolk, stay with them for a while and let them honor you." But when Siyavush heard the king's words, he stared at him in astonishment:

*He strove to keep his heart unstained and clean
And pondered what it was the king might mean:
Perhaps Kavus felt some uncertainty
And meant to test his faith, or honesty.
He knew the king was sly and eloquent,
Watchful and warily intelligent.
He thought, "And if I go there, Sudabeh
Will corner me and pester me to stay."
He said, "Send me to men of proven sense,
To councilors of deep experience,
To those who will teach me how to fight, who know
How I should wield a sword, or shoot a bow,
Who know how kings hold court, how courtiers dine,
The rules that govern music, feasts, and wine:
What will I gather from your women's quarters?
Since when has wisdom lived with wives and
daughters?
But if these are your orders, I will do
Whatever seems appropriate to you."*

The king replied, "Rejoice, my son, and may wisdom always guide you; I have heard few speeches so eloquent and it does a man good to hear you talk like this. But do not be so suspicious; be cheerful, drive away such gloomy thoughts. Now, your loving sisters and Sudabeh, who loves you like a mother, are all waiting for you in the harem." Siyavush said, "I shall come at dawn and do as you command.

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There was a man whose heart was cleansed of all evil, called Hirbad, and he had charge of the king's harem. To this wise man Kai Kavus said, "When the sun unsheathes its sword, pay attention to what Siyavush tells you." Then he told Sudabeh to prepare jewels and musk to scatter before his son. When the sun rose above the mountains, Siyavush came to his father and made his

obeisance before him; Kavus talked to the boy for a while then summoned Hirbad and gave him his orders. He said to Siyavush, "Go with him, and prepare your heart for new delights."

The two went off together lightheartedly enough, but when Hirbad drew back the curtain from the harem's entrance, Siyavush felt a presentiment of evil. The womenfolk came forward with music to welcome him; he saw bowls of musk, gold coins, and saffron on every side, and as he entered gold, rubies, and emeralds were scattered before his feet. He trod on Chinese brocade worked with pearls and saw facing him a golden throne studded with turquoise and draped in gorgeous cloth; there sat the moon-faced Sudabeh, a paradise of tints and scents, splendid as Canopus, a tall crown set on the thick black curls that fell clustering to her feet. Beside her stood a slave, her head humbly bowed, her mistress' gold-worked slippers in her hands.

As soon as she saw Soyavush enter, Sudabeh descended from the throne. She walked coquettishly forward, bowed before him, and then held him in a lengthy embrace. Slowly she kissed his eyes and face, gazing as if she could never grow weary of him. She murmured, "throughout the day and for three watches of the night I thank God a hundred times ofr your existence. No one has ever had a son like you, no king has ever had a prince like you." Siyavush knew what all this kindness meant, and that such friendship was improper; he hurried over to his sisters, who greeted him respectfully and sat him on a golden throne. After spending some time with them he returned to the king's audience hall, and the harem buzzed with chatter: "that is what I call a real prince, so noble and so cultivated...", "He seems an angel, not a man at all...", "And his soul just radiates wisdom..."

Siyavush went to his father and said, "I have seen your harem; all the splendor of the world is yours, and you can have no quarrel with God. In treasure and power and glory you surpass Jamshid, Feridun, and Hushang." The king was overjoyed at his words and had the castle

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decorated like a spring garden; father and son passed the time with wine and music, giving no thought to the workings of Fate. At nightfall Kai Kavus made his way to the harem and questioned Sudabeh: "No secrets from me now, tell me what you thought of Siyavush, of his behavior, of how he looks, of his conversation. Did you like him? Do you think he is wise? Is he better from report or when you see him face to face?" Sudabeh

replied, "The sun and moon have never seen your equal, and who in all the world is like your son? This is not something to be secretive about! Now, if you agree, I will marry him to one of his own kin; I have daughters from you and one of them would surely bear him a noble son." Kavus replied, "This is my desire exactly; the greatness of our name depends on it."

When Siyavush came to his father the following morning Kavus cleared the court and said: "I have one, secret, unfulfilled request of God: that my name should live through a son of yours, and just as I was rejuvenated by your birth, so you will know delight in seeing him. Astrologers have said you will father a great son, to keep our name alive in the world. Now, choose some noble girl as your consort; look in King Pashin's harem, or there is King Arash's clan; look about for someone suitable." Siyavush said, "I am the king's slave, obedient to his wishes; but Sudabeh should not hear of this, she will not like it. And I am having no more to do with her harem." The king laughed at Siyavush's words; he thought all was firm ground and had no notion of swampy water lurking beneath the straw. "You worry about choosing a wife," he said, "and do not give Sudabeh a thought. She speaks well of you and only wants what is best for you." Siyavush showed pleasure at his father's words and bowed before the throne, but inwardly he still brooded over Sudabeh's intentions.

The next day Sudabeh sent Hirbad to Siyavush, saying, "Tell him to put himself to the trouble of honoring us with his noble presence." Siyavush came to the harem and saw her seated on her throne, her crown set on her bejeweled hair, her beautiful womenfolk standing by, as if the palace were a paradise. She descended from her throne and sat him there, then stood before him submissively, her arms folded across her chest, like a serving girl. She motioned to the young women, lovely as uncut jewels, and said, "Look on this place, and on these gold-crowned virgin girls whose

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characters are compounded of coyness and modesty. If one of them pleases you, tell me; go forward and examine her face and stature." Siyavush glanced at the girls, but they were all too shy to return his gaze. One by one they passed before his throne, each silently reckoning her chances of being chosen. When the last had gone by, Sudabeh said, "How long will you stay silent? Will you not tell me which one you like? Your face is like an angel's, and anyone who glimpses you in the distance wishes you were hers. Look carefully at these girls, and

choose whichever is suitable for you." But Siyavush sat there silent, thinking that it would be wrong to choose a wife from among his enemies; the story of what the king of Hamaveran had done to Kavus came to his mind, and the fact that Sudabeh was this man's daughter and, like him, was full of wiles and hatred for the Persian people. As he opened his mouth to answer, Sudabeh removed her veil and said:

*"The moon is of no account beside the sun,
And now you see the sun. Come now, choose one
Of these young virgins, and I will have her stand
Before you as your servant to command.
But first, swear me an oath you will never try
To wriggle out of: Kai Kavus will die,
And when that happens I will turn to you:
Value me then as he was wont to do.
I stand here now, your servant girl, I give
My flesh to you, the soul by which I live;
Take anything you want from me, I swear
I will not attempt to slip free from your snare."
She clutched his head and ripped her dress, as
though
All fear and shame had left her long ago.
But Siyavush's cheeks blushed rosy red,
Tears filled his eyes, and to himself he said,
"May God who rules the planets succor me
And save me from this witch's sorcery.
If I speak coldly to her she will devise
Some spell to make the king believe her lies.
My best course is to flatter her; to calm
Her heart with glozing chat and gentle charm."*

And so he said to Sudabeh: "Who in all the world is your equal, who is fit for you except the king? Your daughter is enough for me, no better bride for me exists. Suggest this to the king and see what he

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replies. I swear I will look at no one else until she has grown as tall as I am. As for this liking you have conceived for my face, well, God has made me as you see me; but keep this as our secret, tell no one, and I too will keep the matter dark. You are the first of all our womenfolk, and I think of you as my mother." Then he left, with sorrow in his heart.

When Kai Kavus arrived in the harem, Sudabeh told him of Siyavush's visit, saying that he had seen all the young women there but only her own daughter had pleased him. Overjoyed, the king had the treasury doors flung

open and a great treasure prepared, while Sudabeh watched in wonder. She was determined to bend Siyavush to her will by any means possible, or, if she could not, to destroy his reputation.

Once more she sat upon her throne arrayed in all her splendor and summoned Siyavush. She said, "The king has prepared treasures for you, crowns and thrones such as no man has ever seen, immeasurable quantities of goods, enough to weigh down two hundred elephants. And he is going to give you my daughter as a bride. But look at me now; what excuse can you have to reject my love, why do you turn away from my body and beauty? I have been your slave ever since I set eyes on you, weeping and longing for you; pain darkens all my days, I feel the sun itself is dimmed. Come, in secret, just once, make me happy again, give me back my youth for a moment. I will reward you with far more than the king has offered - bracelets, crowns, thrones. But if you refuse me and hold your heart back from my desires, I will destroy you with the king and make him look on you with loathing."

Siyavush replied, "God forbid I should lose my head for the sake of my heart, or ever be so disloyal to my father as to forget all manliness and wisdom. You are the king's consort, the sun of his palace; such a sin is unworthy of you." Then Sudabeh sprang from her throne and stretched out her claws at him, crying, "I told you all the secrets of my heart and now you want to ruin me, to make me a laughingstock?" She tore her clothes, clawed at her cheeks, and screamed so loudly the sound was heard in the streets. A tumult of wailing went up from the palace and its gardens, and hearing it, Kavus sprang from his throne and hurried to the harem. When he saw Sudabeh's scratched face and the palace abuzz with rumors, he asked everyone what had happened, never suspecting that his hard-hearted wife

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was the cause of all this. Sudabeh stood wailing and weeping in front of him, tearing at her hair, and said, "Siyavush came to me throne room and clasped me tightly in his arms, saying he had never wanted anyone but me; he flung my crown asid and tore my cloths from my breasts."

Kai Kavus questioned her closely, and in his heart he said, "If she is telling the truth, and is not simply trying to stir up trouble, the ony possible solution is for Siyavush to be executed. The wise say that, in cases like this, honor demands blood." He cleared the harem of everyone but sudabeh and Siyavush, and then, turning

first to Siyavush, calmly said, "You must hide nothing from me. You did not do this evil, I did, and now I must bear the consequences of my own foolish talk; why ever did I order you to go to the harem? Now I must suffer while you tell me what happened. Keep your eye on the truth now, and tell me exactly what occurred."

Siyavush told him the story of how wild with passion Sudabeh had been, but Sudabeh broke in, "This is not true, he wanted no one in the harem except me. I reminded him of all the king had given him, of our daughter and all the treasure that was to be his, and I said I would add more gifts to the bride; but he said he wanted only me, and that without me girls and treasure were nothing to him. He flung his arms about me, his embrace was unyielding as a rock, and when I would not do what he wanted, he yanked at my hair and scratched my face. I am pregnant with a child of yours, my lord, and I suffered so much I thought I would lose our baby there and then; the world turned dark before my eyes."

Kai Kavus said to himself, "I cannot trust what either of them says; this is not something to be decided quickly, crises and worry cloud a man's judgement. I have to search out carefully which of the two of them is guilty and deserves to be punished." To this end he sniffed at Siyavush's hands and at his arms and body. Next he turned to Sudabeh, and on her he smelt the scents of wine, musk, and rosewater. There was no trace of such scents on Siyavush; there was no evidence that he had touched her. Kai Kavus grew grim, despising Sudabeh in his heart, and to himself he said, "She should be hacked to pieces with a sword." But then he thought of Hamaveran and of the outcry that would arise if Sudabeh were harmed, and also he

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remembered how when he had been in captivity there, alone and friendless, she had ministered to him day and night; the memory of this tormented him and he said nothing. Thirdly, she was a loving woman and he felt she should be forgiven for her faults. And fourthly, he had young children by her, and he could not bear the thought of their grief if anything should happen to their mother. But Siyavush was innocent, and the king recognized his righteousness. He said to him, "Well, think no more of all this; follow the ways of wisdom and knowledge. Mention this matter to no one, we must not give gossip any kind of encouragement.

When Sudabeh realized that Kai Kavus despised her, she began to plot against Siyavush, nourishing the tree of vengeance with her wiles. One of her intimates was a

witch who was enduring a difficult pregnancy, and Sudabeh gave her gold, persuading her to take a drug that would abort the twins she carried. Sudabeh said she would tell Kai Kavus the babies were hers, and that she had miscarried because of Siyavush's evil behavior. The woman agreed; when night fell she swallowed the drug, and two ugly devil's spawn were still-born from her. Sudabeh hid her and then lay groaning on her bed as if in labor. Her maidservants came running and saw the two dead devil's spawn on a golden salver, while Sudabeh screamed and tore at her clothes. Kavus woke trembling at the noise and was told what had happened to his wife. He hardly drew breath for the rest of the night and at dawn he hurries to the harem, where he saw Sudabeh stretched out, her quarters in an uproar, and the two dead babies lying pathetically on the golden salver. Her eyes awash with tears, Sudabeh said, "See the work of this paragon of yours, and like a fool you believed his lies!"

Kai Kavus was sick at heart; he knew this was something he could not ignore and he brooded on how to resolve the situation. He had astrologers summoned; he told them of Sudabeh's history and of the war with Hamaveran, then showed them the dead babies, and asked their opinion. The men set to work with their astrolabes and charts and after a week declared that poison did not turn to wine by being placed in a goblet, and that these two babies were not Sudabeh's nor the king's, but the spawn of an evil race. For a week Kai Kavus kept his own council, but then Sudabeh appealed to him again, saying, "I was the king's companion in adversity, and my heart is so wrung with

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grief for my murdered babies I hardly live from one moment to the next." But Kai Kavus turned on her and said, "Be quiet, woman, enough of these sickening lies of yours." Then he ordered the palace guards to search high and low throughout the city for the babies' mother; they found her nearby and dragged her before the king. For days he questioned her kindly and made her promises, then he had her tied up and tortured, but she refused to confess. Finally, he gave orders that she was to be threatened with execution and that, if she still stayed silent, she should be sawn in two; but her only reply was that she was innocent and did not know what to say.

When Kai Kavus was told of her response he went to Sudabeh and informed her of what the astrologers had said, but Sudabeh's reply was that they only said it because they were afraid of Siyavush. She added that,

even if he felt no grief for their dead children, she had no other resource than him and was content to leave the resolution of this quarrel to the world to come. She wept more water than the sun draws up from the Nile, and Kai Kavus wept with her.

He dismissed her and summoned his priests (*magi*) and explained the situation. They advised that he try one of the two by fire [recall the trial by fire of Isolt in the Arthurian romance Tristan and Isolt by Thomas of Brittany? See Chapter 2.], for the heavens would ensure that the innocent would not be harmed. He had Sudabeh and Siyavush called and said that in his heart he could trust neither of them unless fire demonstrated which of the two was guilty. Sudabeh's answer was that she had demonstrated Siyavush's guilt by producing the two miscarried babies, and that he should undergo the trial as he had acted evilly and sought to destroy her. Kai Kavus turned to his young son and asked him his opinion. Siyavush replied that hell itself was less hateful than her words, and that if there were a mountain of fire, he would pass through it to prove his innocence. Torn between his love for Sudabeh and regard for his son, Kai Kavus decided to go ahead with the trial. He had a hundred caravans of camels and another hundred of red-haired dromedaries bring wood, and servants piled it into two huge hills, between which was a narrow pathway such as four horsemen might with difficulty pass through. While the populace watched from a distance,

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*Kai Kavus had priests (**Magi**) pour thick pitch on the
pyre;
Two hundred men dashed out to set the fire
And such black clouds of smoke rose up you would
say
Dark night usurped the brilliance of the day.
But then quick tongues of flame shot out and soon
The plain glowed brighter than the sky at noon,
Heat scorched the burning ground, and everywhere
The noise of lamentation filled the air;
They wept to see the prince, who came alone
On a black horse before his father's throne;
His helmet was of gold, his clothes were white
And camphor-strewn, according to the (Zoroastrian)
riet
That is used in preparation of a shroud.
Dismounting from his horse, he stood, then bowed.
Gently his father spoke, and in his face*

*The prince saw conscious shame and deep disgrace.
But Siyavush said, "Do not grieve, my lord,
The heavens willed all this, and rest assured
The fire will have no strength to injure me;
My innocence ensures my victory."*

When Sudabeh heard the tumult she came out on the roof of her palace and saw the fire; muttering to herself in rage, she longed for evil to befall the prince. The whole world's eyes were fixed on Kai Kavus; men cursed him, their hearts filled with indignation. Then Siyavush wheeled, urging his horse impetuously into the fire; tongues of flame enveloped him and both his horse and helmet disappeared. Tears were in all eyes, the whole plain waited, wondering if he would re-emerge, and when they glimpsed him a shout went up, "The young prince has escaped the fire!" He was unscathed, as if he had rideen through water and emerged bone dry, for when God wills it, he renders fire and water equally harmless. Seeing Siyavush, all the plain and city gave a great cry of gratitude, and the army's cavalry galloped forward scattering gold coins in his path; nobles and commoners alike rejoiced, passing on the news to one another that God had justified the innocent. But Sudabeh wept and tore at her hair and scored her cheeks with her nails.

Siyavush appeared before his father and there was no trace of fire or smoke or dust or dirt on him; Kavus dismounted, as did all the army, and the king clasped

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his son in his arms, asking his pardon for the evil that had been done. Siyavush gave thanks to God that he had escaped the flames and that his enemy's designs had been destroyed. The king heaped praise on him and the two walked in state to the palace, where a royal crown was placed on the prince's head and for three days the court gave itself up to wine and music.

But on the fourth day Kai Kavus sat enthroned in majesty, his ox-headed mace in his hand, and peremptorily summoned Sudabeh. He went over what she had claimed, she said, "Your shameless behavior has tormented my heart for long enough; you used magic against him, and no apology will avail you now. Leave this place and prepare yourself for the gallows; you do not deserve to live and hanging is the only fit punishment for what you have done." She answered, "If my head is to be severed from my body, I am ready, give your orders. But I want you to harbor no resentment against me in your heart, so let Siyavush tell the truth

- it was Zal's magic that saved him." But the king burst out, "Still at your tricks? It is a wonder you are not hunchbacked with the weight of your impertinence!" And then he turned to the court crying, "What punishment is suitable for the crimes she has committed in secret?" All answered, "The just punishment is that she suffer death for the evil she has done." Kai Kavus said to the executioner, "take her and hang her in the public way, and show no mercy." When all abandoned Sudabeh in this fashion, the women of the court broke into loud lamentation, and Kavus turned pale, his heart wrung by their cries.

Siyavush said to the king, "Torment yourself no more about this matter; forgive her for my sake. Now, surely, she will accept good guidance and reform her ways." And to himself he said, "If Sudabeh is destroyed, the king will regret it eventually, and when that happens he will blame me for her death." Kai Kavus, who had been looking for some excuse not to kill Sudabeh, replied, "For your sake I forgive her." Siyavush kissed his father's throne and then rose and left the court; the women of the harem flocked about Sudabeh, bowing before her one by one.

And after some time had passed the king's heart once again inclined to Sudabeh, and his love was such that he could not tear his eyes from her face. Once again her evil nature reasserted itself and she began to weave her secret spells, plotting against Siyavush.

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And, listening to her, Kavus once again began to turn against his son; but for the moment, he concealed his suspicions.

News came to the lovesick Kai Kavus that Afrasiyab and a hundred thousand Turkish cavalry were menacing his borders. Reluctant to give up his life of ease and pleasure, he summoned a council and addressed them thus: "God did not make this Afrasiyab of earth, air, fire, and water, as He did other men. How often has he sworn peace with us, but as soon as he can gather an army together, he forgets all his oaths and promises. There is no one but myself who can confront him and turn his day to darkest night if I do not eclipse his glory he will attack Iran and lay waste our territories as swiftly as an arrow flies from the bowstring." His advisors said, "Your army is sufficient without your presence; why waste wealth recklessly? Twice already your rashness has delivered the kingdom into your enemies' hands. Choose some warrior worthy of war to carry out this task for you." He answered, "But I see no

one here who can confront Afrasiyab; no, it is my boat that must be launched for this undertaking. Now leave me, and let me prepare my heart for what is to come."

Hearing this, Siyavush grew pensive, and thoughts crowded his mind like a dense thicket. To himself he said, "I should fight this war, and I must persuade Kavus to give command of our armies to me. In this way God will free me both from Sudabeh and my father's suspicions, and besides, if I can overcome such a force, I shall win fame for myself." He strode forward, his sword belt buckled on, and said, "I am capable of fighting with the king of Turan, and I shall humble his heroes' heads in the dust."

His father agreed to his request and made much of him, loading him with new honors and giving him treasure with which to equip the army. Then Kavus summoned Rustam and said to him, "No mammoth has your strength, and you showed your unparalleled wisdom and discretion when you raised Siyavush. Now he has come to me, his sword belt buckled on, talking as if he were a young lion. He wants to lead the expedition against Afrasiyab; you are to accompany him, and see you never take your eyes off him. If you are watchful, I can sleep easily, but if you relax your vigilance, then I must bestir myself. The world rests safely because of

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your sword, and the moon in its sphere is yours to command." Rustam said:

*"I am your slave, obedient to you,
Whatever you command me I shall do;
My refuge is prince Siyavush, and where
His crown is, heaven too, for me, is there."
Heartened by Rustam's words, Kai Kavus replied,
"May wisdom be your spirit's constant guide!"*

Preceded by the din of fifes and kettledrums, the proud commander Tus appeared at court and the king flung open his treasury doors to equip the assembled warriors. Helmets, maces, sword belts, armor, lances, and shields were distributed, and the king sent the key to the treasury where uncut cloth and other wealth was stored to Siyavush, saying that he was to administer it as he saw fit. He chose twelve thousand cavalry, men from Pars, Kuch, Baluch, Gilan, and the plain of Saruch, and twelve thousand infantry; for leaders he chose men like Bairam and Zangeh, Shavran's son, and he also selected five priests to hold aloft the Kaviani banner.

Siyavush gave orders that they assemble on the plain outside the palace, and so crowded did the area become, it seemed there was not room for one more horseshoe; before the host the Kaviani banner floated like a glittering moon. Kavus came out, quickly inspected the troops, and addressed them:

*"May fortune favor you! May all who fight
Against you be deprived of sense and sight;
As you set out, may health and luck be yours,
May you return as happy conquerors."*

War drums were strapped on the elephants' backs; Siyavush gave the order to mount and advance. His eyes awash with tears, Kavus accompanied them for the first day's journey. Finally father and son embraced, each weeping like a cloud in springtime, and each felt within his heart that he would not see the other again. Kavus turned back to his court, and Siyavush led his warlike army on toward Zabolestan, where Zal, Rustam's father, awaited them. There a month passed with wine and music; Siyavush spent his time with Rustam, or with Rustam's brother Zavareh, or seated cheerfully with Zal, or hunting wild game through the reed beds.

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But after a month Siyavush and Rustam led the army forward, leaving Zal and his hospitality behind. Men flocked to their banner from India and Kabul, and as they neared Herat, troops poured in from every side. The heavens still smiled on them as they approached Talqun and Marvrud, and so they went forward toward Balkh, injuring no one, not so much as by an unkind word.

On the enemy's side, swift as the wind, Garsivaz and Barman led their army forward; the leaders of the vanguard, Barman and Sepahram, heard that a new prince, mighty as a mammoth, was leading an army forth from Iran. Quick as a skiff that cleaves the waves, they dispatched a messenger to Afrasiyab, telling him of Siyavush and his great army and that warriors like Rustam, death's harbinger, accompanied him. They pleaded with him to come at once, with fresh troops, for the wind was in the sails of their venture and the ship plunged forward.

But Siyavush confronted them before any answer could arrive, and Garsivaz, hemmed in by Iran's troops, had no choice but to give battle; he decided to make a stand before the gates of Balkh. Two great battles were fought on separate days, and then Siyavush staged a successful infantry attack against the city's gates. As the

Persians poured into the city, Sepahram led the Turanian retreat back across the Oxus to Afrasiyab.

As soon as Siyavush and his army had entered Balkh, he ordered that a fitting letter, inscribed on silk, with ink compounded of musk, spices, and rose water, be written to the king. He began by thanking God from whom all victories proceed. Who rules the sun and the revolving moon, who exalts kings' crowns and thrones, who raises to glory and strikes down in sorrow whomsoever He wishes, and whose ways are beyond all human why or wherefore. Having invoked God's blessings on his father, he continued: "By the grace and **farr** (Avestan: *Xvarneh*; Pahlavi: *Khvarrah*) of the world's king, I came to Balkh in high spirits and favored by fortune. We fought for three days and on the fourth, victory was ours; Sepahram has retreated to Termez, and Barman fled like an arrow shot from a bow. My troops occupy the countryside as far as the Oxus and the world submits to my glory. Now, if the king so orders me, I shall lead our army further and continue the war."

When the letter reached the Persian king he felt that his crown and throne had been elevated to the

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heavens, and he prayed to God that this young sapling of his should grow and bear ripe fruit. In his happiness he had an answer written as splendid as spring, as cheerful as paradise: "I pray to God who rules the sun and moon and maintains the world that he keep your heart happy and free from sorrow and disaster, and that victory, glory, and the crown accompany you forever. Impatient for battles of your own, armed with fortune, skill, and righteousness, you led off your army, although your lips still smelled of mother's milk. May your body ever keep its skill and your heart always attain to its desires. But now that you have the upper hand, you should hold back somewhat. Make good use of the time you have gained; see that the army does not scatter, fortify your camp:

*"This Turk you are dealing with is sly and base,
Malevolent, and of an evil race;
He is powerful, imagining that soon
He will lift his head above the shining moon.
Be in no hurry now for war; hold back,
Let Afrasiyab advance, let him attack;
When once he has crossed the Oxus he will see
Carnage destroy his dreams of victory."*

He set his seal to the letter and called for a messenger, ordering him to make all haste to Siyavush. When Siyavush saw his father's missive, he kissed the ground and banished all thoughts of sorrow from his heart; he laughed and touched the letter to his head, took note of its contents, and in his heart felt only loyalty to its commands.

But, for his part, the lion-warrior Garavaz fled like wind-blown dust to the king of Turan, where bitterly and plainly he told him how Siyavush, aided by Rustam and an infinite army of famous fighters, had attacked Balkh. He said, "To each one of us there were fifty of them, armed with ox-headed maces, and their bowmen surged forward like a fire. The eagle does not fly as they flew. For three days and nights they fought, until our leaders and horses were exhausted, but when one of their side grew tired, he retired from the battle and rested, then returned with renewed vigor." But Afrasiyab leapt up like flame and screamed, "What is all this babble about sleep and rest?" He glared at him as if he would hack him in two, then yelled in fury and drove him from his presence. He gave

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orders that a thousand of his henchmen be summoned for festivities and that the plains of Sogdia shine with Chinese splendor.

Afrasiyab passed the day with them in pleasure, but as the sun sank from sight, he hurried to his bed and tossed and turned there in the bedclothes. When one watch of the night had passed he trembled and cried out in his sleep, like a man delirious with fever. His servants ran to him in an uproar, and when Garsivaz heard that the light of the throne was dimmed, he hurried to the king's bedchamber and saw him lying there sprawled in the dirt. He took him in his arms and said, "Come, tell your brother what has happened." Afrasiyab answered, "Do not ask me, do not say anything to me now; hold me tightly in your arms for a moment and let me gather my wits." After a while he came back to himself and saw his chamber filled with lamenting retainers. Torches were brought and shaking like a wind-blown tree, he was helped to his bed, Again Garsivaz questioned him: "Open your lips, tell us this wonder."

The great Afrasiyab answered him thus: "May no one ever see such a dream again; I have never heard that any man, young or old, has passed such a night. In my dream I saw a plain filled with snakes, the world was choked with dust, and eagles thronged the sky. The ground was dry and parched, as though the heavens had never blessed

it with rain. My pavilion was pitched to one side, and our warriors stood around it. A dust storm sprang up and toppled my banner, and then on every side streams of blood began to flow; they swept away my tent, and my army that numbered over a thousand was mere lopped heads and sprawled bodies. Like a mighty wind, an army attacked from Iran; what lances they brandished, what bows! Every horseman had a head spitted on his lance and another head at his saddle [See information concerning the taking of trophy heads by the ancient Celts in Chapter 2]; clothed in black, their lances couched, a hundred thousand of them charged my throne. They flung me from my seat and bound my arms behind me; I stared desperately around but saw no more than fourteen. When he saw me bound before him, he roared like a thunder cloud and hacked me in two with his sword. I screamed with the pain, and my screams awoke me."

Garsivaz said, "The king's dream can only mean what his friends would want for him: you will attain to

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your heart's desire and those who wish you ill will be destroyed. We need a wise, experienced dream interpreter; we should call our priests and astrologers to the court."

Wondering why they had been summoned, a group appeared at court. Afrasiyab had them enter, seated the most distinguished in the front, and chatted a little with each man. Then he said, "My wise, pure-hearted councilors, if I hear a word about this dream of mine from anyone in the world, I shall not leave a single head here on its body." Then, to allay their fears, he distributed a great deal of gold and silver among them and described his dream to them. When the chief priest had heard the dream he was afraid and asked pardon of the king, saying, "Who among us could interpret this dream, unless the king promised they would come to no harm, and an eloquent spokesman for the group began: "I will reveal the inner meaning of the king's dream. A young prince accompanied by experienced councilors will lead a mighty and vigilant army here from Iran; the boy's father has had his horoscope cast and it predicts that our country will be destroyed. If the king fights with Siyavush, the face of the world will turn crimson as brocade with the blood that is shed; the Persians will not leave one Turk alive, and the king will regret giving battle. And if the young prince should be killed by the king, Turan will be left with no nobles to lead it, this land will be convulsed by a war of vengeance for Siyavush. Then you will recall these

truths, when our land is ruined and depopulated; and even if the king became a bird, he could not outsoar the turning heavens that look on us at times with fury, at times with favor."

When he heard this Afrasiyab was alarmed and put all thoughts of war from his head; he told Garsivaz at length of the destruction that had been prophesied if he fought with Siyavush. He concluded, "Instead of looking for world domination, I have no choice but to sue for peace. I will send him gold, silver, crowns, thrones, and countless jewels, and I will withdraw from the territories they ceded before. Then perhaps this disaster can be averted and my tears will damp this fire down. If I can seal Fate's eyes with gold, then the heavens may look favorably on me again. But we can only read what Fate has written; justice is whatever the heavens will for us."

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At sunrise the country's nobles came to court, wearing their diadems of office and with loyalty in their hearts. Having gathered together his wisest and most experienced men, Afrasiyab addressed them:

*"In all my life, Fate has given me no more
Than battles, conflict, and unending war.
How many from this noble company
Have been destroyed in war because of me;
How many gardens are now overgrown,
How many cities sacked and over thrown,
How many orchards fought through; far and wide
My troops have scarred and scoured the countryside.
And when the king is unjust, goodness must flee,
Hiding itself in stealth and secrecy;
The wild ass suffers an untimely birth,
And rivers fail and dry throughout the earth,
The hawk's squabs grow up blind , beaets' teats turn
dry,
The musk-deer makes no musk to know him by;
Righteousness flees from crookedness in fear,
On all sides dearth and misery appear.
But tired now of evil ways I trod,
I long to trace the virtuous paths of God;
In place of sorrow, pain. And enmity,
I will nourish knowledge, justice, amity;
Through me the world will be at rest; no more
Will death surprise us, and untimely war.
Iran and Turan are mine by right,
How may kings pay tribute to my might!*

*If you agree hostilities should cease,
I will write to Rustam now, proposing peace;
To Siyavush I will send rich tokens of
My hopes for harmony and mutual love."*

One by one his councilors agreed to peace and reconciliation, saying that he was their king and they his slaves. When they had left, Afrasiyab turned to Garsivaz and said, "Make ready for the road, do not waste words; choose two hundred warriors and prepare gifts for Siyavush: Arab horses with golden saddles, Indian swords with silver scabbards, gem-encrusted crown, a hundre camel-loads of carpets, two hundred slave girls and as many boys. Tell him we haveno quarrel with him, that we make no claim on Iran. Say, "We accept that Sogdia, the land as far as the Oxus, is ours; thus it has been since the time of Salm and Tur,

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when all the world was turned upside down and the innocent Iraj was slain. I pray God will grant us peace and happiness, that your good fortune will bring peace to the world, and that war and evil will disappear. You are a king yourself; speak to the king of Iran, see if you can soften his warlike ways." Flatter Rustam, take him slaves and horses with golden bridles, load him with gifts so that our plan is successful, but, as he is not a king, do not present him with a golden throne."

When Garsivaz had gathered the gifts together, they made a splendid show. He hurried to the Oxus and sent a nobleman ahead to Balkh tp announce his coming. As soon as Siyavush heard of Garzivaz's approach, he consulted with Rustam as to what should be done.

Garsivaz arrived and Siyavush commanded that he be admitted to the court; seeing him, he stood, smiled, and asked his pardon. Garsivaz paused at a distance and kissed the ground; shame was apparent in his face, and his heart was filled with fear. Siyavush motioned him to a place near the throne and asked after Afrasiyab. Garsivaz sat and took stock of the prince's splendor and then addressed Rustam, "When Afrasiyab heard of your coming, he sent me here with a trifling present for Siyavush." He signaled that the gifts be paraded before Siyavush; the road from the city gates to the court was thronged with the slaves and valuables he had brought, and no one could reckon their value. Siyavush was well pleased with what he saw and he listened to Afrasiyab's proposals. The wary Gersivaz kissed the ground, made his obeisance, and left the court.

Rustam said, "We should entertain him for a week before we give an answer. We must think carefully and consult with others." A house was fitted up for Garsivaz and stewards sent to look after him, while Siyavush and Rustam turned the proposal over at length. Rustam was suspicious of the speed with which Grasivaz had come, and, as was prudent, had scouts posted to keep an eye on the approaches. Siyavush questioned him, then said, "We have to get to the bottom of why they are seeking peace; what is the best antidote for a poison like him? Who are his closest kin? If he were to send a hundred of his warrior relatives here as hostages, that would show us his real objectives. God forbid he is holding back simply out of fear, and that under this show of good intentions he is actually beating his war drums. Once we have arranged all this

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we should send someone to my father Kavus to persuade him to give up his dream of vengeance." Rustam agreed, "You are right; this is the only way to conclude the treaty."

At dawn the next day Garsivaz appeared at court, belted and crowned as was appropriate; he kissed the ground before Siyavush and greeted the prince. Siyavush said, "I have been weighing your words and deeds carefully; the two of us agree that we should wash all thoughts of vengeance from our hearts. Take this answer to Afrasiyab; "If you are plotting an attack on us, know that he who sees the ends of evil should refrain from evil and that a heart adorned with wisdom is a priceless treasure. If there is no poison hiding in this draught you offer, if malevolence has no place in your heart, then let Rustam choose a hundred of your kin, whose names will be given to you; you will send these men to me as guarantors of your good faith. Further, you will evacuate those Iranian twons you occupy, withdraw to Turan, and cease to plan for war. There should be only righteousness between us; I for my part will not prepare for war, and I shall send a letter to King Kavus advising him to recall our armies."

Garsivaz dispatched a horseman, saying, "Gallop yp Afrasiyab and do not pause for sleep on the way; tell him that I have accomplished all he wished for, but that Siyavush demands hostages before he will renounce this war." When the message was delivered, Afrasiyab wried inwardly, uncertain what he sould do. He communed with himself: "If I am to be deprived of a hundred of my own kindred, may court's power will be broken, there will be no one left here who has my well-being at heart; but if

I refuse him these hostages, he will think all I have said is a lie. I shall have to send them if he will not agree to any other terms." He counted off a hundred of his kinsmen, according to the list drawn up by Rustam, presented them with gifts and robes of state, and sent them to the Persian prince.

Then he gave orders that the drums and trumpets he sounded; the royal pavilion was dismantled and his army evacuated Bukhara, Sogdia, Samarkand, Chaj, and Sepanjab, moving toward Gang without excuses or delay. When Rustam learned of their withdrawal he ceased to worry; he hurried to Siyavush, told him what he had heard, and said, "Since things have turned out well, Garsivaz should be allowed to return." Orders were

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given that a robe of honor be prepared and that weapons, a crown, and a belt, together with an Arab horse with a golden pridle and an Indian sword in a silver scabbard, be brought. When Garsivaz saw the prince's gifts, he seemed as astonished as a man might be who saw the moon descend to the earth. He left full of praises for the prince, and his feet seemed to skim the ground in gratitude.

Siyavush sat on his ivory throne, the crown suspended above him. He searched his mind for someone eloquent, who could give words persuasive force; he needed some nobleman from the army who would get on well with Kavus. Rustam said to him, "Who is going to dare open his mouth about such a subject? Kavus is as he always was, his anger is always there, neither less nor more. All I can suggest is that I go to him; I would split the earth open if you ordered me to, and I think only good can come of my mission." Siyavush was overjoyed at his words and gave up all thoughts of looking for another messenger.

The prince and Rustam sat down together and talked at length. Siyavush summoned a scribe, and a letter was written on silk. He began by praising God who had given him victory and glory, whose orders none can evade, the Lord of wealth and dearth, Creator of the sun and the moon, bestower of the crown and throne, who knows all good and evil. The letter continued: "I reached Balkh rejoicing in my fate, and when Afrasiyab heard of my coming the clear water in his goblet turned to pitch. He knew that dissiculties hemmed him in, that his world was darkened and his luck at an end. His brother came offering me wealth and beautiful slaves, begging the king of the world for peace, and resigning authority to him. He promised to keep to his own territories, to

leave Iran's soil, and to harbor in his heart no thoughts of war. He sent a hundred of his relatives to me as guarantors of his word. Rustam comes to you asking that you pardon him, since he is worthy of our kindness." Rustam set off for the king with a contingent of men, his banner fluttering overhead.

For his part Garsivaz returned to the king of Turan and told him of Siyavush, saying, "As a prince he has no equal for handsomeness or nobility of action, for intelligence or kindness or dignity or eloquence; he is brave, speaks well, is a good horseman, and he and wisdom are like old companions." The king laughed and said, "Policy beats warfare, then, my brother! I

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was disturbed by that nightmare I had, which is why I looked for some way out of this. Well, I have accomplished what I wanted with gold and treasure."

Meanwhile Rustam reached the king of Iran's court. As he entered, Kavus descended from the throne and embraced him, asking after his son and their battles and wanting to know why Rustam had returned. Rustam began by praising Siyavush, then handed over the letter. While the secretary was reading it to him Kavus' face grew black as pitch and he turned on Rustam: "He is young, I know, and has seen nothing of the world's evil, but you, who has no equal in the world, whom all great warriors long to match themselves against, have not you seen Afrasiyab's wickedness, and how he has deprived me of rest and sleep? I should have gone, I longed to fight with him, but they told me not to, saying I should let the young prince manage things. And where God's punishment was called for, you let yourselves be beguiled by wealth he has looted from the innocent and by a hundred misbegotten Turks, bastards whose fathers no one can name. What does he care about such hostages? They are water under the bridge to him. But if you have taken leave of your senses, I am not tired of warfare yet: I will send someone resourceful to Siyavush, tell him to burn Afrasiyab's presents and to send the hostages in shackles here, where I will hack their heads off. And as for you, You must lead your army into enemy territory where, like wolves, they are to plunder all they find until Afrasiyab comes out to fight you."

Rustam replied, "My lord, do not upset yourself about this, but listen for a moment. The world is now subservient to you, and you yourself advised the prince not to advance across the Oxus, but to wait for Afrasiyab to attack. And so we waited, but he sued for peace and reconciliation. And the righteous will not

look kindly on someone who breaks his oath. Siyavush fought like a fearless leopard, and what else was he fighting for but the crown and throne, wealth and security, and our homeland Iran? He has gained all these, and there is no point in wildly looking for war now; do not darken your bright heart with such muddle notions. If Afrasiyab reneges on his promises, then we can fight; we are not tired of battle, and that will be the time for swords and warfare. Do not ask your son to break his oath; lies do not become the crown. I tell

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you plainly, Siyavush will not go back on his word and he would be horrified to know what you are planning."

Then Kavus started up, glaring at Rustam in fury, and said, "So everything comes out now, does it? So it was you who put these thoughts in his head, you who tore the desire for vengeance from his heart? You only looked for your own ease and comfort in all this, not for the glory of our crown and throne. You stay here; Tus is the one to strap war drums on his elephants and complete this business. I will send a messenger to Balkh, and the message he takes will be a bitter one. If Siyavush cannot agree to my commands, then he is to resign command of the army to Tus and return here with his companions, and I will deal with him as he deserves."

Rustam was enraged and replied, "The heavens themselves do not lord it over me; if you think Tus is a better warrior than Rustam, you will learn soon enough how rare men like Rustam are." And he stormed from the king's presence with hatred in his heart, his face flushed with anger. Kavus immediately summoned Tus and ordered him to set out. Tus had drums and trumpets sounded to muster the army for the journey.

Kavus summoned a scribe and had him sit beside him. He dictated a letter full of belligerent, angry words. Having praised God of war and peace, Lord of the planets Mars and Saturn and of the moon, Creator of good and evil and of kingly glory, he went on: "Young man, rejoicing in your strength and fortune, may the crown and throne be yours forever. If you have neglected my commands, it is because the sleep of youth has beguiled you. You have heard what this enemy did to Iran when he beat us in battle. Now is no time for you to fall for his wiles; if you do not want fortune to forsake you, do not push your young head into his trap. Send these hostages you have secured here, to my court; it is no surprise if he has deceived you, he has done it to me often enough, persuading me by his glozing words to call

off my attacks. I said nothing about a truce, and you have disobeyed my orders, enjoying yourself with pretty girls instead of getting on with the war. And as for Rustam, he cannot get enough of gifts and riches. But it is conquest by the sword that you should depend on, it is conquered land that gives a king glory. When Tus arrives He will sort out your affairs. You are immediately to load the hostages with chains and mount them on donkeys. Fate will not look

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kindly on this truce of yours; when the news spreads in Iran, it will cause an uproar. Get on with your task of vengeance; attack by night and make a second Oxus of their blood. Then Afrasiyab will not stay sleeping long; he will advance to give battle. But if you feel sorry for that devil incarnate, if you do not want to break your word to him and have no stomach for war, then hand the army over to Tus and get yourself back here."

When Siyavush received the message and saw its graceless language, he called over the courier, who told him how Rustam had been received, and about Tus and Kavus' rage. Siyavush was saddened to hear of the treatment meted out to Rustam, and he fell to brooding on his father's actions, on the day of battle, and on the Turkish hostages. He said:

*"A hundred noble knights, all innocent,
Of royal lineage: and if they are sent
To Kai Kavus he will neither ask nor care
About their lives, but hang them then and there.*

And what excuse can I then bring before God? The world hems me in with evil: if I make war on the king of Turan, God and my own men will condemn me; and if I hand over the army to Tus and return to Kai Kavus, evil will come to me from him, too. I see evil to the left and to the right, and evil ahead of me. Sudbeh has brought me nothing but evil, and I do not know what else God has in store for me."

He summoned two noblemen from the army, Bahram and Zangeh, cleared his tenet of everyone else, and sat them down. He told them what had happened to Rustam and went on, "Countless evils surround me; the king's kind heart was like a leafy tree bestowing shade and fruit, but everything was turned to poison when Sudabeh deceived him. His harem became my prison, and my life's laughter turned to misery; the fruit of her lust was the fire I passed through. I chose war as a means of escape from her clutches. And when we came to Balkh and defeated the

enemy, they retreated from our land and sent us presents and hostages. Our priests (*magi*) advised us to turn aside from war, as we had secured all we had fought for and there was no point in shedding more blood. I will not order further fighting, since I fear to break my oath. Disobedience to God is contemptible, and if I turn from righteousness, I shall

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forfeit both this world and the world to come; I shall be as Ahriman would wish. And, is I fight, who knows to which side Fate will give the victory? Would that my mother had never borne me, or that in being born I had died; my fate is like a massive tree whose fruit is poison and whose leaves are sorrow. I have sworn a binding oath before God and if I break it disaster will erupt on every side. The whole world knows I have made peace with the king of Turan; everyone will revile me, and I shall deserve it. And how can God look kindly on me if I turn again to vengeance, cut myself off from the ways of faith, and flout the laws of earth and heaven? I shall leave this place and seek out somewhere where my name will be hidden from Kai Kavus; but may all be as God wills. Zangeh, I ask you to undertake a heavy responsibility; go quickly to Afrasiyab's court and return to him the hostages and presents he has given us. Tell him what has happened." And to Bahram he said, "I leave our armies, elephants, and war drums, together with this frontier area, under your command. Wait until Tus comes and then hand everything over to him; count out to him all the treasure, every crown and throne, item by item"

Bahram's heart was wrung with sympathy for his commander's pain; violently he wept and cursed the country of Hamaveran. The two noblemen sat grief-stricken. Then Bahram said, "This is not the way forward; without your father there is no place for you in all the world. Write the king another letter, ask for Rostam back. If he tells you to fight, fight. Best not to bandy words with him; there is no shame in apologizing to your father. We will wage war as he commands us to; do not brood on this, flattery will bring him around. The crown and throne, the army and court, all will be useless without you. The king's brain is like a brazier filled with coals, and all his plans and wars are mere folly."

But Siyavush could not accept their advice, since the heavens secretly willed another fate for him. He answered them: "The king's command transcends the sun and moon for me, but neither commoner nor noble, neither

lion nor mammoth, can oppose God: a man who disobeys God's commands abandons himself to bewilderment. I can neither plunge these two countries into warfare again nor go back to the king with his orders neglected and there face his wrath and disappointment. If you are alarmed at my orders, ignore

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them. I shall be my own messenger and leave this encampment." Hearing this, the warriors' hearts failed within them; as if seared by fire they wept at the prospect of separation from their commander, fearing what fate held in store for him. Zangeh replied, "We are your slaves, sworn to serve you, faithful unto death." Siyavush said, "Go to Turan's commander and tell him what has happened to me; say that this truce has meant sweetness for him, but only pain and poison for me. Say that I will not break the oath I swore to him, and that if this means I am to be exiled from the throne, then God is my refuge, the earth will be my throne and the heavens my crown. Tell him I cannot go back to my father. Ask him to allow me free passage through his territories, to wherever God wills I should wander. I shall seek out some distant country where my name will remain hidden from Kai Kavus, where I shall not have to hear his reproaches and can rest awhile from his fury."

Taking a hundred warriors as escort, Zangeh reached the Turkish king's capital. As he approached, Afrasiyab rose from the throne, embraced him, and made much of him. When the two were seated Zangeh handed over a letter and repeated all he had been told. Afrasiyab's heart was wrung by what he read and heard, and his head whirled with confused notions. He had Zangeh billeted according to his rank and then summoned Piran. Clearing the court, he shared with him Kavus' childish talk, which showed his evil character and his plans for war. As Afrasiyab spoke his face clouded with anxiety: worry and sympathy for Siyavush filled his heart. "What", he asked, "is the remedy for all this? What would it be best for us to do?"

Piran replied, "may you live forever, my lord. In all matters you are wiser than I am, and more able to carry out what must be done. But this is my opinion: whoever has the opportunity to help this prince, either secretly or openly, either by giving him wealth or taking pains on his behalf, should do so. I have heard that in stature, sense, dignity, chivalry, and all that is fitting for a prince, there is no nobleman in all the world who is his equal. But seeing is better than hearing, and we have seen how nobly he acted over the

hundred hostages held, opposing his father on their behalf. He has cast aside hopes of the crown and throne and is turning to you for help. It would not be wise of right, my lord, to let him simply pass through our

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territories; our noblemen would blame you for this and you would sadden the prince. And then consider, Kavus is old, he cannot reign for much longer; Siyavush is young, he possesses the royal *farr* (Avestan; *Xvarneh*: Pahlavi; *Khvarrah*), and he will soon inherit the throne. If my lord acts wisely in this matter he will write to Siyavush welcoming him as a father would. Give him a place in this country, offer him respect and kindness; marry one of your daughters to him, treat him with honor and dignity. If he stays here with you, it will bring peace to your land, and if he returns to his father Fate will look kindly on you. Iran's king will be grateful to you and the world's noblemen will praise you. If Fate brings Siyavush here, our two countries will rest from warfare, as the world's creator would wish."

When Turan's commander had heard Piran out and looked at the facts, he brooded for a while, weighing what should be done. Then he said, "Your advice pleases me; no one in the world has your experience and wisdom. But there is a proverb that seems apposite here:

*Bring up a little lion cub, and you
Will be rewarded when his teeth show through;
Forgetting all the kindness he has been shown
He will maul his master when his claws have grown*

But Piran said, "May the king look at this matter wisely: will a man display his father's bad qualities when he opposed those very qualities? Do you not see that Kavus' days are numbered, and that this being so, he must die soon? Then with no trouble at all Siyavush will inherit his country and its treasures and glory; our country and his, and their crowns and thrones, will then be yours. And is this not the height of good fortune?"

Hearing this, Afrasiyab took a wise decision and called in an experienced scribe. He began his letter with praise of the world's creator and continued: "May this God bless the prince, lord of the mace and sword and helmet, who is righteous and who fears God, in whose soul there is no injustice or crookedness. I have received Zangeh's message, and my heart is grieved at your king's treatment of you, But what else does a fortunate man seek for in the world than a crown and

throne? And these you have; all of Turan will do your bidding, and I feel the need of your kindness. You will
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be my son and I will be like a father to you, a father who seeks to serve his son. Kavus has never shown you the kindness I will; I will open my treasury to you, assign you a throne, and keep you as my own child so that you will be a remembrance of me in the world when I am gone. If I let you pass through my kingdom, commoners and noble alike will condemn me, and you will find the going hard beyond my borders, unless you have supernatural powers. You will see no land there and will have to cross the Sea of China. But God has made this unnecessary for you; stay here and live at ease; my army, territories, and wealth are at your disposal. And you will not have to search for excuses to leave: when you and your father are reconciled, I will load you with presents and willingly send you on your way to Iran. You will not be at odds with your father for long; he is old and will soon grow tired of his differences with you. Once a man reaches sixty-five the fire of anger begins to fail in him. Iran and all its wealth will be yours. I have accepted God's command that I succor you, and no harm will come to you from me."

Afrasiyab sealed the letter and, having given Zangeh gifts of gold and silver, a splendid cloak, and a horse with a gold-worked saddle, he sent him on his way to Siyavush. Zangeh reported to his prince what he had seen and heard, and Siyavush rejoiced at this, but at the same time his heart was filled with sorrow and anxiety that he had to make a friend of his enemy, since when did cooling breezes ever blow from a raging fire? He wrote to his father, saying, "Despite my youth I have always acted wisely, and the king's anger against me grieves my heart. His harem was the cause of my first sorrow, making me traverse a mountain of fire, and in my trial the wild deer wept for me. To escape such shame I set out for war, riding confidently against its monstrous claws. Two countries rejoiced at the peace I fashioned, but the king's heart hardened against me like steel. Nothing I did pleased him, and since he is sick of the sight of me, I shall not stay in his presence. May happiness always inhabit his heart, while sorrow drives me to the dragon's maw. I do not know what will become of this, or what secrets of good and ill the heavens hold in store for me."

Next he gave orders to Bahram: "Keep your fame bright in the world; I hand over to you my crown and royal pavilion, the wealth I have levied, and the

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throne, our banners, cavalry, elephants, and war drums. When the commander Tus arrives, hand them over to him just as you have received them." He selected three hundred horsemen for his own use, together with a quantity of coins, jewels, and armor. Then he summoned his officers and addressed them: "Piran, sent by Afrasiyab, has already crossed to our side of the Oxus. He bears a secret message for me, and I shall go out to welcome him. You must remain here; you are to regard Bahram as your leader and to obey his orders." The warriors kissed the ground before Siyavush.

As the sun set, and the air grew dark and the world forbidding, Siyavush led his men to the Oxus, his face obscured by tears. At Termez the streets and roofs were decorated to welcome him, so that spring with all its tints and scents seemed to have come, and each of the towns they passed through seemed like a bride arrayed in splendor. At Qajgar he dismounted and rested for a while. When news of his approach arrived, Piran chose a thousand knights and rose out to welcome him, taking as a gift four richly caparisoned white elephants and a hundred horses with gold-worked saddles. As soon as Siyavush saw his banners and heard the elephants' trumpeting he hurried toward him. The two embraced and Siyavush said, "Why have you troubled yourself by travelling like this? My only hope has been to see you alive and well." Piran kissed his head and feet and his handsome face and gave thanks to God, saying, "O Lord of what is hidden and what is plain, if I had seen such a man in a dream it would have restored my youth to me." To Siyavush he said, "I praise God that I see you before me as clearly as the daylight. Afrasiyab will be like a father to you, and all on our side of the Oxus are as your slaves. I have over a thousand henchmen who are yours to command and if you can accept an old man's service, I stand ready to obey you."

*The two rode forward then, their cheerful chat
Wandering at random over this and that;
The towns they passed were filled with Music's sound,
And scattered musk and gold obscured the ground.
But seeing this, the prince's eyes grew dim,
Old, melancholy memories troubled him;
His heart recalled great Rustam's land, Zabol,
The grandeur and the beauty of Kabul -
Then all Iran beset him, place by place,*

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*He blushed for shame and turned away his face;
But wise Piran saw all his misery
And bit his lip in pain and sympathy.*

They rested a while and, gazing at wonder at him, Piran said, "You seem like one of the ancient kings. You have three qualities which together make you unique: first, that you are of the seed of Kai Qobad; another, that you speak so honestly and eloquently; and third, that your countenance radiates grace." Siyavush replied, "You are renowned throughout the world for your good faith and kindness, for your hatred of evil and Ahriman; swear to me now and I know that you will not break your word. If my presence here is good, I should not weep; but if it is not good, then tell me, show me the way to another country." Piran said, "Do not dwell on the fact that you have left Iran; trust to Afrasiyab's kindness and be in no hurry to leave us. His reputation is bad in the world, but this is undeserved; he is a God-fearing man. He is wise and cautious in his councils and is not given to making hasty, harmful decisions. I am related to him, and I am both his champion and adviser. In this land over a hundred thousand horsemen are mine to command; twelve thousand are from my own tribe and, if I wish, will wait on me day and night. I have weapons, territory, flocks of sheep, and much more in reserve; I can live independently of everyone. All that I have I place at your disposal if you will agree to live here. I have accepted you as a trust from God, and I shall let no harm come to you; though no one knows what Fate holds in store for him." Siyavush was comforted by these words; his spirits revived and they sat to their wine, Piran as a father, Siyavush as his son.

Cheerful and laughing, they pressed on to Gangm a beautiful site where the Turkish monarch held court. Afrasiyab came rushing out on foot to greet them, and as soon as he saw the king approaching, Siyavush dismounted and ran forward. They embraced, kissing each other's eyes and head, and Afrasiyab said, "The world's evil sleeps. From now on neither revolt nor war will break out; the leopard and the lamb will share one watering place. Brave Tur set the world in a turmoil, but now our countries are tired of war. They have fought for too long, blind to the ways of peace; through you we shall rest from battles and the longing for blood-revenge. The land of Turan is your slave, the hearts of

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all here are full of love for you. All I have, my body and my soul, are yours. May you live healthily and

happily here; all our treasures are yours. I will treat you with a father's love and always smile upon you."

Siyavush replied, "May your lineage never forfeit its good fortune." Then Afrasiyab took Siyavush's hand, led him to the throne, and sat down. He gazed at Siyavush's face and said, "I know of nothing like this in all the earth. In the world men are not like this, with such a face, such stature, such royal *farr*." And turning to Piran he said, "Kavus is old and sadly wanting in wisdom if he can give up such a noble and accomplished son."

Afrasiyab had one of his palaces set aside for his guest; it was spread with gold-worked carpets, and a golden throne with legs fashioned like the heads of buffalo was placed there. The walls were hung with Chinese brocade and a multitude of servants was assigned to it. Siyavush entered, and its arch seemed to touch the heavens; he sat on the throne lost in thought until a servant called him to dine with the king. The meal passed in pleasantries, and then the courtiers sat to their wine while musicians played in the background. Afrasiyab pledged his heart to Siyavush and swore he would know no rest without him. They drank till darkness fell; by the time everyone was tipsy Siyavush had forgotten about Iran, and in this drunken state he returned to his own quarters. Afrasiyab said to his son Shideh, "Take some of our nobles at dawn to Siyavush, as he is waking up, and have them present him with gifts - slaves, fine horses, gold-worked boots - and have the army take him cash and jewels. Do this in a dignified, becoming way." The king himself sent many more gifts, and so a week passed by.

One evening the king said to Siyavush, "Let us get up at dawn tomorrow and enjoy ourselves at polo; I have heard that when you play, your mallet is invincible." Siyavush agreed and the next morning they made their way laughing and joking to the field, where the king suggested they divide up their companions, with Siyavush heading one team and he the other. But Siyavush said, "I cannot be your rival, choose some other opponent and let me ride on your side, if you think I am good enough." Afrasiyab was pleased by this and thought everyone else's remarks mere chaff in the wind by comparison. Nevertheless he insisted, "By the head and soul of Kai Kavus, you are to play against me;

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and see you do well, so that no one says I have made a bad choice for an opponent." Siyavush replied, "A and all the warriors here, and the game itself, are yours to

command." For himself the king selected Golbad, Garsivaz, Jahann Pulad, Piran, Nastihan, and Human, who was known for being able to scoop the ball from water. To Siyavush's side he sent some of his own henchmen, including Ruin and the famous Shideh, Andariman, who was a great horseman, and Ukhast, who was like a lion in battle. But Siyavush said, "Which of these men is going to try for the ball? They all belong to the king, and I will be the only one playing on my side. If you will allow me, I will choose some of my own men." The king agreed and Siyavush selected seven Iranians who were worthy of the honor.

At the field's edge drums thundered out, cymbals clashed, and trumpets blared. The ground seemed to shake with the din, and dust rose into the sky as the horsemen took the field. The king struck the ball up toward the clouds; Siyavush urged his horse forward and before it touched the ground he smote the ball so hard that it disappeared from sight. Afrasiyab ordered another ball to be tapped toward Siyavush, the prince lifted it to his lips and the sound of trumpets and drums rang out. Then he mounted a fresh horse, tossed the ball into the air, and hit it such a blow with his mallet that it seemed to rise to the moon's sphere, as if the sky had swallowed it. The king laughed out loud, and his nobles were startled enough to exclaim, "We have never seen a horseman with such skills." Afrasiyab said, "This is how a man who has God's *farr* is!"

A royal pavilion had been erected at the field's edge and there Siyavush sat with the king, who gazed at his princely guest. Then he called to the warriors, "The field, mallets, and balls are yours!" The two sides fell to, and dust rose up, obscuring the sun. The Turks strove hard to get possession, but without success; Siyavush was alarmed by the Persians' behavior and called out in Pahlavi, "This is a playing field, not a battlefield for you to be raging and struggling like this; give way, and let them have the ball at once." The Persians let their reins go slack and stopped encouraging their horses. The Turks struck the ball and rushed forward like fire. When Afrasiyab heard the Turks' shout of triumph he realized what that sentence in Pahlavi had meant. He said to Siyavush, "I have been told that you have no equal as a bowman."

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Siyavush drew his Kayanid bow from its casing and Afrasiyab asked to look at it and have one of his own men test it. He praised it highly and handed it to Garsivaz, ordering him to string it. Garsivaz struggled

to notch the string, but to his chagrin was unable to do so. Siyavush took the bow from him, knelt, bent back the shaft and strung it. The king laughed and said, "Now that is the kind of bow a man needs; when I was young I had one just like that, but times have changed. There is not another man in Iran or Turan who could manage this bow in battle, but Siyavush with his great chest and shoulders would not have any other."

A target was set up at the end of the lists; without saying a word to anyone, Siyavush mounted his horse, yelled his war cry, and galloped forward; one arrow struck the center of the target and, as the warriors watched, he notched another (made of poplar wood, with four feathers) to the string and in the same charge again transfixed the target. Gripping the reins in his right hand he wheeled around and once again sent an arrow home. Then he slipped the bow over his arm, rode back to the king, and dismounted before him. The king stood and called down blessings on him, and the two made their way happily back to the palace.

They sat to food and wine, accompanied by courtiers worthy of the honor, and after a few draughts had been downed and the company was growing merry they toasted Siyavush. While they were still feasting Afrasiyab conferred a splendid robe on Siyavush, a horse with all its trappings, a sword and diadem, clothes and a quantity of uncut cloth the like of which no one had ever seen, silks, purses stuffed with coins, turquoises, male and female slaves, and a goblet filled with rubies. He ordered that all this be counted out and then conveyed to Siyavush's palace. He commanded his kinsmen to think of themselves as a flock of which Siyavush was the shepherd. Then he turned to the prince and said, "We must go hunting together; we will enjoy ourselves, and the hunt will put sad thoughts out of our minds." Siyavush said, "Whenever and wherever you wish."

And so one day, accompanied by a group of Turkish and Persian warriors, they started out with cheetahs and hawks for the hunt. Siyavush spied a wild ass on the plain and left the group behind as he set off like the wind in pursuit. His reins grew light, his stirrups heavy, as he galloped forward over the rough terrain.

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He caught up with the ass and slashed it in two with his sword; the two halves were absolutely equal in weight (as if his hands were a balance and the ass weighted silver) and when the king's companions saw this they exclaimed, "Here is a swordsman worthy of the name!" But to one another they murmured, "An evil has

come to us from Iran. Our leader is put to shame by him: we should oppose the king in this." Siyavush rode on through gullies, over mountains and across the plain, bringing down prey with arrows, sword, and lance, piling up carcasses everywhere, until the group was sated with hunting and made its way cheerfully back to the king's palace.

Whether in good spirits or gloomy, the king wished to be with no one but Siyavush; he took pleasure in his company alone, no longer admitting Garsivaz and Jahan into his confidence. Day and night he spent with Siyavush, and it was Siyavush who was always able to bring a smile to his lips. In this way, with all its mingled joy and grief, a year went by.

Siyavush and Piran were sitting one day, chatting of this and that, when Piran said, "You are like a man who is only passing through this country; what will remain of Afrasiyab's kindness when you die.

*You are the close companion of our king,
As loved by him as pleasure is in spring,
And you are Kavus's son - your glory here
Has raised you to the moon's auspicious sphere,
And this is where you ought to lead your life.
But you have no brothers here, no kin, no wife,
You are like a solitary flower beside
An empty field; you need to choose a bride.
Forget Iran, its sorrows and its wars;
When once Kavus has died, Iran is yours.
Here in the royal castle's women's quarters
The king has three incomparable daughters,
And Garsivaz's household boasts of three
Descended from a noble ancestry,
And I myself have four girls, each of whom
Will be your slave if you will be her groom.
But best would be if you can marry one
Of Afrasiyab's girls; you will be his son.
The finest of them is Farigis, whose grace
Knows no competitor in any place;
She is tall and slender as a cypress tree,
Her hair is a musky crown; you will never see*
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*A woman more accomplished or more wise.
If you should wish to gain this noble prize
I will be your messenger and go-between
To ask the king if she can be your queen"*

Siyavush gazed at Piran and said, "What God wills cannot be unfulfilled; if this is heaven's course, then

I cannot oppose it. If I am not to reach Iran again, or see Kavus' face again, or that of the great Rustam who brought me up, or Bahram's or Zangeh's, or the faces of any of our warriors, then I must choose a home here in Turan. Be as a father to me and arrange this marriage, but keep it secret for now." Having said this, he sighed repeatedly, and his eyelashes glistened with tears. Piran replied, "A wise man does not fight with Fate; if you once had friends in Iran, you have entrusted them to God and left them behind. Your home is here now."

Piran bustled off to court and waited for a while near the throne until Afrasiyab said, "Why are you standing here? What is on your mind? My army and wealth are at your disposal, and if I have some prisoner whose release will be dangerous for me, I will set him free if you should ask. Now, what do you want from me?"

The wise councilor answered, "May you live forever; I have all the wealth and power I need. I bring a secret message from Siyavush. He says to you, "I am grateful for the fatherly welcome you have given me here; now I need you to arrange a marriage for me. You have a daughter called Farigis, and I should be honored if I were considered worthy of her." Afrasiyab grew pensive and replied, "I have gone through this before and you did not agree with me. A man who nourishes a lion cub will regret once the lion is grown. And astrologers have predicted that the union of these two will produce a prince who will conquer the world and destroy Turan; the first crown he will seize will be mine:

*Why should I plant a tree whose bitter root
Will only serve to nourish poisoned fruit?*

A child that comes from Kai Kavus and Afrasiyab will mingle fire and flood; how can I know whether he will look kindly on Turan? And if he favors Iran, then it will be as if I have purposefully taken poison. A man does not deliberately pick up a snake by the tail.

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As long as he is here I will treat him like a brother, but that is all."

Piran said, "Any child of Siyavush will be wise and good-natured. Pay no attention to what astrologers say; arrange matters for Siyavush. A prince of our two peoples will be lord of both Iran and Turan, and both countries will be at peace after long warfare. There can be no more splendid lineage than that of Feridun and Kai Qobad. And, if heaven has another fate in store for us,

thinking will not change it. This is a splendid chance, the answer to all you have desired."

The king replied, "I hope your advice turns out well. I accept your suggestion; see that the matter is carried out appropriately." Piran bowed, left the court, and hurried to Siyavush. He went over what the king had said, and that night the two washed all sorrows from their hearts with wine.

When the sun raised its golden shield into the sky, Piran said to Siyavush, "Bestir yourself, you are to be the princess' guest, and I am ready to do whatever you order me in this affair." Siyavush was uneasy in his heart and shamefacedly said to Piran, "Do whatever you think is appropriate; you know I have nothing to hide from you." Piran hustled off to his house and had his wife Golshahr choose a splendid wedding gift: uncut cloth, gold woven Chinese brocade, trays of emeralds, beakers of turquoise filled with musk and sweet-smelling wood, two princely crowns, two torques, a necklace, two earrings, sixty camel-loads of carpets, three sets of clothes with designs worked in red gold and jewels, thirty camel-loads of silver and gold, a golden throne and four chairs of state, three pairs of slippers worked in emeralds, three hundred slaves with gold caps, a hundred more bearing gold beakers. All this, together with ten thousand dinars, was taken to Farigis by Golshahr and her sisters. She kissed the ground before the princess and said, "The sun is to be joined with the planet Venus; tonight you must go to the prince and shine in his palace like the full moon."

And so Farigis, resplendent as the full moon, came to the young prince. The festivities lasted a week; no one, not even the birds of the air or the fish in the sea, slept during that time; from end to end, the earth was like a garden filled with happiness and music-making. Afrasiyab loaded his son-in-law with gifts and gave him a charter written on silk, making him lord of

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the lands that stretched to the Sea of China, and in confirmation of his sovereignty he sent a golden throne and crown to Siyavush's palace.

A year went by, and then one day a messenger from Afrasiyab arrived at Siyavush's palace. The king said, "It would be right for you to separate yourself from me somewhat. I have given you the land that stretches toward China; make a tour of your territories and choose some city that delights your hearts. Make that your happy home, and never swerve from righteousness."

Siyavush was pleased at this advice; he had fifes and kettledrums sounded, the baggage train fitted out, and litters prepared for Farigis and the women of her entourage. As he led out his army Piran accompanied him with his own troops, and the two made their way toward Piran's homeland, Khotan. There the prince stayed as Piran's guest for a month, feasting and hunting. When the month was over the din of drums rang out at cock-crow and, with the army led by Piran, Siyavush entered the appanage he had been granted by Afrasiyab.

When it was known they had arrived, the local chieftains gave them a splendid welcome, filling the land with the sound of harps, lutes and flutes.

*They reached a fertile and well-watered place,
Possessed of every strength and natural grace:
The setting's natural limit was the sea,
A highway marked the inland boundary,
To one side mountains reared above the plain,
A place of hunting grounds, and wild terrain;
The streams, the groves of trees, made weary men
Feel that their ancient hearts were young again.*

Siyavush said to Piran, "I shall build here, in this happy place: I will raise a splendid city filled with palaces and porticoes. My capital will be worthy of the crown and throne and will soar as high as the moon's sphere." Piran replied, "My lord, do as you see fit. I will contribute everything necessary; knowing you, I have no more need for wealth or land." Siyavush said, "All my treasure and goods are from you; I see you striving everywhere on my behalf. I will build a city here such that everyone who sees it will be amazed." But the astrologers reported that the site was inauspicious, and when Siyavush heard this the reins slackened in his hands and tears fell from his eyes.

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Piran asked, "My prince, why should this grieve you so much?"

*And Siyavush said, "As the heavens roll
They cast my spirit down and sear my soul.
The wealth with which my treasury is filled,
The goods I have sought, the palaces I build,
Will pass into my enemy's fell hand.
Before long, death will take me from this land.
And why should I rejoice when I foresee
That others will sit here in place of me?"*

*I am not long for this world, and soon, God knows,
I will need no palaces nor porticoes;
My throne will then be Afrasiyab's, and he
Though innocent connives to murder me.
And so the ever turning skies bestow
Now joy, now sorrows, on the world below."*

Piran said, "O my lord, why do you bewilder your soul in this way? Afrasiyab has cleansed all evil from his heart and renounced all thoughts of vengeance; and while the soul stays in my body I will stay faithful to you. I will not let even the wind so much as disturb your hair." Siyavush said, "Your reputation is unsullied, and I see only goodness come from you. You know all my secrets; I bring you tidings from God himself, for I am privy to the secrets of the turning heavens. I will tell you what must be, so that later when you see how the world turns you will not wonder at my fate. Listen then: not many days will pass before I shall be slain, although I am innocent of sin; another will inherit my throne and palace. You are true to your word, but the heavens will otherwise. Slander and evil fortune will bring evil on my innocent body. Iran and Turan will rise against one another and life will be overwhelmed by vengeance. From end to end our lands will suffer, swords will usurp the time; innumerable red, yellow, black, and purple banners will throng the skies of Iran and Turan; endless the pillage and slaughter, the theft of accumulated treasure; countless the countries whose streams will turn brackish, their soil beneath war horses' hooves. Then the lord of Turan will regret what he has said and done; but when smoke rises from his pillaged cities, regret will be useless. My spilt blood will set Iran and Turan to wailing, and all the world will be in turmoil. Thus He who holds the world has written, and it is by his command that what

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has been sown is reaped. Come, let us rejoice and feast while we may; the world passes; why tie your heart to it, since neither our efforts nor the wealth we delight in will remain?"

Hearing him, Piran's heart was stricken with grief, and to himself he said, "If what he says is true, I am the cause of this evil. It was I who expended so much effort to bring him to Turan, I then who sowed the seeds of this war of vengeance. I took the king's words as so much wind when he said as much to me." But he consoled himself, "Who knows the secrets of the heavens? He remembers Iran, Kavus, and the days of his greatness,

and it is this that has disturbed him." As they rode forward all their talk was of the mysteries of fate, but when they dismounted they put the subject aside and called for wine and musicians. For a week they feasted, telling tales of the ancient kings; on the eighth day a letter came from Afrasiyab ordering Piran to lead his troops on a tour of inspection, collecting tribute as he went. First he was to travel to the Sea of China, then to the border with India and the Indian Ocean, and from there to Khazar in Turkestan.

The shout to assemble went up from the doorway of Piran's tent; to the din of drums troops amassed to receive their orders, and then the columns set out on the itinerary the king had commanded.

One night, at about the time men sleep, a messenger from Afrasiyab came hurrying to Siyavush. The letter he bore was filled with kindness: "Since you left I am never happy. I have identified a place here in Turan where you could live; however cheerfully and splendidly you pass the time where you are, return to my kingdom and confound those who are envious of your good fortune."

Siyavush gathered his troops and set off to the appointed place, as the king had commanded him. With him came a hundred camel-loads of dirhems, forty of dinars, and a thousand red-haired Bactrian camels made up the baggage train. Ten thousand swordsmen guarded the litters carrying the women of his court, and thirty camel-loads of precious goods - rubies, turquoise, torques, crowns and earrings, sweet smelling woods, musk, and ambergris, brocade and silk, as well as goods from Egypt, China, and Persia. He came to the chosen place, named *Khorram-e Bahar* (The Joy of Spring), and there constructed a city of palaces, porticoes, public
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squares, orchards and gardens, the place was like a paradise, and in the desert wastes he made roses, hyacinths, and tulips grow. On his palace walls he had frescoes painted showing royal battles and banquets. One was of Kai Kavus with his crown, torque, and royal mace; Rostam stood next to his throne, and with him were Zal, Gudarz, and the rest of Kai Kavus' entourage. On the opposite wall Afrasiyab was painted, together with his warriors and the chieftains Piran and Garsivaz, At each corner of the city was a dome that reached to the clouds; and there, their heads among the stars, musicians would sit and sing. The city was called Siyavushgerd, and the world rejoiced in its existence.

On his return journey from India and China, Piran came to visit Siyavush. He was curious to see what the

prince had done with the site and hurried forward, together with a crowd of well-wishers worthy of the honor. The prince and his troops came out to greet him; seeing him in the distance Piran dismounted, as did Siyavush, and the two embraced. They walked together through the city, where so recently there had been only a wilderness of thorns, and Piran praised Siyavush and the magnificent buildings and orchards he saw laid out on every side. He said, "If you were not endowed with knowledge and the royal *farr*, how could you ever have founded such a place? May it last as your memorial until the end of the world, and may you and your descendants live here as victorious kings until then."

When he had seen a portion of the city he reached Siyavush's palace and turned toward Farigis' quarters. The princess scattered coins before him in welcome, asked about the hardships of the journey, and seated him on a throne, while her servants stood in waiting for his orders. He praised all he saw, and then they turned to feasting, wine, and music. They spent a week in this way, at times lighthearted and cheerful, and at times quite drunk. On the eighth day Piran handed over gifts he had brought from his travels: rubies and other princely gems, coins and jewel-studded crowns, silks, horses with saddles of leopard skin and gold-worked bridles; to Farigis he gave a diadem and earrings, a necklace, and a gem-encrusted torque [the wearing of torques is one of the many special affinities between the Celts on the one hand and the Iranian peoples on the other: see Chapter 1 & Chapter 2)].

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After leaving Siyavushgerd Piran returned to his own land of Khotan. Entering the women's quarters he said to his wife, Golshahr, "Whoever has not set eyes on paradise should travel where I have been, to see the angel Sorush enthroned in splendor. Go for a while, and refresh your soul with the sight of Siyavush's city." Then, quick as a skiff that cleaves the waves, he traveled on to Afrasiyab. He listed the countries he had visited and the tribute he had levied, then mentioned Siyavush, saying all he had seen and answering the king's questions: "Heaven's glories do not equal that city, nor is the sun more splendid than Siyavush. I saw a city unparalleled in all of Persia and China: wisdom and that prince's soul have combined to make a paradise of gardens, public places, and flowing streams. From a distance Farigis' palace glitters like a vast jewel. Men revile the world, but you have no cause to complaint

now. If Soroush himself were to descend from the blue heavens he would not be possessed of such magnificence, glory, and wisdom as is your son-in-law. And our two countries rest from war, returning to life like a man who has lain unconscious and revives again."

The king was happy to hear these words, believing that the tree of his good fortune had borne fruit. He told Garsivaz what he had heard, and said, "Visit Siyavushgerd and see what kind of a place it is. Siyavush has given his heart to Turan and forgotten Iran; he has renounced its crown and throne and said farewell to Kai Kavus, Gudarz, and Bahram. In the thorn-brakes here he has created a city; he has built Farigis tall palaces and treats her with honor and respect. When you see him, speak kindly to him and act with suitable deference, whether out hunting, seated at court with his Persian entourage, or drinking and feasting. Take him abundant presents - whatever you can lay your hands on in your treasury - and give Farigis presents, too, and congratulate her on her good fortune. If your host welcomes you with smiles, stay in his pleasant city for two weeks."

Garsivaz chose a thousand Turanian knights and set off in high spirits for Siyavushgerd. Hearing of his approach Siyavush and a detachment of troops hurried out to meet him; the two embraced and Siyavush enquired after the king's health. He welcomed Garsivaz to the palace and had his escort billeted appropriately. On the next day Garsivaz brought Siyavush the king's

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letter together with a robe of state; when Siyavush saw the robe the king had bestowed on him, his spirits opened like a flower in springtime. He and his nobles took Garsivaz about the city, and when they had surveyed it, building by building, they returned to the palace. There they saw Farigis wearing a diadem studded with turquoise, seated on her ivory throne, and surrounded by maidservants. She descended and welcomed Garsivaz, asking after the king and her hometown. Garsivaz seethed with resentment, but his outward behavior was punctilious and respectful. In his heart he said, "Let another year pass and Siyavush will have no time for anyone: he has sovereignty here, a crown and power, wealth, land, and an army." But though inwardly he writhed in anguish and his face turned pale, he hid what was in his heart, saying to Siyavush, "Your efforts have been rewarded; may you live for many years enjoying your good fortune." Two golden thrones were placed in the palace, and there Garsivaz and Siyavush sat, while

musicians played heart-bewitching music on harps and lutes.

At sun rise on the next day Siyavush and Garsivaz went out to an open space to play polo. Garsivaz threw down the ball and Siyavush struck it so hard that it disappeared as though the heavens had swallowed it, while his opponent's mallet struck only dust that spurted up from the plain. Thrones were set at the edge of the field for the two heroes, who watched as their men displayed their prowess with javelins. Garsivaz suggested that Siyavush himself show his martial valor before the Turks, and he assented.

The prince exchanged his throne for his saddle. Five suits of mail, each heavy enough to tire a man, were bound together and set up at the field's end, while all the army watched. Siyavush owned a spear that had belonged to his father, who had used it in war against Mazanderan; this he grasped and then like a maddened elephant he charged, plunging the spear into the suits of mail, shattering their fastenings and scattering them at will. Garsivaz's men collected the broken remnants from the field. Then the prince had four Gilani shields - two made of wood and two of iron - bound together as a target. He called for his bow, and thrust six poplar wood arrows in his belt; three more he kept in his fist, and one he notched to the bow-string. Then he galloped toward the target and loosed the first arrow: it pierced all four shields, as

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did all ten of his arrows one after another, while young and old roared their approval.

Garsivaz said, "My prince, in all Iran and Turan you have no equal. But let us you and I engage in a wrestling match, grasping each other's belts and straining to throw one another, here, in front of our troops. I am the foremost warrior of the Turks, and you will not see many horses to rival mine; there is no one else here who is fit to oppose you. If I can throw you from your saddle to the ground, you will have to accept that I am the better warrior and have the better mount, and if you succeed in throwing me, I will never show my face on a battlefield again." Siyavush replied, "Do not say such things: you are a great lord and a great warrior, your horse is superior to mine, and I reverence your helmet. Choose some other Turk to face me." Garsivaz said, "It will only be a friendly contest, for a moment, with no malice or hard feelings involved." But Siyavush replied, "It would not be right; where I fight is no place for you. When two men oppose one another,

they may smile but their hearts are filled with fury. You are the king's brother and your horse's hooves tread down the moon. I will do whatever you order me to, but I cannot consent to this. Choose some lion warrior from among your companions, set him on a fine, fleet horse, and if you are still intent on having me fight, you will see his head in the dust." Garsivaz laughed, and turning to his Turks called out, "Which of you wants to humble the greatest of warriors, and so be renowned throughout the world?" No one responded, till Gorui spoke up, "If no one else will oppose him, I am his match." Siyavush frowned at this, but Garsivaz said, "My lord, he has no equal in our army." Siyavush said, "If I am not going to fight with you, combat with anyone else is contemptible. But choose two, and I will fight against both together. A Turk called Damur joined Gorui, and Siyavush faced them, while they circled him. Then he lunged forward and grabbed Gorui by the belt, dragging him from his saddle to the ground, all without having to use his lariat. Next he wheeled toward Damur, and seized him by the neck, lifting him lightly from his horse, so that all the onlookers were astonished. As if he were carrying a mere ant rather than a warrior, he rode over to Garsivaz, dismounted, released Damur, and sat down laughing on his throne. Garsivaz was secretly enraged by what he had seen and his face flushed. The two

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returned to the palace and spent a week feasting according to Persian custom, drinking wine and listening to singers, flutes, and lutes.

On the eighth day Garsivaz and his entourage made preparations to leave. Siyavush wrote a friendly letter to Afrasiyab and loaded Garsivaz with presents.

*At first the journey home was filled with praise
Of Siyavush and all his princely ways,
But Garsivaz said, "When this Persian came,
The only gift he brought for us was shame.
Our king has welcomed him - to our disgrace,
Humiliation stares us in the face.
Great Gorui and brave Damur, two men
Whose like Turan will not quickly see again,
Were forced by this high-handed Persian knight
To look like fools who do not know how to fight.
And this will not be the end of it; I fear
The consequences of his presence here."*

And so he talked until they reached Afrasiyab's court, muddying the streams of goodwill toward Siyavush.

When they arrived, Afrasiyab questioned him early, and after he had read Siyavush's letter he laughed aloud, in the best of spirits. Malignant Garsivaz saw the king's gladdened face, and as evening came he left the court, his heart a mass of pain and hatred.

All night he writhed in anguish, and when night's black cloak was torn aside he made his way to Afrasiyab again. The court was cleared of strangers and the two sat together. Garsivaz began, "Your majesty, Siyavush is not the man he was; he receives messengers from Kai Kavus and also from Rum and China; he drinks Kavus' health and a mighty army has gathered around him. Soon he will be a threat to you. If evil had not darkened Tur's heart, he would not have slain Iraj, but since that time our two countries have been like fire and water, each heartsick at the other; and you are crazy enough to want them to unite? You might as well attempt to trap the wind. If I had hidden this evil from you, the world would have condemned me."

The king's heart was hurt by this report, and he began to brood on fate and its sorrows. He said, "Affection sprung from our common blood guides you to speak like this. Let me weigh the matter for three

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days; if wisdom agrees with your assessment, I will say what remedy to adopt."

On the fourth day Garsivaz appeared at court, his sword belt tight about his waist, his diadem of office on his head. Afrasiyab summoned him and went over the matter of Siyavush. He said, "How you remind me of our father, Pashang! And who else have I in the world besides you? It is you I must tell my secrets to, and you must plumb them thoroughly and give me your advice. That dream I had, which upset me for a while and confused me, prevented me from fighting against Syavush. But no harm has come to me from him; since he has bid farewell to the throne of Iran and wisely woven his fate with mine, he has never once disobeyed my orders. And I have treated him well; I gave him a country to rule over, and wealth, and I have made no mention of our grievances against him. I have made a blood alliance with him; I gave him my daughter, the light of my eyes, and I have renounced all thoughts of vengeance against him. If, after all this, I were to suspect him, the world would rebuke me; I have not the least excuse to move against him. If I were to harm him our nobles would condemn me, I would be a byword for bad faith everywhere. And if I harmed an innocent man could God

who rules the sun and moon approve of this? I can see no other solution than to summon him to my court and then send him back to his father: if it is sovereignty he wants, he can take his quarrel elsewhere."

Garsivaz said, "My lord, you cannot treat this matter so lightly. If he goes back to Iran now, our whole country will be destroyed. Whenever you welcome a stranger into your family he becomes privy to all its secrets; if you try and distance yourself from him now, who knows what insanity may come from this? He will be your enemy, and you will be rubbing salt into open wounds. As has been well said, the man who brings a leopard up sees only trouble as his reward."

His words seemed true to Afrasiyab, who regretted what he had done and foresaw only disaster. He replied, "I see no good in this affair., neither in its beginning nor in its end. We must look for what the heavens reveal; in every situation delay is better than haste. Wait until the sun has shown on this for a while, until we get some sense of God's will, and who it is that heaven's light looks favorably upon. If I summon him to court, I will be able to sound his

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secrets, and if I bring disloyalty to light, then I shall have to harden my heart against him, no one can blame me then, since evil deserves punishment and there is an end to the matter."

But Garsivaz, intent on vengeance, said, "You are wise and honest, my lord, but consider: if Siyavush, with all his power and royal **farr** (Avestan: *Xvarneh*; Pahlavi: *Khvarrah*), with his God-given might, with that mace and sword of his, should come here, to your court, then the sun and moon will be darkened for you. Siyavush is not the man you saw; his crown outsoars the heavens. And you would not recognize Farigis, who seems beyond all earthly needs. Your army would go over to him, and you would be left like a shepherd with no flock. If the army sees a prince as handsome, generous, and wise as he is, it is not going to be content with you as its sovereign. And you cannot simply keep him in his own city, grateful to you for what you have done for him and still willing to serve you. No one has ever seen a lion and an elephant mate, or fire above while water flows below.

*If someone wraps a lion cub in silk,
A little whelp, who has not yet tasted milk,
It keeps to its nature still, and, once it has grown,
Fights off an elephant's attack alone."*

The Afrasiyab became despondent and beset by care ; old memories of ancient wrongs and thoughts of vengeance filled his heart.

From then on Garsivaz visited him continually, filling the king's heart with calumny, until one day Afrasiyab cleared the court and said to him, "Go and visit him; do not stay long, but give him this message from me: "Do not you have any desire to quit your round of pleasures and see someone else? Come here with Farigis for a while, I need to set eyes on your face again and enjoy your wise company. There is good hunting in our mountains, and wine and milk in our emerald goblets. We can spend time pleasantly together, and when you wish to return to your own city, you will be seen off with music and festivities. Why is it forbidden for you to drink with me?"

His heart filled with malevolence, his head with deceit, Garsivaz hurried off on his mission. When he was close to Siyavushgerd he selected a smooth-talking soldier and said to him, "Go to Siyavush and say to him
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from me, "My noble and ambitious lord, I beg you by the soul of Turan's king, and by the soul and the crown of Kai Kavus, not to trouble yourself to come out of your city to greet me. Your fame, **farr** (Avestan: *Xhvarneh*; Pahlavi: *Khvarrah*), lineage, crown, and throne raise you above such concerns, and the winds themselves stand ready to serve you."

The envoy arrived and kissed the ground before Siyavush, who was saddened by Garsivaz's message; he withdrew and pondered for a while over what it might mean, saying to himself, "There is some secret hidden here." When Garsivaz reached the court Siyavush went out on foot to meet him, questioning him about his journey, the king, and affairs of state. Garsivaz handed over Afrasiyab's letter, which delighted Siyavush, who exclaimed, "I would outface swords and adamantine walls for his sake; I am ready to travel to his court; you and I shall link our reins and ride together. But first we must feast and drink in these golden gardens, for the fleeting world is a place of sorrow and grief, and woe to him who does not seize pleasure where he can."

Garsivaz said in his heat, "If I return to the king with him, his chivalry and wisdom will trample my plans underfoot; my words will count for nothing, and my council will be seen as a lie. I must make some scheme to lead him astray." For a while he stood in silence, staring at Siyavush's face. Then tears flowed from his

eyes [note the parallel with the Chanson de Roland: "weep from the eyes", which later appears in the Cantar de Mio Cid: "llorar por los ojos"], and seeing this, Siyavush asked in sympathy, "My brother, what is it? Is it a sorrow you cannot talk about? If your tears are because you are upset with Turan's king, I will ride with you now and fight against him until I know why he is humiliating you; and if some formidable enemy has appeared in your life, I am ready to help you in any way I can. Or if Afrasiyab is at odds with you because someone has been slandering you and so replced you in his favor, tell me about it so that I can help look for a remedy."

Garsivaz replied, "No, there is nothing like this between me and the king, and I have no enemies my wealth and martial skill cannot deal with. Thoughts of our lineage welled up in my heart, and I remembered true tales from the past. How evil first came from Tur, who lost God's **farr** (Avestan; Xvarneh; Pahlavi;

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Khvarrah); you have heard of how he schemed against the humble Iraj and so began the endless vendetta of our peoples, and how from then until the time of Afrasiyab, Iran has been like fire and Turan like water, never mingling in one place, always rejecting wisdom and good council. And Turan's king is worse than Tur; his ox had not been skinned yet, who knows what he will do? You do not know how evil his nature is, but if you watch and wait, you will see. Think first of how with his own hand he stabbed Aghriras. The two were brothers, of the same mother and father, and yet he killed Aghriras, who had committed no crime. And there have been many other innocent nobles whom he has destroyed. My concern is that you remain vigilant and safe; since you came here, no one has been harmed by you, you have always striven for justice and decency, and the world has been made more splendid by your knowledge. But Ahriman has filled the king's heart with resentment against you. I do not know what God wills in all of this. But you know that I am your friend whatever good or evil should appear; I do not want you to think later on that I knew of this and did not warn you."

Siyavush replied, "Do not trouble yourself about this. God is with me, and the king has given no sign that he wishes to destroy me. If he were angry with me, he would not have distinguished me by giving me a country to rule over, together with his own daughter, wealth, and troops. I will return with you to his court and make his darkened moon splendid again. Wherever

truth shines out, lies lose their lustre. I shall show Afrasiyab my heart, brighter than the sun in the heavens. Be cheerful, and give up these dark suspicions."

Garsivaz said, "My kind lord, do not imagine he is as you once saw him. For aal your knowledge and stature, you cannot distinguish pretence from goodness, and I fear bad luck will come of this. He has tricked you, blinded you with glory. You were foolish to rejoice when he made you his son-in-law; he lured you away from your own people and gave a great feast and made you his familiar, so that the world began to gossip about it. You are not a wiser man than Aghriras, and you are no closer to him than he was; before their horrified troops Afrasiyab cleaved his brother's waist in two with a dagger. Take this as a lesson, and put no trust in the fact that you are related to him. There, I have told you what is in my heart. You abandoned your

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father in Iran and made a place for yourself here in Turan; you trusted our king's talk and became his friend in sorrow. But this tree you planted has bitter roots and its fruit is poisonous." His heart was filled with treachery, but he sighed as he spoke and his eyelashes were wet with tears.

Siyavush stared at him in bewilderment, and tears streamed from his eyes; he remembered the prophecies of evil destiny, that the heavens would deprive him of love, that he would not live long but die while still a young man. His heart was wrung and his face turned pale, his soul was saddened and sighs escaped his lips. He said, "However I look at this, I cannot see that I deserve punishment. No one has heard that I have done or said anything wrong. If I have made free with his wealth, I have also striven on his behalf, and whatever evil comes to me I shall not swerve aside from his commands. I will accompany you, without my troops, and we will see what has turned the king against me."

Garsivaz replied, "Ambitious lord, it would be better for you not to come. A man should not step heedlessly into fire or trust himself to ocean waves. You would be rushing into danger and lulling your good luck to sleep. I will act for you in this and throw cold water on the fire. Write an answer setting out the good and evil of the situation; if I see that he has no thoughts of vengeance and that the days of your glory are renewed, I will send a messenger here on horseback, lightening the darkness of your days. I trust in God, who knows what is open and what is hidden, that the king

will return to righteous ways, leaving aside crookedness and evil. And if I see that his mind is still dark, I will send a messenger immediately, and you should wait no longer but leave at once: it is not far from here to the borders, a hundred and twenty parasangs to China, and three hundred and forty to Iran. In the former everyone looks favorably on you; in the latter your father longs to see you and the whole country is yours to command. Do not delay, but write to both countries and be prepared to fly to either."

*No longer vigilant, no longer wise,
Prince Siyavush believed his specious lies.
He said to him, "I put my trust in you,
I acquiesce in all you say and do;
Go, plead my cause before the king, and seek
For righteousness and justice when you speak"*
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He summoned a scribe and dictated his letter. After invoking God and praising wisdom, he addressed Afrasiyab: "O wise beneficent king, may you live forever. You summon me and I am grateful; but you have summoned Farigis, too, and she has been ill for wome time. She hardly touches her food and has not the strength to walk. She keeps to her bed, and I sit beside her pillow. My heart is filled with anxiety, seeing her hovering between this world and the next. When her illness eases she will be ready to serve you: but my worry for her well-being is the reason I cannot visit you now." He had the letter sealed and handed it to Garsivaz, who asked for three of his fastest horses and rose day and night back to Afrasiyab's palace.

On the fourth day he reached the court, and when the king saw him ex hausted from the journey he asked him why he had hurried back so quickly. Garsivaz replied, "When evil threatens there is no time for delay. Siyavush treated everyone with contempt; he did not come out to meet me, he would not listen to what I said, he did not read your letter, he kept me standing before his throne. Letters were constantly coming to him from Iran, but the gates of his city were closed against me, and troops flocked to him from Rum and China. If you do not deal him soon, your fist will close on wind and nothing more; he will make war on us and seize both Iran and Turan. And once he leads his men to Iran who will dare attack him? I have told you what I have seen, now suffer in the crisis you created."

When Afrasiyab heard him, ancient wrongs revived in his mind. In his anger he said nothing to Garsivaz, but

fire roared in his heart and his head seemed filled with wind. He ordered fifes, cymbals, trumpets, and Indian chimes to be sounded and led his army from Gang: once more he planted the tree of vengeance.

While the deceitful Garsivaz was straining in the stirrups on his journey home, Siyavush made his way to the inner apartments of his palace. His face was pale and his body trembled. When Farigis saw him she said, "My lion lord, what has made you lose your color like this?" he answered, "My love, I have no honor left here in Turan. Garsivaz speaks truly, my life has come full circle."

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*Queen Farigis clutched wildly at her hair
And clawed her rosy cheeks in her despair,
Blood clogged her musky curls, tears stained her face,
Distractedly she cried, "Leave, leave this place,
But where in all the world will welcome you?
Now, quickly, tell me what you plan to do;
Your father's rage excludes Iran, you say,
China would shame you, Rum is too far away -
Your only refuge in the world is He
Who rules the sun and moon eternally.
May years of pain destroy the scoundrel who
Corrupted the king's heart and slandered you."*

And Siyavush said, "garsivaz will be arriving at Afrasiyab's court about now."

On the fourth night Siyavush slept in Farigis' arms; he began to tremble and started up from sleep, roaring like a maddened elephant. Beside him his wife said, "My prince, what is it?" Then she called for tapers, and for sandalwood and ambergris to be burned before him. Again she asked, "My king, what did you see in your dream?"

Siyavush said, "Tell no one what I have dreamed. My love, my silevr cypress tree, I saw an endless river, and on the further shore a mountain of fire, and men with lances crowded on the bank. The fire began to overwhelm my city, Siyavushgerd. On one side there was water, on the other fire, and between them was Afrasiyab mounted on an elephant. He saw me and frowned, and blew on the fire to make it flare up." Farigis said, "This can only have a good meaning; sleep now for the rest of the night."

But Siyavush rose and called his troops to the palace courtyard. His dagger in his hand, he began to prepare for battle and sent out scouts to watch the road from Gang. When two watches of the night had passed, one of the scouts galloped back from the plain, saying, "Afrasiyab and a great horde of soldiers have appeared in the distance; they are hurrying this way." And then a courier brought a message from Garsivaz: "Save yourself; nothing I said had any effect and the fire sends out clouds of threatening smoke. Decide what you must do and where you should lead your army." Still Siyavush did not suspect his behavior, believing all that he told him. Farigis said, "My wise king, do not think of me, put no trust in Turan but saddle a swift

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horse and flee. You must stay alive; save your own head and give no thought to anyone else."

Siyavush replied, "My dream was true, and the glory of my life darkens; my time on earth draws to its close and only bitterness remains. But this is the heavens' way, bestowing now pleasure and now sorrow; if my palace reached to the stars, still the world's position would have to be tasted; and if I lived for one thousand two hundred years, still my resting place would be the dark earth. You are five months pregnant, and if the fruit maturing in your womb should grow to ripeness, you will be delivered of a splendid prince. Name him Kai Khusrau, and may he be a consolation for your sorrows. Soon, by Afrasiyab's command, my luck will sink to sleep; though I am innocent they will cut my head off, and my crown will be soaked in my vitals' blood. I will have no coffin, shroud, or grave, no mourners to lament my death; I shall lie like a stranger in the dirt, my head severed from my body by a sword blow. The king's bodyguards will drag you naked through the streets, and Piran will come to beg you from your father. He will take you in your wretchedness to his castle; a warrior will come from Iran and lead you and your son secretly across the Oxus. Your son will be placed on the throne, and from the fish in the sea to the birds of the air all creation will serve him. A huge army will come from Iran intent on vengeance; the world will be filled with tumult. Armies will clash in the war of my revenge, the earth will groan from end to end in torment, and Kai Khusrau will throw the world into confusion." This was his farewell to Farigis: "Dearest wife, I must leave; harden your heart, and bid farewell to ease and luxury." She scored her cheeks and tore out her hair, her heart

filled with grief for her husband, her eyes with tears. The two clung to one another in their grief, then, weeping and heartsick, Siyavush left her apartments.

He went to the stables where his Arab horses were kept and found black Behzad, who on the battlefield outran the wind. Lifting off his halter, siyavush wept, took Behzad's head in his arms, and whispered in his ear, "Let no one near you until Kai Khusrau returns; he will replace your bridle. Then you must bid farewell to this stable and bear him out to war and vengeance." He hamstringed all the other horses, wild as a fire that burns through reeds; then he and his warriors set out for Iran, their faces blinded by tears.

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But after they had traveled half a parasang they were confronted by the army of Turan. Seeing them in their armor, with their swords at the ready, Siyavush buckled on his breastplate and said to himself, "garsivaz spoke the undeniable truth." Each side eyed the other's ranks; before this neither had felt any enmity for the other. Turan's cavalry held back out of fear of Siyavush. The Iranians drew up in battle order and prepared for bloodshed: all of them were ready to fight alongside Siyavush; neither delay nor reproaches would be of any use now. Hey said, "If we are killed we will not go down to the dust alone; they will see what battle with Persians means and not consider us contemptible." Siyavush said, "there is no sense to this; this battle has neither head nor tail to it. We will shame ourselves and my gift to my father-in-law is to make war on him. But if the heavens decree that I shall be destroyed by evil, I have no strength nor desire to oppose God's will. As the wise have said, there is no point in striving against an evil fate." Then he called out to Afrasiyab, "great and glorious king, why have you come with your army ready for war; why do you wish to kill me, though I am innocent? You will stir up the armies of our two countries, and fill the land with curses."

Garsivaz replied, "You senseless fool, when has such talk ever been worth anything? If you are so innocent, why have you come before the king armed? A show of bows and shields is no way to welcome a monarch."

The sun rose as Garsivaz spoke, and Afrasiyab ordered his men to draw their swords and roar their war cry as if Judgement day had come. He said, "Grasp your weapons, and make this plain a sea of blood to float a ship on."

There were a thousand Persian warriors there, all good fighting men, but they were surrounded on all sides and slaughtered. Siyavush was wounded by arrows and lances and fell from his black horse; as he lay in the dust Gorui wrenched his hands behind his back and bound them tight as a stone. They set a yoke on his shoulders and dragged him on foot, hemmed in by soldiers, his face bleeding, toward Siyavushgerd; the prince had never seen such a day as this.

Afrasiyab said, "take him off the road, to a stony place where no plants grow, and cut off his head. Let his blood sink in the hot soil there; fear nothing, and
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be quick about it." But the army cried out as with one voice, "great king, what is his sin? Why would you kill someone for whom the very crown and throne will weep? In the days of prosperity do not plant a tree whose fruit will be poison."

Piran's clear-sighted younger brother, Pilsom, was there. He said to Afrasiyab, "The fruit of this tree will be pain and sorrow; the wise say that one who acts circumspectly has little to regret, that reason soothes anger, that haste is the work of Ahriman, bringing guilt to the soul and pain to the body. There is no sense in cutting off a subject's head precipitately. Keep him in chains until time teaches you the best course; act when wisdom's wind has touched your heart. A wise king does not sever a head that has worn a crown. And, if you kill this innocent, his father Kai Kavus and Rustam, who brought him up, will seek revenge. Men like Gudarz, Gorgin, Farhad, and Tus will bind war drums on their elephants; the mammoth-bodied Giv, who despises all enemies, and Kai Kavus' son Fariborz, a lion who never tires of battle, will ready themselves for a war of vengeance. The plains will be thronged with warriors; neither I nor any like me in this company will be a match for them. But Piran will be her at dawn; wait and hear his advice.

Garsivaz said,

*"pay no attention to a young man's prattle:
Vultures feed on their warriors killed in battle;
If you are afraid of vengeance, this will be
Sufficient cause for Persia's enmity.
You have done enough harm - must you once again
Listen to raw advice from foolish men?
If this prince calls, From Rum's and China's borders
Swordsmen and troops will flock to hear his orders.
You have wounded the snake's head - now you are afraid,*

*And want to wrap its body in brocade?
Well, spare him if you wish, but I will not be
A part of it, you have seen the last of me;
In some dark cave I will hide myself away
And live in fear until my dying day."*

Then Damur and Gorui came forward, plausibly twisting their words: "Do not worry about spilling Siyavush's blood, delay is wrong when there is work to do. Take Garsivaz's good advice and destroy your enemy. You set the trap and caught him, do not hesitate now.

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You have the leader of the Persians in your grip, now break the hearts of those who oppose you. You have destroyed his army already, how do you think the Persian king is going to look upon you? If you had done nothing against him from the beginning, this could have been overlooked; but now it is better if he disappears from the world entirely."

The king replied, "I have seen no sin in him, but the astrologers say that hardship will come because of him. But if I spill his blood, a whirlwind of vengeance will arise from Iran. I have brought evil upon Turan, and sorrow and pain upon myself. To free him is worse than killing him, and killing him is grief and agony to me. But neither wise nor evil men know what the heavens will bring?"

Farigis heard this talk and came before the king, her cheeks bloodied, her hair smeared with dust, wailing and trembling with pain and fear. She said, "great king, why will you make a widow of me? Why have you given your heart to lies? In your glory you cannot see the misery before you. Do not cut off the head of an innocent prince; the ruler of the sun and moon will not approve of this. Siyavush abandoned Iran and, with all the world to choose from, made his obeisances to you; he renounced his crown and throne and his father's goodwill for your sake. And he became your ally and support; what more do you want from him? Who has deceived you? And I am innocent, do not mistreat me, for the world is fleeting, casting one into a pit of misery and raising another to glory; but both descend to the dark earth finally. Do not listen to malignant Garsivaz's lies and so make yourself an emblem of evil throughout the world. You have heard what the Arab tyrant Zahhak suffered at Feridun's hands, and what the great king Manuchihr did to the malevolent Salm and Tur. In Kai Kavus' court live men like Rustam, who is contemptuous of Turan and at whose name the world trembles, Gudarz of whom lions are

terrified, Bahram, and Zangeh, the son of Shavran. You are planting a tree whose leaves will bring blood and whose fruit is vengeance. The world's glory will darken and curse Afrasiyab; you are ruining yourself, and you will have long years in which to remember my words. You are not out hunting now, bringing down some wild ass or deer; you are destroying a prince, and the throne and crown will curse you. Do not cast the land of Turan to the winds, or make this an evil day that you will regret."

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Having said this she gazed at Siyavush's face, wailing and clawing her cheeks. The king pities her but sealed up the eyes of wisdom and said, "Leave, get back to the palace; what do you know of what I mean to do?" They took Farigis and locked her in a dark room deep in the palace.

Garsivaz looked at Gorui, who turned his face aside, and stepped before Siyavush, abandoning all chivalry and shame. He grasped the prince by the hair and began to drag him away; Siyavush cried out, "Great God, who rules our earthly state and destiny, bring forth a bough from me that will be like a shining sun to my people, who will seek revenge for my death and renew my ways in my own land." Pilsom followed him, his eyes awash with tears, his heart filled with sorrow. Siyavush said to him, "farewell; may fortune weave her threads with yours forever; convey my greetings to Piran. Tell him the world has changed, that I had other hopes of Piran when I was like a willow tree bending before the wind of his advice. He told me that when my luck turned he would be at my side with a hundred thousand infantry and cavalry, that he would be like a pasture for my foraging. But now that I am hailed before Garsivaz, on foot, despised and wretched, I see no one here to befriend me or to weep for me."

Garsivaz and Gorui dragged him away from the army and the city to a waste place on the plain. Gorui took the dagger from Garsivaz, and when they had reached the appointed place they threw the prince's mammoth body to the ground. Knowing neither fear nor shame, they held a gold dish at his throat to catch the blood and severed the head of that silver cypress tree. The prince's head sank into endless sleep, never to awake. Gorui took the dish to the place that afrasiyab had ordered, and emptied it. A wind rose up, and darkness obscured the sun and moon; people could not see one another's faces, and all cursed Gorui.

*I turn to right and left, in all the earth
I see no signs of justice, sense, or worth:
A man does evil deeds, and all his days
Are filled with luck and universal praise;
Another's good in all that he does - he dies
A wretched, broken man whom all despise.*

Siyavush's palace resounded with lamentation; his slaves cut off their hair, and Farigis too cut her
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musky tresses and bound them about her waist and clawed at her cheeks' roses. Loudly she cursed Afrasiyab, and when eh heard her cries he ordered Garsivaz to drag her into the streets, and there to strip her and have her beaten, so that she would miscarry the seed of Iran, saying, "I want nothing to grow from Siyavush's root, neither a tree nor a bough nor a leaf; I want no scion from him worthy of a crown or throne."

One by one the nobles of his entourage condemned him, saying that no one evr heard of a king or minister who had given such an order. Pilsom came weeping and heartsick to Lahak and Farshidvard and said, "Hell is better that Afrasiyab's realm, and this land will know no rest nor peace now; we should go to Piran and seek helo for these tormented women."

They saddled three fine horses and hurried to Piran's castle, where they arrived covered in sweat and dust. They told him that Siyavush had been dragged on foot, bound, and with a yoke placed about his neck; that he had been forced to the ground by Gorui with his face twisted up like aheep's while a basin was held to catch his blood; that his head had been severed and that his body lay like a silver cypress felled in a meadow. They said that a heathen shepherd of the deserts would not slit a man's throat in such a way, that all the land mourned for Siyavush, and that tears stood in all eyes like dew.

Piran fell from his throne in a faint, and when he came to he tore at his hair and clothes and heaped dust on his head. Pilsom said to him, "Hurry, pain is heaped upon pain: Farigis will be killed, guards have dragged her by her hair to the court; do not turn your back on her distress."

Piran had ten good horses brought from his stables and in two days and nights the group arrived at Afrasiyab's court. They saw the gates thronged with warders and executioners, and farigis dragged forward, as if insensible, by guards with drawn swords in their hands. The court was in a tumult, weeping and lamenting

and condemning Afrasiyab, saying that he would have Farigis hacked in two, that this horrific crime would utterly destroy his sovereignty and that no one would ever call him king again. Piran rode forward like the wind, and everyone with any sense rejoiced. Farigis saw him through her bloody tears and said, "See what evil you have brought upon me, you have thrown me living into the fire." Piran dismounted and tore at his

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clothes in grief; he told the guards crowded about the gates to delay carrying out their orders.

Then, weeping and heartsore, he rushed before Afrasiyab and said, "Great king, live prosperously and wisely: what evil has darkened your benevolence, what demon has gained power over you, destroying all shame before God in your soul? By killing the sinless Sitavush, you have thrown your own honor and glory in the dust. When this news reaches Iran the court will go into mourning, and their nobles will lead a great army here intent on vengeance. The world was at peace and God's ways prevailed, and now some demon has burst from hell and deceived the king's heart: curses on the devil who perverted your heart! For long years you will regret this, living in pain and sorrow. And now that you have dealt with Siyavush, you turn against your own child? But Farigis has no desire for glory or sovereignty; do not make yourself a byword for cruelty by killing your pregnant daughter; you will be cursed throughout the world for as long as you live, and when you die all hell will be your home. If the king would brighten my soul he will send her to my castle; and if you fear her child, wait until it is born; I will bring it to you, and then do to it whatever evil you wish."

Afrasiyab replied, "Do as you say; you have made me unwilling to shed her blood." Heartened by this, Piran went to the gates, paid off the guards, and took Farigis away from the court and its lamentations. He brought her to Khotan and, when they arrived, entrusted her to Golshahr, his wife, saying, "Hide this lovely woman away; look after her well." Days passed, and Farigis, whose glory lit the world, grew heavier.

On a dark, moonless night, when birds and beasts were sleeping, the lord Piran saw in a dream a candle lit from the sun. Siyavush stood by the candle, a sword in his hand, crying out in a loud voice, "This is no time for rest; rise from sleep, learn how the world moves onward; a new day dawns and new customs come; tonight is the birthnight of Kai Khusrau."

Piran trembled in his sleep and woke; he roused Golshahr and said, "Go to Farigis; I dreamed of Siyavush, more splendid than the sun, who said to me, 'How long will you sleep? Rise, and run to the feast of Kai Khusrau, who will rule the world.'"

When Golshahr reached Farigis she saw that the princess had already borne her son. She ran back lightheartedly, shouting the news to all the world, and

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said to Piran, "He is like the sun and moon together; come and see the little marvel, see what God has created in His goodness; you will say that he is ready for a crown, or for a helmet and battle." As soon as Piran saw the prince he laughed and scattered coins for him; his great stature seemed more fitting for a one-year-old child than a newborn baby. Gazing at the child, Piran wept for Siyavush and cursed Afrasiyab. To his nobles he said, "If I am killed for this, I will say it: I shall not let Afrasiyab get his clutches on this child, even if he throws me to wild beasts."

At the time the sun unsheathes its sword, as Afrasiyab was waking up, Piran came hurrying in; after the room was cleared, he approached and said, "Sun king, world conqueror, wise and versed in magic arts, another subject was added to your rule last night. He seems a capable, intelligent child and is as fair to look upon as the moon. If Tur could live again he would long to see him, for he resembles Faridun in majesty and glory. No picture in a palace is as magnificent as this prince; in him the royal splendor is renewed. Now distance evil thoughts from your mind, mercy will become both your crown and your heart."

*God cleansed all hatred from the monarch's mind;
He knew that Siyavush had been maligne;
He sighed for him, tortured with pain and guilt,
Mourning his malice and the blood he had spilt.*

He said, "I have heard enough about this newcomer; everyone talks about him. The land is full of disturbances because of him, and I remember what I was told; that from the mingled line of Tur and Kai Qobad a great king would be born, the world will turn to him, and all the cities of Turan will pay him homage. But let what must come, come; there is nothing to be gained by worry and grief. Do not keep him among your courtiers; send him off to the shepherds, and see

that he does not know who he is nor why he is there." He said whatever came into his head, thinking that this ancient world was young and malleable.

Piran left the court in high spirits, giving thanks to God and praising the king. He traveled home deep in thought. Once there he summoned shepherds from the mountains and said, "Keep this boy as dearly as your own souls, keep him safe from wind and dust, see that he wants for nothing and never suffers." He gave

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the shepherds many gifts, and sent a wet nurse with them.

By the time the boy was seven years old his lineage began to show. He fashioned a bow from a branch and strung it with gut; then he made a featherless arrow and went off to the plains to hunt. When he was ten he was a fierce fighter and confronted bears, wild boar, and wolves. Soon, still using the same rough bow he had made, he progressed to leopards and lions. By now he would take no orders from the shepherds who looked after him, and so his guardian descended from the mountains and went whining to Piran. He said, "I have come to complain to your lordship about our young hero; at first he hunted deer and did not look for lions or leopards. But now it makes no difference to him whether he is after a lion or a deer. God forbid any harm should come to him; I am your to command my lord." Piran laughed, and said, "Lineage and skill will not stay hidden long!"

He rode to where the young lion was living and ordered him to step forward. Seeing the boy's noble stature, he dismounted and kissed his hand. Then he gazed at him, taking in the signs of kingly glory in his face; his eyes brimmed with tears and love filled his heart. He folded the boy in his arms and held him there for a long time, brooding in his heart on the boy's fate. He said, "O Kai Khusrau, follower of the pure faith, may the face of the earth be bright for you." Kai Khusrau replied, "My lord, everyone speaks well of your kindness, and I see you are not ashamed to embrace a shepherd's son." Piran's heart was wrung at these words; he blushed and said, "My boy, you call to mind our ancient heroes; the world is yours by right and you are deprived of it. No shepherd is kin to you, and I could tell you much more about this." He called for a horse and royal clothes for the young man, and, as the two rode together back to Piran's castle, Piran grieved in his heart for Siyavush. He kept the boy by him and brought him up; but though he

delighted in his company, he feared for him because of Afrasiyab, and his anxiety gave him no rest. And so the heavens turned for a few years more, and Afrasiyab's heart grew milder. One night a messenger arrived summoning Piran to the king's presence. When he arrived Afrasiyab said to him, "Every night my heart is filled with thoughts of evil and sorrow. I think of that child of Siyavush and it is as if he has darkened all my days. How can it

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be right for a shepherd to bring up a descendant of Feridun? If it is fated that evil will come to me from him, my precautions will not change God's will. If he can forget about the past, let him live happily, and I will, too; and if he shows signs of evil, then he will lose his head, as his father did."

Piran replied, "My lord, you need no councilor to advise you. What does a little child who is ignorant of the world know about the past? Do not trouble yourself about this matter any more. What is that saying, 'The teacher is stronger than the father, and a mother's love counts most of all'? Now, for my sake, swear me an oath, as solemn as those sworn by the ancient kings, that you will not harm the boy." Afrasiyab's granite heart softened at Piran's words, and he swore a solemn royal oath:

*"By day's bright splendor, by the dark blue night,
By God who made the earth and heaven's light,
Who made earth's beasts and human souls, I say
I shall not harm this child in any way."*

Piran kissed the ground and said, "Just king, without peer or equal on the earth and in the heavens, may wisdom always guide you, may time and space be as the dust beneath your feet."

Piran hurried back to Kai Khusrau, and his cheeks glowed with happiness. He said to Kai Khusrau, "Drive wisdom from your heart; if he talks about battles answer with banquets, appear before him like a fool, talk as an idiot talks. If you can keep clear of sense, you will get through today safely." Then he placed the Kaianid crown on his head and buckled the Kaianid belt about his waist. He had him mounted on a high stepping horse, and the two came to Afrasiyab's court while crowds gathered to gaze with tears in their eyes, and heralds called before them, "Clear the way, a new prince approaches."

When they reached the court the grandfather's face was wet with tears of shame; then he stared at his grandson, saying words of friendship but revolving evil in his mind. He gazed for a while at the youth's stature and splendor, and as he looked his face turned pale. Watching him, Piran began to tremble and despaired of Kai Khusrau's life. The king's face seemed closed and forbidding, but then kindness entered his heart.

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He said, "Young man, you are new to the court; tell me what you know about the shepherd's life. What do you do with your sheep, how do you lead them to their pasture?"

Kai Khusrau answered, "There is no hunting; I have no bow nor bowstring nor arrows."

The Afrasiyab asked him about his teachers, and the good and evil fortune he had seen.

Kai Khusrau answered, "Where there is a leopard, the hearts of sharp-clawed men burst with fear."

Thirdly he asked him about his mother and father, about Iran, and about his food and where he slept.

Kai Khusrau answered, "A fierce dog cannot bring down a ravening lion."

The king laughed at his replies and turned to Piran saying, "His mind is awry; I ask him about the head and his answer is all about feet. No good nor evil is going to come from him; men intent on revenge do not behave like this. Go, hand him over to his mother, and set someone trustworthy to look after them. Let them go to Siyavushgerd. Keep bad councilors away from him, but give him whatever he needs in the way of money, horses, slaves, and so forth."

Hurrying a little, Piran hustled Kai Khusrau from Afrasiyab's presence; they reached home safely with Piran well pleased by what had happened and convinced that the evil eye was sealed. He said, "God's justice has bestowed a new tree on the world, and now it gives its fruit." He opened wide the doors of his ancient treasury and equipped the prince with all he needed - silks, swords, jewels, horses, armor, crowns, belts, thrones, purses of coins, carpets, and cloth and everything else he might require.

Then he sent Farigis and Kai Khusrau to Siyavushgerd, which had become a wilderness of thorns; even the beasts of the field came to pay homage to them, and men gathered from every quarter and bowed before them, saying, "From the noble tree's uprooted stock a new shoot has sprung. May the evil eye be far

from our universal lord, may Siyavush's soul be filled with light." The ground of the ruined city revived and the weeds turned to tall cypresses. From the place where Siyavush's blood had been spilt a green tree sprang up; on its leaves the prince's face could be seen, and its scent was like the scent of musk. It flourished in the winter's cold as freshly as in

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spring, and it became the place where those who mourned Siyavush gathered together.

*This crone will see her infant suck and play,
And while he sucks she will snatch her breast away;
Such is the world to which our hearts are bound
Before we are hurried pell-mell underground.
If Fortune raises one above the skies
Fortune will cast him down before he dies;
Turn from this world's inconstant vanity
And put your trust in God's eternity.*

When Rustam learned of Siyavush's death he dragged Sudabeh from Kai Kavus' harem and killed her for her part in the young prince's downfall. He then attacked Turan and laid much of it waste in a war of vengeance. Afrasiyab however escaped and lived to fight another day.

The Persian hero Giv was sent to Turan to find and bring Kai Khusrau, and his mother Farigis, to Iran. After their hazardous journey, crossing the river Oxus to the Iranian side, Kai Khusrau was acclaimed by the Persian court as Kai Kavus' heir. Only Tus demurred, as he believed that both he and Fariborz had a better right to the throne than Kai Khusrau.

Kai Khusrau became the ruler of Iran, and his grandfather Kai Kavus retreated into the background. Kai Khusrau immediately began preparations for a lengthy campaign to subjugate Turan and bring Afrasiyab to justice for his murder of Siyavush. ...

We have given various versions of the vengeance for Siyavush exacted by the Iranians. Below is the version given in the Shah Namah:

When a great warrior embarks on war he should not trust his army to an enemy; only tears which no doctor

can cure will come of this. Someone who is from a noble family but who cannot achieve any kind of greatness is made savage by this failure. It is unwise for a king to trust any man who remains subject to others and unfulfilled in this way. If the heavens deny him his desires, his loyalty to the king is always suspect; there is no goodness in him, and ambition always gnaws

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at his heart. When you hear their tale through, you will know the nature of such a man.

The sun had reached its zenith, bringing Aries beneath its sway, and the world was filled with a golden light like white wine. From Tus' encampment the din of drums and the squeal of trumpets rang out; the land resounded with war cries and the neighing of horses, and the air was dark with the dust of armies gathering. The sun and moon were obscured, and everywhere the clatter of armor and the trumpeting of elephants could be heard.

Red, yellow, blue and purple banners thronged the sky, and in the center was the banner of Kaveh, surrounded by horsemen from the clan of Gudarz. A tucket sounded, and Kai Khusrau appeared at the entrance to the tent, crowned and carrying his mace. Wearing golden boots as a sign of office, Tus went forward with the banner of Kaveh. He was followed by chieftains descended from Nozar, each wearing a torque [remember the torque as a symbol of royalty or command among the Celts; the great hero of the Spanish Celts in their long struggle against the Romans, Viriathus, bore a name which means "torque wearer"] and a diadem; one by one they paraded before Kai Khusrau.

The king addressed them: "Tus leads this army; he bears the Kaviani banner, and you must be ready to obey his orders. Following royal custom, he should harm no one on the march; let no chill wind touch farmers, craftsmen, or any other civilian. Fight only with opposing warriors; harm no one who offers you no harm, for the world is fleeting and we are not here long. Under no circumstances should you pass through Kalat; if you do so your enterprise will fail. May the soul of Siyavush be as the sun; may his place in the other world be one of hope. He had a son, by a daughter of Piran; the boy closely resembled his father. He and I were born at the same time, and he was like me when we were young, open and cheerful in his manner. He lives now in Kalat with his mother,

ruling the area in royal splendor. He knows none of our Persian chieftains by name; you must not ride that way. He has a fine army, besides which the road through his territory lies over a difficult mountain pass. He himself is a brave warrior and horseman, of noble lineage and with a champion's strength. Take the way through the desert; there is no point in passing through a lion's territory."

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Tus replied, "May Fortune always favor your desires; I shall travel as you have commanded, since your commands bring only success."

Quickly Tus led off his troops and Kai Khusrau retired to take council with Rustam and his nobles and priests [**Magi**]. They spoke of Afrasiyab, of Kai Khusrau's anxieties, and of his father's [Siyavush] suffering.

The army progressed, stage by stage, until they came to a place where the road divided. In one direction by a waterless desert, and in the other Kalat and the road to Jaram. The elephants with their war drums in the van of the march paused until Tus arrived; the man waited to see whether he would obey orders or take the road the army itself would have preferred. When he reached them Tus talked with his officers about the hot, waterless way; he said to Gudarz, "Even if the dust of this desert were of amber and its sands of musk we would still have a weary journey ahead of us, and we will need water and rest. Therefore it is better that we make for Kalat and Jaram, and we can rest at Mayam for a while. On both sides of the road the area is cultivated and there is flowing water; why should we put ourselves to the trouble of slogging through the desert? I have been through Jaram once before, when the army was led by Gazdaham, and it is not a difficult journey, except there is a bit of going up and down hillsides. It is best we go this way then, and not count off the desert parasangs."

Forud was told that the face of the sun was dimmed by an approaching army's dust, and that the earth seethed like a rushing river with horses and elephants. "Your brother," they said, "is bringing an army up from Iran, seeking revenge for the murder of his father [Siyavush]." Forud was an inexperienced youth; when he heard this his heart was filled with anxiety, and his soul darkened. He went out to inspect the surrounding mountain side and had the gates to his castle fastened behind him. He gave orders that no

herds nor flocks of sheep were to be left on the plains or mountain pastures, that all of them were to be brought within the perimeter wall. When he had supercised the flocks being brought up the mountain side he returned to the castle and secured the gates. From Jaram the din of distant drums resounded, and toward Mayam dust obscured the sky.

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Forud's mother was Jarireh, who still grieved in her heart for Siyavush. Forud came to her and said,

*"Dear mother, from Iran an army comes
Led by great Tus, with elephants and drums;
What is your advice? What tactics should we try?
If they attack us how should we reply?"*

His mother said, "My son, you are always so eager to fight, but God forbid such a day should dawn for you. Your brother Kai Khusrau is now the new king of Iran; he knows very well who you are, and that you and he had the same father. Piran gave me to your father from the first, and is he had not done so Siyavush would never have taken a Turkish wife. You are of noble, royal descent on both sides. If your brother is seeking revenge in order to vindicate the spirit of Siyavush, you should join him and prepare yourself for war. Put on your Rumi armor and ride out to battle, your heart filled with rage, your head ringing with war cries. Go in the van of your brother's army; as he is the new king, so will you be the new champion seeking revenge. It is fitting for even leopards and sea monsters to grieve at the death of Siyavush, and for the birds of the air and the fish of the sea to curse Afrasiyab; no herois prince like Siyavush will ever appear again in the world, neither as regards glory or civility or dignity or justice. You are this great man's son, you are every inch a king and you should ready yourself to exact revenge, to show whose blood runs in your veins. Observe this approaching army and find out who is leading it. Call your warriors about you and prepare gifts - wine, fine robes, noble horses, tables of food, swords, helmets, barding, armor, Indian daggers. In all the world, your brother is a sufficient treasure to you; may you lead his army on the war of revenge, you as the new champion, he as the new king."

Forud said to his mother: "Which Persian should I speak to? On the day of battle, which of them can I

depend upon? I know none of them by name, and none of them has sent any messages to me."

Jarireh replied, "My prince, when you see their army's dust in the distance, search the ranks of Bahram and Zangeh, the son of Shavran. Have them show you proof of who they are, for you and I need have no secrets from them. Do not be separated from these two; they were your father's lieutenants when he was a

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prince. May you and your good name live forever; may the soul of Siyavush abide in glory. Now, keep what I tell you in mind; go out with Tochvar and with no other soldiers. When you ask who is who in their army, Tochvar will be able to tell you."

Forud said, "Mother, you are like a lion, and it is your councils that give our tribe its splendor."

*A lookout ran in from the walls and cried,
"The Persian army fills our mountain side,
The plain and passes are all thronged with men,
You would say we will never see the sun again;
The way up to our castle is like a sea
Of banners, elephants, and cavalry."*

Tochvar and Forud galloped out of the castle gates, but the young man's luck was dimmed by dust, and when the heavens turn aside, neither rage nor kindness suffice.

Forud said to Tochvar, "Do not keep from me anything I ask you; when we see the Persian chieftains with their banners and maces of office, and golden boots, tell me the names of everyone you know." They made their way to a high point from which they could look down on the groups of Persians below. There were so many golden helmets and golden shields, golden maces and golden belts, that a man would say there was no gold left in any mine on earth and that a cloud had passed overhead and rained down jewels. There were cavalry and infantry, swordsmen and lance bearers, and their drums thundered with such a noise that the vultures of the air cowered away in fear; thirty thousand warriors, armed and ready for combat, crowded the mountain side. Forud and Tochvar stared in astonishment at the mass of men and their gear.

Forud said, "Tochvar, tell me the chieftains' banners, and do not hide anything from me." Tochvar replied, "The banner with the device of an elephant belongs to Tus, and those horsemen with glittering swords who crowd around it are his bodyguard. The

banner behind him, with the device of the shining sun, belongs to your father's brother, Fariborz. Behind him, the huge banner that is surrounded by such a mass of warriors, the one with a shining moon, belongs to young Gostaham, Gazdaham's son, whose valor makes elephants tremble in terror. The one beyond that, with the device of the wild ass, stands before the brave warrior

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Zangeh, the son of Shavran. The banner studded with stars, with a red ground and a black silk fringe, belongs to Bizhan who in battle stains the sky with blood. The banner with the dark, lion-terrifying tiger belongs to Shidush, a huge mountain of a man. The one behind that, with a buffalo, with all the lance bearers crowded around it, belongs to Farhad, who seems blessed by heaven in all he does. The banner with the wild boar on its belongs to Gorazeh, and the one bearing the device of a wolf belongs to the chieftain Giv."

When the Iranians caught sight of Forud and Tochvar high on the mountain, Tus was furious and ordered the elephants with their war drums to halt. He said, "This will alarm our soldiers; a nimble horseman must ride up to the summit and see who those two warriors are, and what they are doing up there. If they are our men they will be whipped with two hundred lashes, and if they are Turks they are to be caught and brought here. If they are killed in the encounter then their bodies are to be dragged in the dust; we should do this without fear of any consequences. If they are spies sent in secret to count our number, let them be hacked in two where they are, and their bodies tossed from the mountain side."

Bahram, of the tribe of Gudarz, volunteered, saying, "I will ride up to the summit and do as you command." He urged his horse out of the army's ranks; determinedly, he made his way up the mountain. Forud turned to Tochvar and said, "Who is this approaching us with such contempt? He is in such a hurry he seems quite unconcerned by us; he is riding a fine dun horse and has a lariat looped at his saddle." His councilor answered, "He is not someone to be handled roughly; I do not know who he is, but I think he is one of Gudarz's men. When Kai Khusrau returned to Iran from Turan, one of the king of Turan's helmets went missing; I think he is wearing it, and his armor seems royal, too. He is surely one of Gudarz's clan, but let us ask him."

*Bahram approached the top, and roared aloud
As if he were a threatening thundercloud,
"Who are you on the mountain's summit there?
Our trumpets blare, our drums' din fills the air,
And cannot you see our army's countless horde
Led by great Tus, our leader and out lord?"*

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Forud replied, "You have been offered no scorn, do not speak scornfully to us. Talk civilly, as a knight should, and keep your cold, contemptuous words unsaid. You are not a lion and I am not a wild ass; this is no way to behave with me. You are no greater than I am, neither as a warrior nor as a man, nor in brute strength. You have a head, feet, a heart, a brain, sense, a loud voice, and eyes and ears; look, I have all those, too, so do not threaten me. I am going to question you, and if you answer me as befits a knight, I shall be pleased."

Bahram replied, "Say on, then, you in the sky up there while I am down here on the ground!"

Forud said, "Who is leading this army off to war?"

Bahram answered, "Tus leads us, with the Kaviani banner and his war drums; he is accompanied by chieftains like Gudarz, Giv, Shidush, Farhad, Gorgin, Gostaham, Zangeh, and Gorazeh."

Forud said, "Why have you not mentioned Bahram? The list is incomplete without him. Of all the clan of Gudarz, he is the one that I want to hear about, but you say nothing about him."

Bahram replied, "Well, my lion-warrior, and what have you to do with Bahram?"

Forud said, "This is what I heard from my mother. She said, "When the army approaches you, welcome them and ask for Bahram, and also for another warrior called Zangeh, the son of Shavran; these two were brought up with your father, they shared the same wet nurse, and you should try not to miss them."

Bahram replied, "May fortune favor you; are you the fruit of that royal tree? Young prince, are you Forud? If so, long may your shining soul flourish!"

He said, "Yes, I am Forud, a sapling from that toppled cypress."

Bahram said, "Show me your body, uncover the mark of Siyavush." Forud showed him his upper arm, on which there was a dark mole, like a dash of amber on a rose petal, such that no painter could reproduce it, even

with a pair of Chinese compasses. Bahram knew then that the person before him was descended from Kai Qobad and of the seed of Siyavush. He dismounted and made his obeisance to Forud and then ran up the mountain toward him. Forud too dismounted and sat on a rock and said to Bahram, "Great leader, lion in battle, seeing you alive and well, I could not be happier if my eyes
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beheld my father here; I came to this summit to find out which chieftains were with the Persian army and who was leading it. I shall hold as splendid a feast as my means allow, in order to delight your commander. I shall distribute horses, swords, maces, and all manner of other goods, and then I shall set out with you to Turan, intent on vengeance. I am the right man to prosecute this war; in the saddle I am like a mounted fire, burning all before me. Tell your commander to come up the mountain so that he and I can spend a week together laying plans, and on the eighth day, when the war drums ring out and Tus is seated in the saddle, I shall in bitterness of heart, and with a fury that no man has ever equaled, prepare myself to avenge my father's death."

Bahram replied, "My young, noble, chivalrous prince, I shall tell Tus all that you have told me, and I shall kiss his hand asking him to respect your wishes; but our leader is not a wise man and he has little time for advice. He has skill and wealth and is of the blood royal, but he has scant respect for the king. He is always quarreling with Giv, Gudarz, and the king about Fariborz and the succession, and he constantly says, "I am of the seed of Nozar, I am worthy to be king of the world." He is likely to ignore my words, or to be infuriated by them and attack me. He is a willful, unpredictable man. Apart from myself, do not let anyone else who comes in search of you catch sight of your helmet; if someone else comes, do not greet him. And then Tus dislikes me in his heart, because he wishes that he and Fariborz were rulers. He said to me, "See who is on that mountain, do not ask him why he is there but let your mace and dagger speak for you. Why should anyone be on that mountain today?" If he takes your message calmly, I will bring you the good news and lead you to the army; if anyone else comes, do not trust him. Not more than one warrior should ride up to you at a time, this is our leader's way; if anyone approaches consider him well, and if need be retreat to your castle and bar the doors."

From his belt Forud drew a mace; its handle was of gold and encrusted with turquoise. He said to Bharam: "Take this as a remembrance from me and keep it whatever happens; if Tus welcomes me, all will be well and there will be many other presents - horses, saddles, crowns and royal jewels."

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When Bahram returned to Tus he said, "May wisdom fill your faultless soul: the man we saw was Forud, the son of King Siyavush, who was slain despite his innocence. He showed me the birth sign of those descended from Kai Kavus and Kai Qobad."

*But evil Tus replied, "These men you see,
These drums and trumpets, all belong to me;
My orders when I sent you there were clear:
"Do not say a word to him, but bring him here."
So he is a prince, is he? And who am I,
According to this castle in the sky?
What have I seen from your Gudarz's clan?
Nothing but brazen traitors, to a man.
A lion does not guard that mountain side;
One useless horseman made you run and hide."*

Tus turned to his troops: "Great fighters, destroyers of our enemies, I want an ambitious warrior who will face this Turk in combat, who will sever his head with a dagger and bring it here to me." Rizviz, Tus' son-in-law, responded to the call; this battle would be his last.

Bahram said to him, "Champion, fear the Lord of the sun and moon and do not rush into something that will dishonor you. If a knight rides out against that prince, he will not escape with his life." Tus was angered by Bahram's words and he ordered a few warriors to ride up toward the summit of the mountain. But as they were leaving Bahram called out to them, "Do not think this will be an easy task. It is Kai Khusrau himself who is on that mountain, and a hair of his is worth more than any hero. If anyone here never saw Siyavush's face, then let him ride up the mountain side to see it now." When they heard this the warriors returned to camp.

But Tus' son-in-law, whom the heavens watched with scorn, took the way from Jaram toward Mount Seped, his heart filled with a furious longing for combat.

When Forud caught sight of him, he readied his bow, and said to Tochvar, "Tus has treated my

overtures of peace with contempt. The knight riding up toward us is not Bahram, and anxiety fills my heart. Watch him, and tell me whether you recognize him; and why is he clothed from head to foot in iron armor?" Tochvar replied, "This is Rivniz, the one brother among forty sisters, all as lovely as the spring. He is

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deceitful, untrustworthy, a falterer; but he is also young and brave an Tus' son-in-law."

Forud said, "This is no time to be praising him, when he is about to fight me. As soon as he gets closer I will send him back to his sisters' skirts. If he feels the wind of my arrows and lives, no longer count me as a man. Now, should I shoot at his horse or at him; you are experiences at this, what do you advise?" Tochvar said, "Shoot at the rider, and let Tus grieve for him. Tus knows that in the goodness of your heart you offered him peace, but he is foolishly decided to make war on you, and in so doing he shames your brother."

When Rivniz was a bowshot away, Forud drew back his Indian bow and loosed an arrow of poplar wood, which pierced the knight's helmet, pinning it to his skull. He fell and his horse turned, dragging Rivniz's head in the dust. Tus was watching from the heights in Mayam, and when he saw this the mountain side blurred and darkened before his eyes. But as the wise say, an evil nature is repaid in kind, not once but many times.

Then Tus said to Zarasp, "Make your heart bright as fire, put on knight's armor, exert yourself and avenge our fallen champion; if you do not, I see no one who will." Zarasp prepared for combat and placed his helmet on his head; his heart was filled with a longing for revenge, and his head whirled with impatience.

The lion warrior said to Tochvar, "Another rider is coming. Look and see if you recognize him; is he a prince, or one of the common soldiers?" Tochvar replied, "The time has come to fight in earnest; this is Tus' son, Zarasp, who will not turn his horse aside from a raging elephant. He is married to one of Rivniz's sisters and has come to avenge his brother-in-law. As soon as he can make out your helmet, loose an arrow against him, so that this crazy commander Tus will realize we are not to be despised."

Forud urged his horse forward and as he did so loosed an arrow toward Zarasp: it pierced the armor at

his waist and entered his body. Blood flowed from the wound, and his soul departed; he fell, and his horse turned and galloped back to camp. A great cry went up from the Persian army, and Tus wept with rage and grief; in haste he pulled on his armor, lamented for the two dead warriors and shaking like a leaf. Like a mountain he sat in the saddle, as if he were astride some great elephant, then grasped the reins and set off

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toward Farud, his heart filled with a longing for revenge, his head whirling with grief and pain.

Tochvar cried out to Forud, "A moving mountain approaches our mountain: it is Tus, their commander, who has come to fight against you in combat. You should not pit yourself against an experienced monster like this; get into the castle and bar the gates and then we will see what Fate decrees. Now you have killed his son and son-in-law you cannot expect a friendly welcome from him."

Forud was young and flared up against Tochvar, saying, "When battles are to be fought - whether it is against Tus or a raging elephant or a ravaging lion or a sea monster or a tiger - a man gives himself to combat heart and soul; he does not start smothering the fire with mud."

Tochvar, in his experience, said, "Princes do not despise good advice. Even if you were made of iron and could rip a granite mountain up by its roots, you are still one solitary knight. If thirty thousand Persian warriors come up this mountain to fight against you, not only your castle but the very stones of this mountain will be razed and not a jot will survive. And the expedition to avenge your father's death will suffer a setback that will never be reversed." But he did not say what should have been said long before and, following the advice of this worthless councilor, Forud gained only war and death.

The prince tugged at the reins, turning his horse toward the castle, and notched another arrow to his bow. Within Forud's castle walls were eighty female attendants; they were watching from the battlements, and when they saw the young hero turn back, their spirits sank.

Tochvar addressed Forud: "If you are determined to oppose Tus it is better you do not destroy him; kill his horse beneath him, because a Persian prince will not fight on foot even if hard-pressed. And then one arrow might not finish him; his henchmen are

certain to follow him up the mountain. You never faced his fury, and you cannot deal with both him and them." Forud heard him and drew back his bow; the arrow struck Tus' horse, which lowered its head and fell lifeless to the ground. Enraged, Tus made his way on foot back down the mountain, his shield slung around his neck, his body caked in grime. Forud yelled taunts after him, "What happened to the great champion then, who runs away on

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foot from a single horseman? What kind of a show does that make in front of his army?" The women on the battlements laughed, and Jaram re-echoed with their scornful cry,

*"The old man ran from the young hero's bow,
Straight down the mountain, quick as he could go."*

When Tus reached the base of the hillside, warriors clustered about him saying, "You have come back safe and sound and this is no time for tears." But Giv turned aside, ashamed to see his leader return on foot. He said, "This young man has gone too far; if he is a prince, and wears the earrings of his office, how can he treat our great army so contemptuously? We are not here to agree to whatever he wants to propose. Even if Tus was hasty and overbearing, this Forud is making a mockery of our mission. We came here to sacrifice our lives in a war of vengeance for Siyavush; we should not forget this. Forud has destroyed Zarasp, a great knight descended from Nozar, and he left Rivniz's body weltering in its own blood. What further humiliations are we waiting for? Even if he were Jamshid's son and had Kai Qobad's brain, he is still embroiled on the course of an ignorant fool."

As he spoke he fastened on his armor; he mounted his horse, which was like a mighty dragon, and set off toward Jaram. When Forud saw him, a cold sigh escaped his lips and he said, "This army has no sense of its luck, good or bad; one after another they come, each braver than the last, shining like the sun in Gemini. But this is not a wise course, and a head without wisdom is like a body without a soul. If they are not victorious, I fear for their war of vengeance, unless Kai Khusrau comes to Turan, and then he and I shall stand shoulder to shoulder in this war for our father and crush our enemies like dirt in a fist. Now, tell me, who is this haughty warrior, over whose weapons they will have us to weep."

Tochvar looked down the mountain side and, unaware of the effect of his words, was like one who sows thorns in a meadow. He said, "This man is a terrible dragon whose breath can bring birds down from the sky. He has destroyed three armies from Turan, orphaned innumerable children, crossed mountains, rivers, and deserts, deprived countless fathers of their sons, and placed his foot on the neck of slain lions. It as he

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who took your brother to Iran, getting him across the Oxus when no boat could be found. His name is Giv, and he is a mammoth of a man, a raging flood in battle. No arrow will pass through his breastplate: he wears Siyavush's armor when he fights and fears neither lances nor poplar wood arrows. Shoot your arrow at his horse and see if you can wound it. Then he will have to dismount and go on foot back to camp as Tus did, his shield slung about his neck."

Forud drew back his bow and the arrow flew, piercing the horse's chest. Giv toppled from his collapsing mount and began to make his way back down the mountain. A laugh of derision went up from the battlements, and Giv seethed with chagrin beneath their taunts. The Persian warriors went to him saying, "Thanks be to God it was your horse that was wounded, and not you."

But his son Bizhan, who was a headstrong youth, railed against him: "My father is a conqueror of lions, he has outfaced raging elephants, so why did a single horseman make you turn tail like this? You always used to be in the thick of the fighting, and now because your horse is wounded you run off like a drunkard!" Giv said, "When my horse was wounded I had no choice but to quit the field." And then angrily reproached Bizhan for his presumptuous remarks. Bizhan turned his back on him; Giv exploded in rage and struck at him with his horsewhip, shouting as he did so, "Have you not been told you should think before picking a quarrel? You have neither sense nor brains nor wisdom, my curses on whoever brought you up!"

Bizhan's heart was filled with bitter fury, and he swore a solemn oath before God that he would not take saddle from horse until either he had avenged Zarasp or died in the attempt. He went to Gostaham, his heart filled with grief, his mind with rage, and said, "Lend me a horse that can ride up the mountain; I am going to put my armor on and show just who is a man and who is not. A Turk has installed himself on

that summit in full view of the army. If we leave him there will he a lot of hard riding to do, and I have only two horses that can carry a man in full armor; if one of them is killed here, I will never find his equal either for speed, strength, or endurance."

Gostaham replied, "This is not sensible; you should not go rushing into disaster. Think of Zarasp, Rivniz, our matchless leader Tus, your fathere who

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brings down lions - all of them seen off by this Turk; no one can defeat that granite mountain and enter the castle unless he has a vulture's or a Homa's wings."

Bizhan said, "Do not break my heart; I will tear myself limb from limb if I do not do this. I have sworn by the moon, by God Who holds the world, and by our sovereign's crown that I will not come down from that mountain until I have avenged Zarasp or am slain like him."

Gostaham replied, "This is not the road you should be taking; wisdom knows nothing of such fury."

Bizhan burst out, "I would not have one hair of your beard harmed. I have a hundred thousand horses, their tails braided with royal jewels; choose one and have him saddled, and if he is killed, so be it."

He owned a splendid horse swift as a wolfm lean-bellied, tall and eager for combat. Bizhan, filled with youth's ambition, had him armored with barding. But when he thought of Forud's prowess, Giv's heart was thrown into anxiety. He called Goistaham to him, and they talked about youth's impetuous fire; he sent back with him Siyavush's armor and royal helmet. Gostaham gave them to Bizhan who put them on as quickly as he could and set off in high spirits, accoutered as a mighty warrior, up mount Seped.

The young prince turned to Tochvar: "Another of their men is coming. Look there, and tell me the name of this young chieftain for whom they will soon have to weep and wail."

Tochvar replied, "Iran has no warrior like him; he is Giv's only son, and his father loves him more than his wealth and his own soul. He is a brave champion, victorious as a lion. Again, shoot at the horse; you must not break the Persian king's heart by killing this lad. And in any case, he too is wearing the armor that Giv wore, and it is proof against arrows and lances. He is likely to fight on foot and you will not be his equal then; look at that sword he bears, glittering like diamonds."

Forud loosed an arrow at Bizhan's horse, which fell as if lifeless; Bizhan disentangled himself from his failing mount and began to climb up to the summit, his drawn sword in his hand.

*He shouted to Forud, "Courageous knight,
Wait where you are and see how lions fight;
Know that this unhorsed warrior will not turn back
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*But sword in hand I will climb your mountain track;
Wait for me, face me man to man, and then
See if your ever want to fight again!"*

When he saw that Bizhan was not withdrawing, Forud shot an arrow at him, but Bizhan lifted his shield and harmlessly deflected it. He reached the summit and readied his sword; Forud retreated, and the battlements behind him rang with shouts. Bizhan ran after him, and with his sword hacked at the barding of Forud's horse; he pierced it, and the horse fell in the dust. Forud scuttled into the gatehouse of his castle and the sentinels immediately barred the gates behind him. Those on the battlements hurled rocks down at Bizhan, knowing that no time should be lost. Bizhan yelled back, "You were mounted and ran away from a man on foot. Are you not ashamed of yourself? Where are your courage and fame now, Forud.?"

When Bizhan got back to Tus he boasted, "My lord, that knight could humiliate a whole plain full of warriors; you should not be surprised if the hail of his arrows turned a granite mountain to water, there is no greater fighter anywhere." Tus' response was to swear an oath of vengeance, saying, I will raze his castle and see the dust of its ruins obscure the sun; I will fight a battle of revenge for Zarasp and destroy that malignant Turk; I will make the stones of his castle glisten like coral with his blood."

When the shining sun disappeared and dark night spread its army across the sky, a thousand horsemen entered the castle of Kalat as reinforcements. The gates were fastened behind them, and the night was filled with the sound of armaments and the bells of their horses' gear.

Jarireh, Forud's mother, slept at her son's feet, and the darkness was filled with pain and sorrow for her. She dreamed of a great fire that raged in their castle, and then spread until the whole mountain was a mass of flame which consumed the castle and all the women in it. She started up from sleep, her soul in

anguish, and went on the battlements to gaze out on the world. She saw all the mountain filled with the glitter of spears and armor, and ran weeping to Forud, saying, "Wake up, my son, the stars have turned against us; all the mountainside is thronged with our enemies, and their spears and armor threaten our gates!"

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*The young prince said, "Dear mother, do not cry.
If fate has willed that I am soon to die
You weeping will not make my death delay;
Each man must leave on his allotted day.
My father too was young when he was killed,
Now I must bow to what the heavens have willed.
As he was put to death by Gorui
So this Bizhan intends to murder me.
But I will fight; if I am to die, I will slaughter
All who attack, and I will not beg for quarter."*

He distributed helmets and armor to his men; then he placed a helmet on his own head, tightened the belt about his Rumi armor, and grasped his royal bow.

When the shining sun rose into the sky's vault, the war cries of chieftains rang out on all sides, mingling with the clatter of heavy maces and the din of drums, bugles, fifes, and Indian chimes. Forud led the Turkish troops out from the castle, and the top of the mountain was so clogged with dust, arrows, and maces that it seemed like a sea of pitch. The ground had disappeared, there was hardly room to fight, and the rocks and precipitous mountain slopes alarmed the horses.

Battle was joined and, as the sun journeyed across the sky, Forud's army steadily lost ground. On the heights and in the gullies the Turks were killed; Fortune was against the young man, although he himself still fought like a lion and the Persians watched him in wonder. But when he saw that all his companions had been killed, and that he could not fight on alone, he tugged at the reins, turned, and fled up the mountain to his castle. Roham and Bizhan lay in ambush for him, and bore down on him. As soon as he saw Bizhan's helmet Forud readied his mace, but as he did so Roham rode out of the ambush behind him, yelling his war cry, an Indian sword in his grasp. He struck a mighty blow that caught Forud on the shoulder, severing his arm, and rendering him unfit for battle. Forud groaned with the pain and urged his horse forward; he reached

the castle gates, which were slammed shut and bolted behind him.

Jarireh ran to him and took him in her arms, and she and their attendants bore him to an ivory couch. His mother and the women cut off their musky tresses, and Forud struggles for life while wailing surrounded his couch and anguish filled the castle. Barely opening his lips, Forud said, "It is right for you to mourn;

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the Persians will come now intent on plunder, they will enslave you and raze my castle and its ramparts to the ground. Those of you who pity me, whose faces burn for my sorrow, go to the battlements now and cast yourselves down from them, so that not one of you remains for Bizhan to boast of. He it is who has taken my life from me, who has destroyed me in the days of my youth." After he said this, his cheeks turned sallow, and in pain and grief his soul departed.

The womenfolk fled to the battlements and all of them threw themselves down on the rocks beneath. Jarireh set fire to the castle and fed it with their treasures. Then she went to the stable and with a sword slashed the remaining horses' bellies and lacerated their legs, and the horses' blood splattered her face. Lastly she made her way back to where Forud lay. She drew a dagger from the folds of his clothes and ripped open his belly with it; she placed her face against her son's and died.

The Persians had torn up the gateposts and poured into the castle, intent on plunder. But when Bairam came upon Forud and Jarireh his heart broke with grief. Weeping, he turned to the Persian troops and said, "This man has died even more wretchedly and terribly than did his father. Siyavush was not killed by a mere squire, and his mother did not die beside him; neither was his castle burned like a reedbed nor his chattels and treasures destroyed. Fear God, my friends, and the turning of the heavens, whose arm is long in apprehending evil-doers and who is merciless to sinners. Have you no shame before Kai Khusrau, who spoke so gently and at such length to Tus, who sent you here to avenge the death of Siyavush and who gave you such wise council? When he learns of his brother's spilled blood, you will lose all favor with him. And what good can be expected from men like Roham and that hot-head Bizhan?"

Meanwhile Tus and his entourage of Persian chieftains, including Gudarz and Giv, made their way

up the mountainside to Kalat, their war drums sounding as they came. Entering the room where Forud and his mother lay dead, they saw Bahram seated beside the bodies, weeping and lamenting, and Zangeh to one side, a group of warriors clustered about him. Forud lay on the ivory couch like a toppled teak tree, his face fair as the full moon, and it was as though Siyavush himself lay there, asleep in his armor. Gudarz and Giv and the

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other warriors wept to see him, and Tus too wept bloody tears, both for his son and for Forud. Gudarz, Giv, and the others there turned on him and said, "A commander should not act hastily, and rage ruins all he does. Through rage and haste you have thrown this young prince, with all his splendor and nobility, to the winds; and the same passions destroyed both Rivniz and Zarasp, who counted Nozar among their ancestors. Without wisdom, ability and rage together are like a sword eaten away by rust."

Tus ordered that a royal tomb be built on the mountain top. Within it, on a golden couch, they placed the prince's body dressed in cloth of gold and with a golden belt. His head was embalmed with camphor and his body with rosewater and musk. The tomb was sealed, and the army moved on; so passed this lionhearted prince.

After Forud's death, Tus led the Persian army deep into Turan, and Afrasiyab's counselor, Piran, was put in charge of Turan's defenses. Success had made the Persians careless, and Piran was able to inflict a severe defeat on them by ambushing them at night.

Kai Khusrau eventually heard of Tus' insubordination in attacking Forud, and of his army's defeat at the hands of Piran. He angrily recalled Tus and appointed Fariborz as commander in his place. But the Persians suffered defeat again, and the remnants of their broken army fled back toward Iran. Turan allied itself with other Asian peoples and nations, including China, in the hope of finally defeating Iran. Rustam began to intervene in the conflict and the tide of battle turned in Iran's favor: Afrasiyab and his allies were routed, although Afrasiyab managed to escape again, and the border areas between Iran and Turan were once more under Persian control. At this point, Rustam, who could now move about Turan more or less at will, encountered a notorious demon, the Akwan Div.

Listen to this tale, told by an old Persian. Here is what he said:

One day Kai Khusrau rose at dawn and went to a flower garden to hold court. He had spent the first hour of the day there, surrounded by his chieftains - Gudarz, Rustam, Gostaham, Barzin, Garshasp (who was descended from Jamshid), Giv, Roham, Gorgin, and Kharrad - when a herder of horses came in from the plains with a request for help.

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"A wild ass has appeared in my herd," he said. "He is like a demon - a *div* - who has slipped his bonds, or you could say that he is like a savage male lion. He is constantly breaking the necks of my horses. He is colored just like the sun, as if he had been dipped in liquid gold, except for a musk-black stripe that runs from his mane to his tail. He is as tall as a fine bay stallion, with big round haunches and sturdy legs."

Kai Khusrau knew very well that this was no wild ass, since a wild ass is never stronger than a horse. He turned to Rustam and said, "I want you to deal with this problem; go and fight with this animal, but be careful, for it may be Ahriman who is always looking for ways to harm us." Rustam replied:

*"Your Fortune favors any warrior who
Fearlessly serves your royal throne and you:
No dragon, div, nor lion can evade
My fury and my sword's avenging blade."*

He mounted his great horse Rakhsh and, lariat in hand, left the king and his courtiers to their pastoral pleasures. When he arrived at the plain where the herdsman kept his horses, the wild ass was nowhere to be seen. For three days he searched among the horses, and then on the fourth day he caught sight of him galloping across the plain like the north wind. He was an animal that shone like gold, but beneath his hide all was ugliness and sin. Rustam urged his horse forward, but as he closed on the wild ass he changed his mind. He said to himself, "I should not kill this beast with my dagger; I ought to noose it with my lariat and take it still alive to the king." Rustam whirled his lariat, intending to snare it by the neck, but as soon as the ass saw the lariat, it suddenly disappeared from before the hero's eyes. Rustam

realized that he was not dealing with a wild ass, and that it would be cunning he would have to call on, not strength. He said, "This can only be the Akvan Div, and somehow he must be made to feel the wind of my sword's descent. I have heard from a knowledgeable man that this is the area he haunts, but it is strange that he should take on the shape of a wild ass. I must find some trick by which my sword can stain that golden hide with blood."

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Then once again the beast appeared on the plain, and Rustam urged his horse forward. He notched an arrow to his bow, and as he made like the wind, the arrow flew ahead like fire. But at the moment he drew back his royal bow, the ass once again disappeared. For three days and nights Rustam made about the plain, until he began to feel the need for water and bread, and he was so exhausted that his head sank down and knocked against the pommel of his saddle. Looking around, he caught sight of a stream as inviting as rosewater; he dismounted and watered Rakhsh, and as he did so he felt his eyes closing in sleep. He loosened the girth and removed the poplar wood saddle from Raksh's back and set it down as a pillow beside the stream. He spread out his saddle cloth and lay down to sleep on it, while Raksh cropped the grass nearby.

When the Akvan Div saw Rustam asleep in the distance, he transformed himself into a wind rushing over the plain. As soon as he reached the sleeping hero he dug out the soil all around him, and then lifted him up toward the heavens on a great crag of excavated earth. Rustam awoke and was alarmed; his wise head whirled in confusion, and as he wriggled this way and that the Akvan Div called out to him:

*"Hey, Rustam, mammoth hero, make a wish!
Am I to throw you to the ocean fish,
Or hurl you on some arid mountainside?
Well, which is it to be, then? You decide."*

Rustam realized that in this div's hands all wished would be turned upside down. He thought, "If he throws me down on a mountain, my body and bones will be smashed. It will be much better if he throws me in the sea, intending the fishes' bellies to be my winding sheet."

Rustam replied, "The Chinese sages teach,

*'Whoever dies in water will not reach
The heavens, nor see Soroush, his fate will be
To haunt this lower earth eternally.'
Throw me upon some mountain top, and there
I will terrify a lion in its lair.'*

When the Akvan Div heard Rustam's request, he roared and bore him toward the sea.

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*"I am going to hurl you somewhere," he replied,
"Beyond both worlds, where you cannot run nor hide."*

Then he flung him deep into the ocean's depths; but as he descended through the air toward the water, Rustam drew his sword and with this he kept off the sharks and sea monsters that made for him. With his left arm and leg he swam, and with the right he warded off attacks. He struck out immediately, as befits a man used to fighting and hardships, and after a short time, by going steadily in one direction, he caught sight of dry land.

Once he had reached the shore and given thanks to God who had delivered him from evil, he rested and took off his wet tiger skin, spreading it beside a stream until it was dry. He threw away his soaked bow and armor and set off, leaving the sea behind him. He found the stream by which he had slept and where he had been confronted by the evil-natured div.

But his splendid horse Rakhsh was nowhere to be seen in the pastures there, and Rustam railed against fate. Abgrily he picked up the saddle and bridle and set off through the night in search of him. As dawn broke he came upon a wide meadow filled with clumps of trees and flowing streams. There were partridges everywhere, and he could hear the coing of turtle-doves; then he found Afrasiyab's herdsman, asleep among the trees. Rakhsh was there, charging and neighing among the herd's mares, and Rustam whirled his lariat and snared him by the head.

He rubbed Rakhsh down, saddled him, slipped the bridle over his head, and mounted. Then calling down God's blessing on his sword he set about rounding up the horses. Their thundering hooves woke the bewildered herdsman, who called to his companions for help; grasping lariats and bows, they came galloping to see who the thief was who had dared come to their meadows and challenge so many of them. When Rustam saw them he drew his sword, roared like a lion, "I am

Rustam, son of Zal," and fell upon them. When he had slaughtered two-thirds of them, the herdsman turned and fled; Rustam followed in hot pursuit, an arrow notched to his bow.

It happened that at this time Afrasiyab was coming to this very meadow, in a hurry to inspect his horses. He arrived with his entourage and with wine and

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entertainers, intending to relax for a while in the place where the herdsman watered the herd every year.

But as he drew near the spot there was no sign of either the herdsman nor of his horses. Then he heard a confused noise coming from the plain, and in the distance he saw the horses galloping and jostling one another, and Rakhsh was visible through the dust sent up by their hooves. Soon the herdsman appeared and told him the whole astonishing story of how he had seen Rustam not only drive off the whole herd single-handed, but also kill many of the herdsman's companions besides.

It became a matter of urgent discussion among the Turks that Rustam had appeared there alone. They said, "This has gone beyond a joke; we must arm ourselves and respond. Or have we become so weak and contemptible that one man can come and kill whoever he wishes? We cannot allow a solitary horseman to turn up and drive off our whole herd of horses."

Afrasiyab set off with four elephants and a detachment of soldiers in pursuit of Rustam. When they were close enough, Rustam unslung his bow from his shoulder and came riding toward them; he rained arrows down on them as thickly as the clouds rain down dew and then set about them with his steel sword. Having killed sixty of them, he exchanged the swords for his mace, and dispatched forty more. Afrasiyab turned tail and fled. Rustam captured the four white elephants, and the Turanian soldiers despaired of life as he pursued them for two parasangs, raining down blows of his mace against their helmets and armor like a spring hail storm. Then he turned back and added the elephants to his plunder.

He returned to the stream in triumph, and once again met with the Akvan Div, who said,

*"Do not you get tired of fighting constantly?
You fought the savage monsters of the sea,
Got back to land and, once you had reached our plain,*

It seems you could not wait to fight again!"

When Rustam heard him he roared like a warrior lion; he unhitched the lariat from his saddle and flung it toward the div, who was caught about the waist. Rustam twisted in the saddle and raised his mace, then brought it down with a blow like a blacksmith at his forge. The blow landed on the div's head and his skull

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and brains were smashed by its force. Rustam dismounted and with his glittering dagger severed the div's head. Then he gave thanks to God who had given him victory on this day of vengeance.

You should realize that the div represents evil people, those who are ungrateful to God. When a man leaves the ways of humanity consider him as a div, not as a person. If you do not appreciate this tale, it may be that you have not seen its real meaning.

Once Rustam had cut off the div's head, he remounted Rakhsh and, driving the herd of horses before him, together with whatever else he had looted from the Turks, he set off toward Kai Khusrau's court. News reached the king that Rustam was returning in glory; he had set off to nose a wild ass, and now he had defeated a div and captured elephants besides. The king and his court went out to meet him, the courtiers wearing their crowns of office; the procession included elephants, trumpets, and the imperial banner. When Rustam saw the banner and realized that the king was coming to greet him, he dismounted and kissed the ground; the army shouted its approval and the drums and trumpets sounded. The nobles dismounted and only Kai Khusrau remained in the saddle; he ordered Rustam to remount Rakhsh and the procession made its way cheerfully back to Kai Khusrau's camp.

Rustam distributed the horses to the Iranian army, keeping none back for himself, as he considered only Rakhsh suitable to be his own mount. The elephants he gave to Kai Khusrau, as worthy of a lionlike king. The court spent a week rejoicing with wine and music and entertainers, and when Rustam was in his cups he told the king about the Akvan Div, saying, "I never saw such a majestic wild ass, of such a splendid color; but when my sword cut its hide, it was an enemy I saw, not a friend. It had a head like an elephant's, long hair, and a mouth full of boar's tusks, its two eyes were white and its lips black; its body did not bear looking at. No animal is like him,

and he had turned that whole plain into a sea of blood; when I cut off his head with my dagger, blood spurted into the air like rain."

Kai Khusrau was astonished; he set down his wine cup and thanked God for creating such a hero, the equal of whom the world had never seen.

Two weeks passed with feasting, pleasure, and telling stories, and when the third began Rustam decided to return home in triumph. He said, "I long to

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see Zal, my father, and I cannot hide this wish any longer. I shall make a quick journey home and return to court, and then we can plan our campaign. Capturing a few horses is too trivial to count as vengeance for the blood of Siyavush."

Kai Khusrau opened the doors of his treasury. He had a goblet filled with pearls brought, and five royal robes worked with gold, as well as Rumi slaves with golden belts, girls with golden torques [recall the use of torques among the Celts] around their necks, carpets and an ivory throne, brocade and coins and a crown studded with turquoise. All these he sent to Rustam, saying, "Take them as a present for your journey. But stay today; tomorrow we can think about your leaving." Rustam stayed that day, drinking with the king, but when night came he was determined to leave. The king accompanied him two parasangs of the way, and then the two embraced and bade farewell to one another. Kai Khusrau took the way back to his court, and the world was filled with his justice and goodness, while Rustam continued on the journey to Zabol.

*A night as black as coal bedaubed with pitch,
A night of ebony, a night on which
Mars, Mercury, and Saturn would not rise.
Even the moon seemed fearful of the skies:
Her face was three-fourths dimmed, and all the night
Looked gray and dusty in her pallid light.
On plain and mountainside dark henchmen laid
Night's raven carpet, shade on blacker shade;
The heavens seemed rusted iron, as if each star
Were blotted out by tenebrous, thisck tar;
Dark Ahriman appeared on every side
Like a huge snake whose jaws gape open wide.
The garden and the stream by which I lay
Became a sea of pitch; it seemed that day
Would never come, the skies no longer turned,
The weakened sun no longer moved nor burnes.*

*Fear gripped the world and utter silence fell,
Stilling the clamor of the watchman's bell,
Silencing all the myriad cries and calls
Of everything that flies or walks or crawl.
I started up, bewildered, terrified;
My fear awoke the woman at my side.
I called for her to bring me torches, light;
She fetched bright candles to dispel the night
And laid a little feast on which to dine,
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*Red pomegranates, citrons, quinces, wine,
Together with a polished goblet fit
For kings or emperors to drink from it.
"But why do you need candles now?" she said.
"Has sleep refused to visit your soft bed?
Drink up your wine and - as you do so - I
Will tell a story from the days gone by,
A story full of love and trickery,
Whose hero lived for war and chivalry."
"Sweet moon", I said, "my cypress, my delight,
Tell me this tale to wile away the night."
"First listen well," she said, "and when you have
heard
The story through, record it word for word."*

When Kai Khusrau decided on revenge for his father [Siyavush]'s death, he put the world's affairs on a new footing; the crown of Turan began to lose its lustre, and the Persian throne gained in glory. The heavens smiled on Iran and its people; the world was renewed again, as in its early days, and Kai Khusrau washed his face in the waters of loyalty and good faith, although no wise man will put his trust in this world where all things flow away like water.

One day Kai Khusrau was sitting with his warrior chieftains at an entertainment. His throne was draped with brocade and he wore a jeweled crown; in his hand was a cup encrusted with rubies and filled with wine, and the heart-ravishing sound of harps echoed in his ears.

Their wine cups filled with wine like rubies from the Yemen and white roses set out before each one, his loyal nobles surrounded him: Kai Kavus' son Fariborz, Gostaham, Gudarz, Farhad, Giv, Gorgin, Shapur, Nozar's son Tus, Rustam, and Bizhan. Serving girls stood before Kai Khusrau, their hair like musk, their skin like jasmine; all the court was alive with color, perfumes, and beauty, and the king's chancellor presided over the feast.

A doorman entered and went over to the chancellor; he said that a delegation from the Ermani tribe, who inhabit the border region between Iran and Turan, were outside asking to see the king. They had traveled a long way and were demanding justice. The chancellor relayed their request to the king who granted them audience; they were brought in according to court protocol, their arms crossed over their chests, and

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when they had kissed the ground they presented their petition to the throne. In deep distress they said, "Great king, may you live victorious and forever. We have traveled a weary way from our country, Erman, which lies between Iran and Turan, and we bring you a sorrowful message. You are the scourge of evil in seven countries, the prop of the helpless, and long may you flourish! Our country borders Turan, from which great disasters have come to us. Within our marches, toward Iran, is a forest, parts of which we have cultivated. It is full of fruit trees and we also pasture our flocks there; in short, we depend upon this area and we appeal to the king to help us. Innumerable wild boar have overrun this forest; their tusks are like an elephant's, they are of mountainous size, and they are destroying the land of Erman, killing our animals, trampling our crops, smashing with their tusks trees that have been there for longer than anyone can remember. Granite is not as tough as their tusks, and we fear that our good fortune is at an end."

When the king had heard them out he pitied their plight and he turned to his chieftains:

*"Who is ambitious for success and fame?
Which warrior here is worthy of the name?
Who will chop these wild pigs' heads off with his
sword?
I will not be miserly with my reward!"*

Then he ordered his treasurer to bring in a golden tray heaped high with jewels jumbled pell-mell together; near this was set a quantity of brocade, and ten horses branded with Kai Kavus' mark and caparisoned with golden bridles were led in. Once again he turned to his nobles and said,

*"Who here will do the bidding of the throne,
And with his efforts make my wealth his own?"*

No one answered, except Bizhan, son of the great warrior Giv: he stood and said, "Long may your realm and clan flourish, and the world submit to your authority. I will undertake this mission, my body and soul are yours to command."

Giv glanced up and it was clear that he was worried by his son's remark. He made his obeisance to the king, then turned to Bizhan: "This is mere young

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man's talk. What makes you so sure of your strength? A youth might be knowledgeable and of good family but he will not manage anything without experience. He has to see the world first, both good and bad, and he has to taste life's bitterness. Do not go waning off where you have never been before, and do not make such a fool of yourself in front of the king!"

Bizhan was a quick-witted young man whose star was rising; he was infuriated by his father's talk and he turned directly to the king: "Do not think I am not capable of this; believe me, I have the strength of a young man and the wisdom of a greybeard: I will cut these wild pigs' heads off or I am not Bizhan, the son of Giv, destroyer of armies." Kai Khusrau responded, "You are full of talents, and may you always be our shield against evil; any king who has a subject like you would be a fool to fear his enemies." Then he turned to Gorgin, Milad's son, and said, "Bizhan is young and ignorant of the way: be his guide and companion to where the river marks the boundary of our domain."

Bizhan tightened his belt, placed his helmet on his head, and prepared to leave. He took Gorgin as a companion to turn to if anything should go wrong, and the two set off with hawks and cheetahs intending to hunt as they proceeded on their long journey.

Like an elephant foaming at the mouth, Bizhan gave chase to wild asses and gazelles, slicing off their heads; his cheetahs brought down mouflon, ripping their bellies open, the rest of the flock scattering in terror. With his bow Bizhan was like another Tahmures, the binder of *divs* (demons), and his hawks' talons made such havoc among the pheasants that their blood spotted the jasmine plants by the wayside. Indeed, Bizhan and Gorgin went forward as if the plain were were their private hunting park.

They reached the forest of wild boar; the animals were milling about with no knowledge that Bizhan had saddled his horse to deal with them, and the young

warrior was enraged by their number and effrontery. He said to Gorgin, "Let us go in together, or, if you would rather, you wait over by the lakeside there, while I attack them with my arrows. When you hear them squealing among the trees, have your mace ready for any that escape me."

But Gorgin said, "This is not what we agreed to before the king; you took all the jewels and gold and
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silver, and you agreed to do the fighting; all you could expect from me was that I show you the way here." Bizhan frowned in astonishment at this response; nevertheless, he entered the forest like a lion and set about shooting arrows at the herd of wild boar. His war cry was like a spring cloud's thunder, and the trees' leaves came pattering down like rain. He went after the herd like an enraged elephant, a glittering dagger in his hand; they turned to charge him, tearing up the ground with their tusks, sparking fire where their tusks struck rock, as if they would burn the world. One sprang at Bizhan like a div (demon), ripping open his armor, then withdrew and rubbed its tusks against a tree, as if it were an armorer honing a sword on stone. But when it renewed its attack, the young warrior plunged his dagger into its belly, splitting its mammoth body in two. Then the remaining boar scattered like foxes, their bodies wounded, their hearts sick of combat. Bizhan lopped off the heads of those he had killed with his dagger and fixed them to his saddlestraps [for a similar custom among the Celts, see Chapter 2]. He intended to take the tusks back to the king and to display the severed heads to the court as a demonstration of his prowess; their combined weight would have exhausted a buffalo.

Resentful and scheming, Gorgin emerged from where he had been lurking; he was so filled with chagrin that the forest appeared like pitch to him. He congratulated Bizhan and made a show of rejoicing at his success. Afraid of the shame that might come to him from this business. Ahriman twisted his heart; forgetful of God, for the sake of his own reputation, he began to plot against Bizhan and spread a snare before him.

He said, "My congratulations, you have a warrior's heart and a wise man's soul; God and your good fortune have given you victory here. There is something I wanted to tell you. I have been in these parts a few times before, with Rustam, Giv, and

Gostaham. Tus was here, too, and Gazhdaham. What splendid deeds we did on this wide plain then; how famous we became, and how dearly Kai Khusrau loved us! But the heavens have moved on since then. About two days' journey from here, toward Turan, there is a place where people gather to hold festivals; you will see a wide pasture, all green and gold, a sight to rejoice any free man's heart. The landscape is filled with copses of trees, flowers, flowing streams; it is a

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place worthy of a hero. The ground is as soft as silk, the air is scented like musk, the streams seem to flow with rosewater; jasmine tendrils bow down to the ground with the weight of their flowers, and the roses there are incomparably beautiful; pheasants strut among the rosebushes, and nightingales sing from the cypress branches.

"In a few days from now the whole area will be like a paradise, the meadows and mountain slopes dotted with groups of angelic young women, all led by Manizheh, the daughter of Afrasiyab. She and her attendants will be staying there; the Turkish girls are cypress-slender, smelling of musk, with faces like rose petals, languorous eyes, lips that taste of wine and rosewater. If we hurried we could be there in a day, and we could seize a few of these delectable girls and take them back in triumph to Kai Khusrau."

When Bizhan heard this his young blood was roused; he agreed to the venture, partly from a thirst for fame, but partly too for the pleasure it promised. The two set off on the long journey, one urged on by desire, the other by malice. They traveled for a day between two forested areas, and then spent two cheerful days hunting in the Ermani grasslands. Gorgin knew that Manizheh was not far off, and that the whole plain was bright as a pheasant's eye with her entourage, and so he repeated to Bizhan what he had said about the festival held there.

Bizhan said, "I will go on ahead; I will spy out the festival from a distance, to see how the Turanians manage these things. Then I will ride back here and we can decide what to do. I will be able to think better once I have seen them." Then he turned to his steward and said, "Bring me my golden diadem that looks so splendid at banquets, and the torque [recall what we said above concerning the torque and the Celts] and earrings Kai Khusrau gave me, and the armbands covered in jewels that I have from my father." He also asked

for a jeweled belts, then wrapped himself in a spelnedid Rumi cloak and fixed an eagle's feather to his diadem. His horse Shabrang was saddled and he set off for the festival, his ambitious heart filled with curiosity.

When he came in sight of the festivities, he stretched out beneath a cypress tree, to stay out of the sun. He was close to the princess' tent, and he felt his heart fill with longing. The whole plain

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echoes with the sound of music and singing, as if welcoming his soul. The princess peered from her tent and saw the stretched-out warrior, his cheeks as bright as Canopus in the skies above Yemen, or like jasmine petals encircled by dark violets, an imperial diadem on his head, a brocade cloak covering his body. Within her tent the princess felt the force of love, and she made no attempt to veil herself from the stranger. She said to her nurse,

*"Go quickly over there; find out for me
Who is lying underneath that cypress tree:
I think it is Siyavush, or else he seems
More like the angels that we see in dreams.
Ask him, 'What bribgs you here? Will you not at least
Join in our festival and share our feast?
Are you Prince Siyavush, then? Or are you
An angel's child? Because whichever is true,
You have lit in me a fire that makes me fear
The world will end and Judgment Day is near.
I have come here every year to celebrate
The spring's arrival on this happy date,
But never saw a stranger here before:
Now I have seen you, and I shall see no more."*

When the nurse reached Bizhan, she bowed to him and spoke as Manizheh had instructed her. Bizhan blushed like a rose, then said confidently enough, "Messenger of your beautiful mistress, I am not Siyavush, nor am I born of an angel; I am from Iran, from the land of the free. I am Bizhan, the son of Giv, and I traveled here from Iran to fight against wild boar. I cut off their heads and left them lying in the dirt; I am going to take their tusks back to my king. When I heard about this festival, I put off returning to my father: I thought my good fortune might show me the face of Afrasiyab's daughter in my dreams. And now I see this plain decked out like a Chinese temple with splendor and wealth. If you treat

me well I will give you a golden diadem, earrings, and a belt; take me to your beautiful mistress, and incline her heart favorably toward me."

The nurse returned to Manizheh and whispered in her ear, describing his face, his stature, and how God had made him. Straightaway Manizheh sent her back, with the message, "If you come over to me and brighten my dismal soul, you will find that you have gained what

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you dreamed of." When Bizhan heard this, the time for talk was over; full of hope and curiosity, he walked from the tree's shade to the princess' tent.

He entered the tent, tall as a cypress; Manizheh embraced him and removed his gold-worked belt. She asked him about his journey, and which warriors had accompanied him on his expedition. "And why," she said, "should such a handsome and noble person be tiring himself out with a mace?" She washed his feet in rosewater and musk and had an elaborate meal set before the two of them; wine was brought and the tent was cleared of everyone except Manizheh's musicians, who stood before them with lutes and harps. The ground was spread with brocade sewn with gold coins and embroidered like a peacock, and the tent was filled with the scents of ambergris and musk. Old wine in crystal goblets overcame the warrior's defenses; for three days and nights the two were happy in each other's company, till finally drink and sleep defeated Bizhan.

The time for departure came, and Manizheh felt she could not bear to be separated from Bizhan; seeing his sad face she called her serving girls and had them prepare a soporific drug which they mingled with his drink. They fitted out a traveling litter, so that one side was for pleasure, the other for sleep; the sandalwood of the sleeping area was drenched in camphor and rosewater, and there they set the unconscious warrior. As they approached the town Manizheh covered him with a cloth; stealthily, at night, Bizhan was conveyed into the castle, and she mentioned her secret to no one.

After his long sleep Bizhan awoke to find his beloved in his arms; he was in Afrasiyab's palace, and Manizheh's face was beside him on the pillow. He started up in alarm and cried out to God for protection against Ahriman: "How can I ever escape from this place? Listen to me sufferings, take revenge

for me on Gorgin; he it was who led me into this, who deceived me with a thousand tricks."

But Manizheh said, "Live happily, my love, and reckon as wind what has not yet happened. All kinds of fate come to men, sometimes feasting, sometimes fighting." They prepared to eat, not knowing whether a gallows awaited them or a marriage ceremony. Manizheh called for musicians; each of the yung women was

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dressed in Chinese brocade and, to the sound of their lutes, Bizhan and Manizheh passed the day in pleasure.

A few days passed in this way, and then gossip caused disaster's tree to tremble. A rumor reached the court chamberlain, and he secretly investigated the matter, tracing the reports back to their source. He inquired as to where the interloper was from and why he had come to Turan; when he found out, he feared for his own life and made all haste to save himself. He saw no choice but to tell the king and ran to him with the news: "Your daughter has taken a lover from Iran." Outraged by Manizheh's behavior, the king shook like a willow tree in a storm, called on God to aid him, and sent for his councilor Qara Khan. "Give me," he said, "good advice as to what to do with this shameless woman."

Qara Khan replied, "First enquire more closely into the accusation. If the matter turns out to be as you say, then I have nothing to add. But hearing about something is not the same as seeing it." Afrasiyab turned to Garsivaz and said, "How much we have endured at the hands of Iran and will endure in the future! And now Fate has added a faithless daughter to my troubles from that country. Go with loyal horsemen and watch the gates and roofs; tie up any stranger you find within the palace and bring him here."

His men surrounded the inner palace, occupied the roofs, and kept a watch on the exits while Garsivaz approached the main door. He found it secured from the inside, and sounds of feasting and revelry could be clearly heard. Garsivaz tore the door from its hinges and leaped into the chamber beyond; immediately, he made his way to the room where Bizhan was. When he saw Bizhan, his blood boiled with rage; three hundred serving girls and musicians were there, singing to lutes and serving wine. Bizhan sprang up in fear, his one thought being how he could fight without his armor of his horse Shabrang. He was alone and his father Giv could not help him now; God was his only recourse.

He had always kept a glittering dagger inside one boot, and this he now drew as he leaped toward the door, saying:

*"I am Bizhan, God's warlike son; I claim
An ancient Persian family's noble name.
No one skins me, unless he is sick of life
And wants his head slashed open with this knife;
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*And if the earth resounds with Judgment Day,
No man will ever see me run away.
If you insist on war, prepare for war -
I will soak my fists in your Turanian gore
And hack your heads off. But if you agree
To intercede before your king for me,
I will tell him why I am here. You are a knight,
Be chivalrous and we will not need to fight."*

Garsivaz saw what Bizhan was about, but he also saw the sharp dagger in his hand and knew that he meant it when he said he would soak his fists in their blood. He swore a solemn oath that he would do as Bizhan suggested, and with his promises he managed to cajole the dagger from Bizhan's hand. He then talked him into allowing himself to be bound in fetters; they trussed him up like a caught cheetah.

*When Fortune turns her face away from you,
What can your manly skills or virtues do?*

And so Bizhan was haled before Afrasiyab, bareheaded, and with his hands bound. He greeted the king and said, "If you want the truth from me, here it is: I had no desire to come to this court and no one is to blame for my being here. I came from Iran to destroy a herd of wild boar and found myself near your borders. I sent my people to search for a lost hawk, while I sheltered from the sun under a cypress tree and fell asleep there. A denizen of fairyland came and spread her wings over me and gathered me up, while I was still sleeping, to her bosom. She separated me from my horse and took me along the path where your daughter and her escort of soldiers were. The plain was filled with horsemen, and various litters and palanquins passed me by. In the distance an Indian parasol appeared, surrounded by Turanian cavalry, and as it came closer I saw that the parasol covered a splendid litter in which lay a beautiful young woman; a crown was on the pillow beside her. The being that

held me repeated the name 'Ahriman' a few times and then like a mighty wind swooped down among the horsemen; suddenly she set me in the litter and whispered a spell over the woman there so that she remained asleep until we entered the castle. I wept to see her, but I have committed no sin, and Manizheh has suffered no stain nor taint of guilt

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in all this. I think the being who did this to me must have been a fairy of ill omen."

But Afrasiyab said, "Bad lusk has caught up with you, and none too soon. You came from Iran with your bow, looking for a fight and hoping to make a name for yourself; now you stand in front of me defenseless as a woman and with your hands tied, prattling about dreams as if you were drunk. You think you can deceive me with your lies?"

Bizhan replied, "Your majesty, listen to what I have to say for a moment, and realize its truth: a boar can fight anywhere with its tusks, as a lion can with its claws; warriors need a sword, a mace, a bow in order to fight against their enemies. You cannot have on the one side a man naked and with his hands tied, and on the other a man armored in mail; no matter how brave it might be, how can a lion fight without its claws? If the king wishes me to show my prowess before his men, let him have a horse and a heavy mace brought here. Then he can set a thousand of his horsemen against me, and if I leave one of them alive, never call me a man again."

When he heard this, Afrasiyab glared at Bizhan in fury and turned to Garsivaz. "You see how he is still plotting against me; the evil he has done already is not enough for him, he asks me to be allowed to kill my men in combat! Take him bound as he is and get rid of him; have a gallows erected before my castle gates so that everyone who passes by will see him. String him up and never mention him to me again, so that the Persians will know not to come snooping around here any more."

As they dragged Bizhan to the door he wept in bitterness of heart, and said, "If God has written on my forehead that I am to die in an evil time, I fear neither death nor the gallows. I fear the warriors of Iran; I fear that my enemies among them will call me a coward because I was strung up unwounded; I fear that my noble ancestors will reproach me, and that my soul will linger here, having shamed my father."

God pitied his youth and confounded his enemies' plans. While the pit for the gallows was being dug, Piran appeared in the distance; as he approached he saw a gallows being erected with a noose swinging from it and called out, "Who is to be hanged here? And is the king's gateway a fitting place to raise a gibbet?"

Garsivaz answered, "This is for Bizhan; he saw he was in great distress, naked, dry-mouthed, and pale,

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with his hands tied tightly behind his back. He said, "How did you come to be here? Did you come to Turan looking for bloodshed?" Bizhan told him his tale of bad luck, and Piran wept to hear it. He ordered the soldiers to pause before hanging him, to wait until he had talked with the king and pointed out to him where his best interests lay.

He entered the court humbly, his arms folded across his chest, bowed before Afrasiyab, and waited. The king realized he had some petition to make and laughed, saying:

*"Out with it then! Tell me, what is your request?
Noblest of all my chieftains, and the best,
If you want gold or jewels or wealth from me,
If you want troops, or arms, or sovereignty,
You know my goods are yours, as payment for
Your peerless services in peace and war."*

Loyal Piran kissed the ground, stood, and said, "May your auspicious reign never end; the world's kings praise you and your splendor is like the sun's. Whatever I have - be it people, wealth, or authority - is from you; my request is not for myself, since no subject of yours wants for anything. I have given the king advice on many matters many times before this, but my advice was not followed. I told you not to kill Kai Kavus' son, Siyavush, who was of royal lineage and who was tireless on your behalf, as this would make Rostam and Tus your enemies, bringing them from Iran on their war elephants, tearing apart the bonds that unite us. And have you not seen the damage the Persians have done to our country, trampling two-thirds of it underfoot, making our lives bitter as brackish water? And Zal's sword is still not sheathed; his son Rostam is still lopping off heads with it and staining the sun with blood. Now that there is the chance of peace, you are looking to stir up new troubles, foolishly sniffing at the poisoned blossoms of hatred. If you spill Bizhan's blood, once again the

dust of vengeance will rise up from Turan. The king is wise and I am his subject, but open your heart's eyes to the truth. Think how the king of Iran has profited from our enmity, and yet you are trying to provoke it further, to make disaster's tree bear fruit again. We cannot survive a second war against them; no one knows Giv, and the monster Rustom, or iron-fisted Gudarz better than you do."

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Piran threw cold water on the raging fire, but Afrasiyab replied, "And you do not know what Bizhan has done to me, embarrassing me before all Turan and Iran. Can you not see the humiliation that shameless daughter of mine has brought to my white hairs, destroying my women's reputation in the world? My whole country and army will make sport of my disgrace forever. If he escapes from me with his life, everyone will reproach me; I will spend the rest of my days weeping, disgraced, and despised."

Piran repeatedly called down heaven's blessing on the king and said, "My noble lord, favored by Fortune, all is as you say, and it is your reputation that is at stake. But consider my suggestion carefully: chain him in heavy chains, such that he would rather die on the gallows than suffer the pain they bring. This will teach the Persians a lesson, and they will not be in such a hurry to plot against us in the future. Any man who languishes in your dungeons is not going to be reckoned a useful warrior."

The king followed his advice and said to Garsivaz, "Prepare a dark pit and heavy chains: bind his arms tightly, shackle him hand and foot, and hang him head down within the pit so that he sees neither sun nor moon. Take elephants and have them drag here the huge rock that the Akvan Div wrenched from the ocean depths; cover the pit's entrance with it, and let Bizhan suffer there till he loses his mind. Then go with your cavalry to that shameless hussy Manizheh's palace and destroy it, strip her of her crown and atatus and say to her, 'Wretched woman, you deserve neither crown nor throne; you have shamed the king before his ancestors and dragged their noble name in the dust.' Then hale her to the pit and say to her,

*'See in this pit now, naked and alone,
The man you set beside you on your throne;
You were the springtime of his life; now be
His friend and jailer in adversity.'*"

Garsivaz strode from the king's presence to carry out his evil orders. Bizhan was dragged from beneath the gallows to a deep pit, loaded from head to foot with heavy chains, and lowered head down into its darkness. A stone was placed over the opening, and from there Garsivaz led his men to Manizheh's quarters; her wealth was plundered, and the crown torn from her head.

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Barefoot, clad only in her shift, her hair loose, her face smeared with blood and tears, Manizheh was dragged stumbling to the pit's edge. There Garsivaz said to her, "Here is your lord and household; you are to be this prisoner's jailer forever."

For a day and a night Manizheh wandered moaning about the wilderness. As dawn approached she came back to the pit's edge and scabbled away the dirt beneath the stone till she could force her hand into the darkness. When the sun rose above the mountain tops she began to go from door to door, begging for bread. At the end of the day she brought the scraps she had collected and pushed them through the opening she had made, offering them to Bizhan. And so, in grief and wretchedness, she passed her days.

After a week, Gorgin saw that Bizhan had not returned and he began to search for him everywhere, his face bathed in tears of shame. He regretted what he had done and wondered how he could have betrayed his companion like this. He hurried in the direction Bizhan had taken and went through the groves of trees looking for him, but he saw no one and heard not even so much as a bird's song. He scoured the meadows calling for his friend, and finally caught sight of Bizhan's horse in the distance. The reins were loose, the saddle had slipped down, and the horse's lower lip hung pendulous, as if the animal were consumed with rage. Gorgin gave Bizhan up for lost, certain that he would never return to Iran: either he had been strung up on a gallows or was languishing chained in a pit, but it was clear that Afrasiyab had harmed him in some way. Gorgin flung down his lariat and turned aside his face in shame; he was sorry for what he had done and longed to see his friend. He led Bizhan's horse back to their camp and rested there for a day; then he set out for Iran, travelling day and night without stopping to sleep.

When the king learned that Gorgin was returning without Bizhan, he told Giv to ask Gorgin what had become of his son. Giv ran weeping into the street,

his heart filled with anxiety, crying out, "Bizhan has not come back, and why should he stay with the Ermani?" He ordered that a horse he had used in crises before be saddled; inwardly raging like a leopard, he rode out to meet Gorgin, intending to ask him where Bizhan was, and what had happened. To himself he said, "This Gorgin has secretly and suddenly tricked him; if I find it is

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true that he is coming back without Bizhan, I will cut his head off there and then."

Gorgin saw Giv approaching. He dismounted and ran forward, then groveled in the dust before him, his head and his cheeks scored by his nails. He said, "My lord, you are the king's elect, the leader of his armies, why have you come out to meet me, your eyes flowing with tears? I return sick at heart, and seeing you, my wretchedness increases; I look at you and my face is bathed in shame's hot tears. But do not fear for him; no harm has come to him, and I can give you proof of this."

When Giv heard the warrior's words and saw his son's dusty, desolate horse led by Gorgin, he fell from his own mount as if unconscious. His head sank into the dust; moaning, he tore at his clothes and hair and beard, and cried out, "God of the heavens, who has placed intelligence and love in my heart, now that I have lost my son it is right that the bonds of life dissolve in me; take me to where the blessed spirits live, you who know better than I the extent of my heart's sorrow. In all the world he was all I had, as a companion and as a help in times of trouble; now that ill fortune has taken him from me, I am left here to grieve alone."

Again he turned to Gorgin. "Tell me what happened, from the beginning. Did fate suddenly snatch him away, or did he leave you of his own accord? What disaster overtook him? Tell me what snare the heavens laid for him, what devil confronted him and destroyed him in the uplands there. Where did you find his abandoned horse? Where did you lose sight of Bizhan?"

Gorgin replied, "Calm yourself, and listen to my words carefully. Know, then, my lord - and may your presence always lend splendor to our court - what happened, and how it happened, while we were fighting the wild boar. We taveled from here to confront the herd and when we reached the borders of Erman we saw a once-wooded region that had been leveled as flat as

the palm of a hand; all the trees had been torn down, and the whole area was full of boar's lairs. We seized our spears and went to work, yelling to drive the boar into the open and fighting like lions; the day ended and we still were not tired of our task. Like charging elephants we drove them before us, and we hacked out their tusks with chisels. Then we set off on the return journey to Iran, rejoicing and hunting as we came.

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Suddenly a wild ass appeared, more beautiful than any ever seen before; its coat was like that of Gudarz's horse, it had the muzzle of Farhad's horse, feet like the Simorgh's, but with steel hooves, and its head, ears, and tail were like those of Bizhan's horse, Shabrang. Its mane was like a lion's, and it was as swift as the wind; you would think it had been sired by Rakhsh. It made for Bizhan like a towering elephant, and he noosed it with his lariat, but it charged off into the distance, dragging Bizhan out of sight. Their struggle sent a cloud of dust into the air and both the wild ass and his captor disappeared from view. I searched everywhere, until my mount was exhausted, but I found no trace of Bizhan: all I could discover was his horse, trailing its saddle in the dust. I stayed there for a long time calling Bizhan's name, but finally I gave up and decided that the wild ass must have been the White Div. My heart burned with anxiety, wondering how his struggle with the Div had turned out."

When Giv heard this speech he knew that something terrible had happened; he saw that Gorgin was talking at random, his eyes downcast, his tearful face the color of straw, his trembling voice indicative of his guilty heart. Giv thought that his son was lost to him, and he saw that Gorgin was lying; Ahriman plucked at his heart, and he longed to take revenge for his son's disappearance, no matter how shameful such a course might seem. But then he reflected that this would clarify nothing. "What good will it do me to kill him now?", he thought. "It will only make Ahriman glad and profit Bizhan nothing at all. I must look for another way forward. I will tell Gorgin's tale to the king and see if that will clear matters up; I can easily take my revenge later, as he has no defense against my spear if I choose to use it."

Giv roared at Gorgin, "You spawn of a div, you have taken the sun and moon from my life, you have stolen away the king's chosen champion, you are

forcing me to travel the world in search of relief for my sorrow - how can you sleep or rest enmeshed in such lies and deceit? But I shall go before the king, and after that I shall be revenged on you with my dagger."

And so he went to the king, and after greeting him respectfully and wishing him long life and good fortune, he said,

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*"In all the world I had but one delight -
My son, for whom I fretted day and night,
For whose pure soul I wept paternal tears;
To lose him was the worst of all my fears.
And now Gorgin returns alone and tries
To hide his guilty soul with specious lies;
He brings bad news of me beloved son
And has no sign of him to show but one -
A riderless, led horse. Your majesty,
Look closely at this matter and you will see
That my demand for vengeance here is just;
Gorgin has brought my head down to the dust."*

The king was moved by Giv's grief; he turned pale and grew sick at heart thinking of Bizhan. He asked Giv, "What did Gorgin say about where Bizhan is?" Giv told him Gorgin's tale, and Kai Khusrau answered, "Think no more of thism mourn no longer; Bizhan is alive and you should live in hopes of seeing your lost son again. I have agreed with my priests that I and my troops shall soon set out for Turan to fight in the war of vengeance for Siyavush: I and my elephants will overcome that country, and Bizhan will be there by my side, fighting like a div on our behalf. Grieve no more; I am as eager as you are to see him again." Giv left his presenc, his heart filled with pain and grief, his cheeks sallow, his eyes wet with tears.

When Gorgin arrived at Kai Khusrau's court he found it empty; the courtiers had left with Giv to comfort him. Gorgin went forward, shamefaced and apprehensive, kissed the ground before Kai Khusrau, and greeted him. He placed the boars' tusks, glittering like diamonds, before the king, and said, "May the king be victorious in all things, may all his days be springtime, and may the heads of all his enemies be cut off as I cut off these boars' heads!"

Kai Khusrau looked at the tusks and questioned Gorgin about the expedition, asking how he had been separated from Bizhan and what disaster had befallen him. At first Gorgin was speechless, but then he began

to tell his lying tale, trembling from fear of the king. But before he could finish, Kai Khusrau, realizing that his confusion indicated his guilt, started up and pushed him away from the throne, reviling him: "Have you not heard the old saying that even a lion who arouses the vengeance of Gudarz's clan will perish miserably? If you were not such a wretch,
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and so certain to come to a bad end, I would have your head twisted off like a chicken's!"

Kai Khusrau gave orders that blacksmiths fashion heavy shackles for him, and that his feet be fettered, so that he could reflect on the evil he had done. To Giv, Kai Khusrau said, "Calm yourself, we must begin the search for Bizhan. I shall send out a thousand horsemen to see if they can find news of him, and if we hear nothing at first, do not despair. Wait until the spring brings in the new year, and the sun renews the world; then when the flowers reappear and the earth turns green again, and the breezes are laden with scent, I shall pray to Hormoz [Avestan: *Ahura Mazda*]. I shall have the world-revealing cup [see the magic cup of Sir Galahad in the Arthurian Cycle] that shows the seven climes brought to me, and I shall invoke God's blessings on our noble ancestors. Then I will tell you where Bizhan is, since the cup will answer my prayers."

Giv's heart was reassured, and he thanked the king and wished him long life and prosperity.

As soon as Giv had left the king's presence, he sent out horsemen in every direction to see if they could find some trace of his son. They covered all Iran and Turan but found nothing, so that when the spring came and the world was renewed the king turned to the world-revealing cup.

Hopeful for news of his son, Giv entered the court, and when Kai Khusrau saw him bent over and withered away with worry, he put on the Rumi cloak he wore to pray. He cried out to God, calling down blessings on the sun as it inaugurated the new year, and asked for strength and help to defeat the power of Ahriman. Then he returned in solemn procession to his palace, replaced the crown on his head, and took the cup in his hands. He stared into it and saw the world's seven climes, the turnings of the heavens, all that happened there, and how and why things came to pass. He saw from the sign of Pisces to that of Aries, he saw Saturn, Mars, the sun, Leo, Venus, Mercury above, and the moon below. The royal magician saw all

that was to be seen. Searching for some sign of Bizhan, his gaze traversed the seven climes until he reached the land of Gorgsaran, and there he saw him, bound with chains in a pit, longing for death; beside him princess Manizheh stood, ready to serve him. The king turned toward Giv and his smile lit up the council chamber. "Rejoice,
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Bizhan is alive, rid yourself of your anxiety. He is imprisoned, but this is small cause for grief, because he is alive and a noble woman is attending him. He suffers terrible pains, and it hurts me to see him like this, weeping, despairing of help from his family, trembling like a willow tree. But who can go to his rescue, who is loyal enough to undertake this expedition, to save him from his sorrows? Only Rustam, who can pluck monsters from the sea's depths, is fit for this task. Go to Zabolistan and travel day and night without rest; take my letter but breathe not a word of it to anyone as you go."

A scribe was called in and the king (Kai Khusrau) dictated a friendly letter to Rustam:

*"Great Rustam, noblest of our warriors,
Whose deeds remind us of our ancestors,
Leopards submit to you, sea-monsters roar
In terror when you walk upon the shore,
Persia's stout heart, prop of our sovereignty,
Prompt with your help in all adversity:
The demons [**divs**] of Mazanderan were slain
By you, your mace destroyed their evil reign.
How many kings, how many enemies
You have conquered, and how many provinces!
To pluck from darkness any mortal who
In peril or affliction turns to you,
The Lord has given you a mammoth's might
And lionhearted courage when you fight.
Gudarz and Giv in their despair now ask
For your assistance in a worthy task;
You know how close this clan remains to me,
Never have they endured such agony.
Giv has a single son [**Bizhan**], and all his joy,
His hopes of life, are centered on this boy;
To me he has been a loyal courtier who
Will do whatever I command him to.
Now, when you read this letter, do not delay,
Return with Giv, hear what he has to say;
In council we will decide what must be done
To save this noble warrior's captive son.*

I will provide men and treasure, you are to free Bizhan from his Turanian misery."

Kai Khusrau sealed the letter; Giv took it, made his obeisance to the king, and went home to prepare for the journey. He rode with his clansmen, quick as a
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hunted animal, covering two days' travel in each day, crossing the desert and heading for the River Hirkand [**Helmand**]. When he reached Gurabad a lookout saw him and shouted that a warrior and his entourage were approaching the river bank; the leader carried a Kabul sword in his fist, and they were followed by a banner flapping in the wind. Rustam's father, Zal, heard the lookout's cry and rode out to meet them, so that they would have no reason to act in a hostile manner toward him. As he saw Giv coming, his face downcast and preoccupied, he said to himself, "Something has happened to the king, there is no other reason for Giv to come here." When he met up with them he asked after the king, and how the war with Turan was faring. Giv greeted him respectfully from Kai Khusrau, and then unburdened his heart, telling him the tale of his lost son. He asked for Rustam, and Zal answered, "He is out hunting wild asses: when the sun goes down he will be back." Giv said, "I will go and find him, I have a letter from Kai Khusrau I have to give him." But Zal answered, "Stay here, he will be here soon; come to my house and spend the day feasting with me."

But as Giv entered the outer court Rustam was seen returning from the hunt. Giv went out to greet him and dismounted before him. Hope flared up in his heart and the color came back to his face, although his eyes were still filled with tears. When Rustam saw the anxiety in his expression and the marks of tears on his face, he said to himself, "Some disaster has happened to Iran and to the king." He dismounted and embraced Giv, asking after Kai Khusrau, and then for news of Gudarz, Tus, Gazdaham, and various other warriors at the Persian court such as Shapur, Farhad, Bizhan, Roham, and Gorgin. When Giv heard the name "Bizhan", a cry escaped from his lips and he said to Rustam, "My lord, all kings honor you, and I am happy to see you and to hear you speak so kindly; those you ask after are well, and they send their greetings to you. But you do not know the terrible calamity that has stricken me in my old age; the evil eye has lighted on Gudarz's clan and destroyed all our good

fortune. I had one son in all the world; he was both my boy and my confidant, my councilor. He has disappeared from the face of the earth; no one in my clan has suffered such a calamity. I have ridden day and night searching the world for Bizhan. But now, at the turning of the year, our king has prayed to God and seen in the world-revealing cup

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that he is in Turan, loaded down with chains; seeing this, Kai Khusrau sent me here to you. I stand before you, my heart filled with hope, my cheeks sallow with grief, my eyes blinded by tears; I look to you as my one recourse in all the world, as you are ready to help everyone in their time of need."

He wept and sighed, and as he handed over Kai Khusrau's letter he told Rustam of the business with Gorgin. Rustam too wept as he read the letter, and loathing for Afrasiyab welled up in him. He cried out for Bizhan and said, "Think no more of this; Rustam will not remove the saddle from Rakhsh's back until he has taken Bizhan's hand in his and destroyed the chains and prison that hold him. By God's power and the king's good fortune, I shall bring your prince back from Turan."

They went to Rustam's castle, where Rustam went through Kai Khusrau's letter and said to Giv, "I understand what is to be done, and I shall carry out the king's commands. I know what services you have rendered, to me and to the court, and though I rejoice to see you here, my heart grieves for Bizhan. But you should not despair; I shall act as the king orders me and do my best to rescue your son, even if God should separate my soul from my body in the attempt, I am ready to sacrifice my soul, my men, and my wealth on Bizhan's behalf. With God's help and our victorious king's good fortune, I will free him from his chains and the dark pit where he languishes and return him to the Persian court. But now, you must be my guest for three days, and we shall drink together and take our ease; there is no thine nor mine between you and me. We will feast here and tell tales of the heroes and kings of old, and on the fourth day we will set out for Kai Khusrau's court."

Impulsively Giv stepped forward and kissed the hero's hand, chest, and feet. He praised Rustam and wished him eternal strength and wisdom. When Rustam saw that Giv was reassured he said to his steward, "Set out a feast, call our councilors and chieftains." After the banquet, Zavareh, Faramarz, Zal, and Giv sat

in a bejeweled hall where musicians and wine servers entertained them; their hands were stained with ruby wine the goblets glittered, and the harps resounded. And so three days and nights passed in pleasure and happiness; on the fourth they prepared to set out. Rustam ordered the baggage train to be made ready, laid

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his ancestors' mace in the saddle, and mounted Rakhsh. Rakhsh pricked up his ears, Rustam's head seemed to overtop the sun, and he and Giv together with a hundred Zaboli horsemen, set out impatiently on their journey to Iran.

As Rustam approached the Persian heartland, the pinnacles of Kai Khusrau's castle could be seen in the distance and a welcoming wind came down to him from the heavens. Giv said, "I shall ride on ahead and announce your coming."

Giv reached the court and made his obeisance to Kai Khusrau, who asked him about his journey and where Rustam was. Giv replied, "Great king, your good fortune makes all things turn out well; Rustam did not refuse your orders. When I gave him your letter he reverently placed it against his eyes, and he has come here as befits a loyal subject, his reins twisted with mine. I rode on ahead to announce his coming to you."

Kai Khusrau's answer was, "And where is this prop of our nobility, this paragon of loyalty now?" He ordered Gudarz, Tus, and Farhad, together with two companies from the army, to go out and greet the approaching hero. The din of drums rang out and the welcoming party was drawn up; the world was darkened by their dust, and in the gloom their lances glittered and their banners fluttered. When they reached Rustam they dismounted and bowed before him, and he too descended from his horse and asked each one for news of the king. Then everyone remounted and the group made its way to the royal palace.

When Rustam entered the audience hall he ran forward, invoking the blessings of Hormuz (Avestan: *Ahura Mazda*) upon the king. He then called on the angel Bahman to protect his crown, the angel Ordibeheshet to protect his person, the angel Shahrivar to give him victory, the angel Sepandar to watch over him, the angel Mordad to watch over his flocks.

Kai Khusrau stood, motioned Rustam to sit beside him, and said, "You are the champion of the world's kings; what men conceal you know, and what you do not

conceal is still unknown to them. The Kaianids have chosen you before all others; you are the support of their army, the guardian of Iran, the refuge of their troops. I rejoice to see you here, valiant and vigilant as ever. Now, are Zaverah, Faramarz, and Zal well? What news can you give me of them?" Rustam knelt and kissed the throne and replied, "Victorious king, all three

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are well and prosperous, thanks to your good fortune. Blessed are those whom the king remembers!"

Kai Khusrau ordered his chamberlain to summon Gudarz, Tus, and other courtiers of the first rank. The steward had the royal gardens prepared; a golden crown and throne were placed beneath a tree whose blossoms were beginning to fall, royal brocades were spread on the grass, and the flower gardens glowed like lamps at night. Near where the king sat a tree was placed so that its shade covered him; and its trunk was of silver, its branches of gold encrusted with rubies and other precious stones; its leaves and buds were made of emeralds and agates that hung like precious earrings. Golden oranges and quinces grew from the branches; they were hollow inside and filled with musk macerated in wine, and their surfaces were pierced like a flute's, so that the scent diffused through the air, delighting the king. The wine servers who stood before the guests had bejeweled crowns, and their cloaks were of brocade shot with gold; they wore torques [once again, recall the wearing of torques among the Celts; only Iranians and Celts and the Goths who were so strongly influenced by both Celts and Iranians ever wore torques] and earrings, and the bodices of their clothes were worked with gems. The faces of the servants who burned sandalwood before the king and played on harps glowed like rich brocade. All hearts rejoiced to be there; the wine went round and even before it took effect the guests' faces shone like pomegranate blossoms.

Kai Khusrau sat Rustam in the place of honor beneath the tree and said to him, "My noble friend, you are Iran's shield against all evil, protecting us as the Simurgh spreads out her wings. You have always been ready to serve Iran and her kings and with your mace and the might of your royal **farr** (Avestan: *Xvarneh*: Pahlavi: *Khvarrah*) you destroyed the demons (*divs*) of Mazanderan. You know how Gudarz's clan was served in good fortune and bad, always ready to do my bidding and to guide me toward the truth, and Giv

especially has been my bulwark against all evils. Such a sorrow has never come to this clan before, for what sorrow is greater than the loss of a child? If you do not agree to help us now no other lion-warrior will; think what must be done to save Bizhan, who languishes a captive in Turan. Whatever horses or arms or men or treasure you need, take them, and give the matter no more thought!"

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Rustam kissed the ground, rose quickly, and said,

*"Your majesty, you are like the radiant sun
Bestowing light and life on everyone":
May greed and anger never touch your reign
And may your enemies live wracked with pain.
Monarch with whom no other monarch can compete,
All other kings are dust beneath your feet,
Neither the sun nor the moon has ever known
A king like you to occupy the throne.
My mother bore me so that you could live
Sure of the service that you knew I would give;
I have heard the king's command and I agree
To go wherever he might order me.
The heavens can rain down fire but I will not leave
This mission that I undertake for Giv
Until success is mine - and I will not ask
For chiefs or troops to help me in this task."*

Gudarz, Giv, Fariborz, Farhad, and Shapur, together with the other assembled chieftains, called down the world Creator's blessings on Rustam, and the company sat to their wine, as happy and radiant as the springtime.

When Gorgin heard of Rustam's presence at the court, he realized that here was the key to his deliverance. He sent him a message: "O sword of fortune, scabbard of loyalty, banner of greatness, treasury of faith, gateway of generosity, prisoner of disaster, if it does not pain you to hear from me, let me tell you of my sorrows. The hunchbacked heavens have doused the torch of my heart and left me in darkness; what was fated to happen to me has happened. If the king will forgive me my sins and restore me my good name, I am ready to throw myself into the fire before him, I will do anything to rid myself of this disaster that has come to me in my old age. If you will ask for me from the king, I will follow you with all the energy of a wild mountain shep. I shall go to

Bizhan and grovel before him, in hopes of getting back my good reputation."

When Gorgin's message reached Rustam, he sighed, troubled by Gorgin's sorrow and by his foolish request. He sent the messenger back and told him to say to Gorgin, "You fearless fool, have you not heard of what the leopard said to the sea monster: 'When passion overcomes wisdom, no one can escape its clutches; but

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the wise man who overcomes passion will be renowned as a lion?' You talk like a cunning old fox, but you did not see the trap set for you. How can I possibly mention your name before Kai Khusrau for the sake of such a foolish request? But you are so wretched that I will ask Kai Khusrau to forgive your sin and brighten your life's darkened moon. If God wills that Bizhan be freed from his chains, you will be set free also, and no one will take any further revenge on you. But if the heavens will otherwise, you must despair of life. I shall go on this mission, armed with God's strength and the King's command, but if I do not return successfully, prepare yourself for Gudarz and Giv to wreak vengeance on you for their child's death."

Two days and nights passed and Rustam made no mention of the matter; on the third day, when Kai Khusrau was seated on his ivory throne, the hero came to him. He began to talk about Gorgin's miseries, but the king cut him off: "You are my general, and you are asking me to break the oath I swore by my throne and crown, by the lord of the sun and moon, that Gorgin would see nothing from me but suffering until Bizhan was freed from his chains. Ask me for anything else, for thrones, seal-rings, swords or crowns."

Rustam replied, "My noble lord, if he did wrong, he repents of it and is ready to sacrifice his life in a good cause; but if the king will not forgive him, his name and reputation are lost forever. Anyone who strays from wisdom's path sooner or later regrets the evil that he does. It would be right for you to remember his former deeds, how he was always there in every crisis, and how he fought steadfastly for your ancestors. If the king can grant me this man, it may be that fortune will smile on him again." Kai Khusrau allowed his request, and Gorgin was released from the dark pit where he had been chained.

Then the king asked Rustam how he intended to go about his task, what he would need in the way of troops and treasure, and who he wanted to accompany

him. He added, "I fear Afrasiyab will kill Bizhan in a fit of impatience. He has a demon's nature and he is impulsive; he might well suddenly destroy our warrior." Rustam replied, "I shall prepare for this task in secret; the key to these chanins is deceit, and we must not act too hastily. We must tug back on the reins, and this is no time for maces, swords, or spears. I will need a quantity of jewels, gold, and
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silver; we will go with high hopes, and when we are there, fear will make us cautious. We will go as merchants, and this will give us a good excuse to linger in Turan for a while. I will need carpets and clothes, and things to give as presents."

Kai Khusrau gave orders that his ancient treasuries be opened; the king's treasurer brought brocades and jewels, and Rustam came and selected whatever he needed. He had a hundred camel-loads of gold coins made up, together with a hundred mule-loads of silver, and he had the court chamberlain choose a thousand lion hearted warriors. Seven noblemen - Gorgin, Zangeh, Gustham, Gorazeh, Farhad, Roham, and Ashkash - were to go with him as his companions and as guardians of the wealth. When these men were summoned, Zangeh asked, "Where is Kai Khusrau, and what has happened that he has called us like this?"

At dawn the chamberlain appeared at the castle gates, and the seven heroes stood before the chosen troops, fully armed and ready to sacrifice their souls if need be. At cock crow, as the sky whitened, war drums were fastened on the elephants and Rustam, tall as a cypress tree, appeared in the gateway, mace in hand, his lariat hitched to his saddle. He called down God's blessings on his country, and the group set off.

They neared the border with Turan, and he called the army's leaders to him. He said, "You are to stay here, alert and on guard; you are not to leave this place unless God divides my body from my soul; be prepared for war, however, have your claws ready for blood."

The army stayed on the Persian side of the border while Rustam and his nobles pressed on the Turan. But first they disguised themselves as merchants, removing their silver sword belts and dressing in woolen garments. They entered Turan as a richly laden caravan, accompanied by seven horses, one of which was Rakhsh; there were a hundred camel-loads of jewels, and a hundred mule-loads of soldier's tunics and armor. The bells on the animals and the clatter of

their progress made a noise like the trumpets of Tahmures; the whole plain was filled with their din until they reached the town where Piran lived. Piran was away hunting; when Rustam saw him returning, he had a goblet filled with jewels and covered with a fine brocade cloth and two horses with jeweled bridles and draped with brocade led forward. Servants took the gifts to Piran's palace, and

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Rustam accompanied them. He greeted Piran respectfully, as one whose virtues were known both in Iran and Turan. By God's grace Piran did not recognize Rustam; he said to him, "Where are you from, who are you, and why have you come here in such a hurry?" Rustam replied, "I am your servant, sir; God has led me to your town to refresh myself and rest. I have come the long and weary way from Iran to Turan as a merchant; I buy and sell all sorts of things. I have traveled here assured of your kindness, and hope has now conquered my heart's fears. If you will take me under your wing's protection, I shall stay here to sell jewels and buy horses. Your justice will ensure that no one harm's me, and your benevolence will rain down blessings upon me." Then he set before Piran the goblet filled with jewels and had the splendid Arab horses, that had no trace of wind-blown dust on their immaculate coats, led forward. Invoking God's benediction, he handed the presents over, and the bargain was made.

When Piran saw the jewels glittering in the goblet he welcomed Rustam warmly and sat him on a turquoise throne, saying, "Be happy here, be sure you will be safe in my city; I will give you quarters near to my palace and you need have no fears for your goods, no one will give you any trouble. Bring everything you have of value here and then look for customers. Make my son's house your personal headquarters, and think of yourself as one of my family." Rustam replied, "My lord, I brought this caravan from Iran for you, and all that I have is yours. Wherever I stay will be suitable for me, but with my victorious lord's permission, I will stay with the caravan; there are all kinds of people traveling with me, and I do not want any of my jewels to disappear." Piran said, "Go and choose any place you desire; I will send guides to help you."

Rustam chose a house for his party to stay in, and a warehouse for his goods. News spread that a caravan had come to Piran's castle from Iran and

customers began to arrive from all quarters, particularly when it became known that there were jewels for sale. Buyers for brocade, carpets, and gems converged on the castle, and Rustam and his companions decked out their warehouse so that it shone like the sun itself.

Manizheh heard about the caravan from Iran and hurried to Piran's city. Unveiled and weeping, Afrasiyab's daughter came before Rustam; wiping her tears from her face with her sleeve, she said,

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*"I wish you life and long prosperity,
May God protect you from adversity!
May heaven prosper all you say and do,
May evil glances never injure you.
Whatever purposes you hope to gain
May all your efforts never bring you pain,
May wisdom be your guide, may fortune bless
Iran with prosperous days and happiness.
What news have you? What tidings can you bring
Of Persia's champions and their king?
Have you not heard Bizhan is here, do they not
Desire to help their friend in any way?
Will he be left by Giv, by all his kin,
To perish in the pit he suffers in?
Fetters weigh down his legs, his arms and hands
Are fixed to stakes by heavy iron bands;
He hangs in chains, blood stains his clothes, I weep
To hear his groans, and never rest nor sleep."*

Rustam was afraid when he heard her, and he burst out as if in rage, pushing her toward the street: "Get away from me, I do not know any kings. I know nothing about Giv or that family, your words mean nothing to me."

Manizheh stared at Rustam and sobbed painfully. She said, "You are a great and wise man and your cold words do not suit you. Say nothing if you wish, but do not drive me from you, for my sufferings have worn away my life. Is this the way Persians treat people? Do they deny news to the poor and wretched?"

Rustam said, "What is the matter with you woman? Has Ahriman told you that the world is coming to an end? You disrupted my trade, and that is why I was angry with you. Do not let what I said upset you; I was worried about selling my goods. As for the king, I do not live in the city where he does, and I know nothing about Giv nor his clan; I have never been to the area where they live."

Quickly, he had whatever food was available set in front of the poor woman, and then he questioned her as to what had made her unhappy, why she was so interested in the Persian king and nobility, and why she kept her eye on the road from Iran the whole time.

Manizheh said, "And why should you want to know about my sorrows and misfortunes? I left the pit with my heart filled with anguish and ran to you thinking you were a free and noble man, and you yelled at me

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like a warrior attacking an enemy. Have you no fear of God in you? I am Manizheh, Afrasiyab's daughter; once the sun never saw me unveiled, but now my face is sallow with grief, my eyes are filled with bloody tears, and I wander from house to house seeking charity. I beg for bread; this is the fate God has visited upon me. Has any life ever been more wretched than mine? May God have mercy upon me. And poor Bizhan in that pit never sees the sun nor moon, but hangs in chains and fetters, begging God for death. His pain adds to my pain, and I have wept so much that my eyes can weep no more. But if you go to Iran again and hear news of Gudarz, or if you see Giv at Kai Khusrau's court or the hero Rustam, tell them that Bizhan lies here in deep distress and that if they delay it will be too late. If they wish to see him alive, they should hurry, for he is crushed between the stone above him and the iron that binds him."

Rustam wept tears of sympathy and said to her, "Dear lovely child, why do you not have the nobles of your country intercede for you with your father? Surely he would forgive you and feel remorse for what has happened?" Then he ordered his cooks to bring Manizheh all kinds of food, and especially he told them to prepare a roasted chicken folded around with soft bread; when they brought this, Rustam dexterously slipped a ring into it and gave it to Manizheh, saying, "Take this to the pit, and look after the poor prisoner who languishes there."

Manizheh hurried back to the pit, with the food wrapped in a cloth and clutched against her breast. She passed down to Bizhan just as she had received it. Bizhan peered at it in astonishment and called out to her, "Dearest Manizheh, you have suffered so much on my behalf. Where did you get this food you are in such a hurry to give me?" She said, "From a Persian merchant who has come with a caravan of goods to Turan; he seems like someone who has passed through many trials, a noble and splendid man. He has a great

many jewels with him and has set up shop in a big warehouse in front of Piran's castle. He gave me the food wrapped in a cloth and told me to bring it to you, and said that I could return for more later."

Hopeful and apprehensive, Bizhan began to open the bread, and as he did so he came on the hidden ring. He peered at the stone set in it and made out a name, then he laughed in triumph and astonishment. It was a

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turquoise seal, with the word "Rustam" engraved on it with a steel point, as fine as a hair. Bizhan saw that the tree of loyalty had born fruit; he knew that the key that would release him from his suffering was at hand. He laughed long and loud and when Manizheh heard him laughing, chained in the darkness as he was, she was alarmed and feared that he had gone mad. She called down to him, "How can you laugh when you cannot tell night from day? What do you know that I do not? Tell me. Has good fortune suddenly shown you her face?"

Bizhan replied, "I am hopeful that fate will finally free me from this pit. If you can swear to keep faith with me, I will tell you the whole tale from beginning to end, but only if you will swear yourself to secrecy, because a man can sew up a woman's mouth to prevent idle talk and she will still find some way to free her tongue."

Manizheh wept and wailed, "How wretched my fate is! Alas for the days of my youth, for my broken heart and my weeping eyes. I have given Bizhan my body, my sul, and my wealth, and now he cannot trust me. My treasury and my jeweled crown were plundered, my father cast me out, unveiled and humiliated, before his court, and now that Bizhan sees hope he leaves me in despair. The world is dark to me, my eyes see nothing, Bizhan hides his thoughts from me, and only God knows all things."

Bizhan replied, "What you say is true. You lost everything for my sake. I should not have said what I said. My kindest friend, my dearest wife, you have to guide me now, the agony I have suffered has turned my brains. Know then that the man selling jewels, whose cook gave you the food you brought, has come to Turan looking for me; that is the only reason he is here selling jewels. God has taken pity on me and I shall see the broad earth once again. This jeweler will save me from my long agony, and you from your grief and beggary on my behalf. Go to him once again and say to

him in secret, "Great hero of the world's kings, tender-hearted and resourceful, tell me if you are Rakhsh's lord."

Manizheh hurried to Rustam like the wind and spoke as Bizhan had instructed her. When Rustam saw her come running like this and heard what she said, he knew that Bizhan has entrusted her with their secret. His heart melted and he said, "May God never withdraw his kindness from you, my lovely child. Tell him, 'Yes, I

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am Rakhsh's lord, sent by God to save you. I have traveled the long road from Zabol to Iran and from Iran to Turan for your sake.' Tell him, but let no one else know of this; in the darkest night listen for the least sound. Spend the next day gathering firewood in the forest, and when night comes, light a huge bonfire."

Overjoyed at his words and freed from all sorrow, Manizheh hurried back to the pit where Bizhan lay bound. She said, "I gave the great lord your message, and he confirmed that he was the man you said he was. He told me to wipe away my tears and to say to you that he had come here like a leopard to find you, and now that he had done so you would soon enough see his sword's work. He will tear up the ground and throw the stone that covers you to the stars. He told me that when the sun releases its grip on the world and night comes I am to build a huge fire so that the stone and the pit's whereabouts shine like the daytime, and he will be able to use the glow as a guide to us."

Bizhan said, "Light the fire that will deliver us both from darkness", and he prayed to God, saying, "Pure, splendid, and just, release me from all sorrows and strike down my enemies with your arrows; give me justice, for you know the pains and grief I have suffered; allow me to see my native country again and to smash against this stone my evil star." Then he addressed Manizheh:

*"And you, who has suffered long and patiently,
Who has given heart and soul and wealth for me,
Who thought that, undergone for me, distress
Was but another name for happiness,
Who cast aside your kin, your noble name,
Your parents, crown and land, to share my shame:
If in my youth I find I am free again,
Delivered from this dragon and this pain,
I will bow before you like a man whose days*

*Are passed before his God in prayer and praise;
Prompt as a slave who waits before his lord,
I will find for you a glorious reward."*

Manizheh set about gathering firewood, going from branch to branch like a bird, her eyes fixed on the sun to mark when it would drop behind the mountains. And when she saw the sun disappear and night draw its skirts over the mountain slopes, at that moment when the world finds peace and all that is visible fades

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from sight because night's army has veiled sunlight in darkness. Manizheh quickly lit the flames. Night's pitch-black eyes were sealed; Manizheh's heart pounded like a brass drum as she listened for the iron hooves of Rakhsh.

For his part, Rustam put on his armor and prayed to the God of the Sun and Moon saying, "May the eyes of the evil one be blinded, give me strength to complete this business of Bizhan." He ordered his warriors to prepare for battle; poplar wood saddles were placed on their mounts, and they made ready to fight.

They set out toward the distant glow, and traveled expeditiously. When they reached the great stone of the Akvan Div and the pit of sorrow and grief, Rustam said to his seven companions, "You will have to dismount and find some way to remove that stone from the mouth of the pit." But no matter how hard the warriors struggled, they could not shift the stone; when Rustam saw how they sweated to no avail, he too dismounted and hitched up his skirts about his waist. Praying to God for strength, he set his hands to the stone and lifted it; with a lion's power he flung it into the forest, and the ground shuddered as the stone landed.

He peered into the pit and, sighing in sympathy, addressed Bizhan: "How did such a misfortune happen to you? Your portion from the world was to have been one of delight, how is it that the goblet you took from her hands was filled with poison?" Bizhan answered from the darkness, "Your journey must have been long and hard; when I heard your war cry, all the world's poison turned to sweetness for me. You see how I have lived, with iron as my earth and a stone as my sky; I have suffered so much pain and grief that I gave up all hope of the world."

Rustam replied, "The shining Keeper of the World has had mercy on your soul, and now I have one request

to ask of you: that you grant me Gorgin's life, and that you drive from your heart all thoughts of hatred for him." Bizhan said, "What do you know of my experiences with this companion of mine; my lionhearted friend, what do you know of how Gorgin treated me? If I ever set eyes on him again my vengeance will be like God's last judgment."

Rustam said, "If you persist in this hatred and refuse to listen to what I have to say, I shall leave you chained here in this pit; I shall mount Rakhsh and
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return whence I came," When he heard Rustam's words, a cry of grief rose up from the pit, and Bizhan said, "I am the most wretched of our clan's heroes. The evil that came to me was from Gorgin, and now I must suffer for this, too: but I accept, and drive all thoughts of hatred for him from my heart."

Rustam lowered his lariat into the pit and brought Bizhan out of its depths, wasted away with pain and suffering, his legs still shackled, his head uncovered, his hair and nails grown long, all his body caked with blood where where the chains had eaten into the flesh. Rustam gave a great cry when he saw him weighed down with iron and set about breaking the fetters and shackles. They made their way home, with Bizhan on one side of Rustam and the woman who had succored him on the other; the two young people recounted their sufferings to the hero, who had Bizhan's head washed and fresh cloths brought for him. Then Gorgin came forward and sank to the ground, striking his face against the dust; he asked pardon for his evil acts and for the foolish things he had said. Bizhan's heart forgave him, and he forgot all thoughts of punishment.

The camels were loaded with their goods. Rustam put on his armor once more and the Persian warriors mounted, with drawn swords and maces at the ready. Ashkash, who was a wary fighter, always on the lookout for whatever might harm the army, led off the baggage train. Rustam said to Bizhan, "you and Manizheh should go with Ashkash. Afrasiyab will be so enraged we cannot rest tonight. I am going to play a trick on him within his own walls, and his whole country will laugh at him tomorrow." But Bizhan's answer was, "If I am the one who is being avenged, I should be at the head of this expedition."

Rustam and the seven warriors left the baggage train in Ashkash's capable hands and set out. Letting their reins hang slack on their saddles and drawing

their swords, they arrived at Afrasiyab's palace at the time when men turn to drunkenness, rest, and sleep. They attacked and confusion reigned: swords glittered, arrows poured down, heads fell severed from bodies, mouths were clogged with dust. Rustam stood in the portico of Afrasiyab's palace and yelled, "So you sleep well, do you, you and your valiant warriors? You slept in state while Bizhan was in the pit, but did you dream of an iron wall confronting you? I am Rustam, the son of Zal; now is no time for sleep in soft beds. I

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have smashed your chains and removed the stone you set as Bizhan's keeper; he is free of his fetters, and rightly so, since this was no way to treat a son-in-law! Were Siyavush's sufferings, and the war that came from them, not enough for you? You had no right to seek Bizhan's life, but I see your heart is stupefied and your mind is asleep." And Bizhan cried out, "Misbegotten, evil-minded Turk, think how you dealt with me when you were on your throne and I stood chained before you; then, when I was bound motionless as a stone, you were savage as a leopard, but now I walk freely on the face of the earth, and the ferocious lion slinks off."

Afrasiyab struggled with his cloths and called out, "Are all my warriors asleep? Any man who wants jewels and a crown, block these enemies' advance." Cries and a confused noise of combat resounded on all sides, and blood streamed beneath Afrasiyab's door; every Turanian warrior who ventured forward was killed, and finally Afrasiyab fled from his palace. Rustam entered the building and distributed among his men its cloth and carpets, the noble horses with their poplar wood saddles covered with leopard skins and jewels, and the king's women-folk, who took the Persian heroes by the hand.

They left the palace and packed up their plunder, having no intention of staying any longer in Turan. Because of the baggage they carried and to avoid a bitter outcome to their expedition, they urged the horses forward as fast as they could. Rustam became so exhausted by their haste that even the weight of his helmet was a trouble to him, and his companions and their horses were so weak they had hardly a pulse left in their arteries. Rustam sent a messenger to the forces he had left when he crossed into Turan, saying, "Draw your swords from their scabbards; I am certain that the earth will soon be black with an army's

hooves. Afrasiyab will muster an army of vengeance, and follow us here; their lances will darken the sunlight."

At last the returning group reached the waiting army; they made themselves ready for battle, their lances sharpened, their reins at the ready. A lookout saw horsemen approaching from Turan and Rustam went to Manizheh in her tent and said, "If the wine has been spilt, its scent still lingers: if our pleasures are past, the memory of them is still ours. But this is the

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way of the world, giving us now sweetness and pleasure, now bitterness and pain."

As soon as the sun rose above the mountain tops Turan's warriors had begun to prepare for their onslaught. The town was filled with a deafening clamor: horsemen mustered in their ranks before him, and all were eager to exact revenge from Iran. They felt that the time had passed for words; a remedy had to be found, since what Bizhan had done had disgraced their king forever. "The Iranians do not call us men," they said. "They say we are women dressed as warriors."

Like a leopard, Afrasiyab strode forward and gave the signal for war: he ordered Piran to have the war drums strapped on their elephants, saying, "These Persians will make fun of us no more." Brass trumpets, bugles, and Indian chimes rang out before the palace. Turan was in an uproar as the army set out for the Persian border, and the whole earth seemed like a moving ocean.

A lookout saw the earth heaving like the sea and ran to Rustam: "prepare to fight, the world has turned black from the dust flung up by their horsemen." But Rustam replied, "There is no cause for fear; dust is what they will come to if they fight with us." Leaving the baggage with Manizheh, he donned his armor and came out to inspect his troops, roaring like a lion, "What use I a fox when it is caught in a lion's claws?" Then he addressed his army:

*"The day of battle has come: my noble lords,
Where are your iron-piercing spears, your swords?
Now is the time to show your bravery
And turn our vengeance into victory."*

The trumpets blared and Rustam mounted Rakhsh. He led his men down from the mountainside as the enemy

were passing through a defile to the plains. The two sides ranged themselves behind walls of iron-clad warriors. On the Persian side, Ashkash and Gostaham and their horsemen made up the right flank, the left was commanded by Farhad and Zangeh, while Rostam himself and Bizhan were in the center. Behind them towered Mount Bisitun, and before them was a wall of swords. When Afrasiyab saw that the enemy forces were led by Rostam, he put on his armor uneasily and ordered his men to hold back. He had them form defensive ranks; the air darkened and the ground disappeared. He entrusted

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his left flank to Piran, and the right to Human; the center was held by Garsivaz and Shideh, while he himself kept an eye on all parts of the line.

Like a massive mountain, Rostam rode up and down between the armies and called out:

*"You miserable, wretched Turk - you shame
Your thrown, your warriors, and your noble name.
Your heart is not in this fight; how many men
You have mustered in your army's ranks, but when
The battle is joined at last and I attack,
I will see no more than your retreating back.
And did my father never say to you
The ancient proverbs that are always true?
'A herd of milling asses cannot fight
Against a single lion's savage might;
All heaven's stars will never equal one
In glory and in radiance - the sun;
Words will not give courage to a fox, no laws
Can make an ass develop lion's claws.'
Do not be a fool, and if you want to save
Your sovereignty, do not act as if you are brave;
If you attack this time, in all this plain
You will not escape alive from me again!"*

When the Turkish king heard these words he trembled, heaved a bitter sigh, and cried out in fury, "Warriors of Turan! Is this a battlefield, or a banqueting hall?"

When they heard their commander's voice a great shout went up from the Turanian ranks; dust rose into the sky obscuring the sun, war drums were fastened on elephants, horns and trumpets sounded, and the line of armored warriors made a solid iron wall. The plain and mountain slopes re-echoed with cries from men on both sides, in the dusty air the glitter of swords flashed

as if the world's end had come, and blows from steel maces rained down on armor and helmets like hail. Rustam's banner, with its dragon device [both Arthur Pendragon, known as King Arthur, also bore a banner with a dragon as its heraldic device, while Rodrigo Diaz de Vivar, known as El Cid, carried a shield which bore the dragon as the heraldic symbol: so, King Arthur, Kai Khusrau and Rodrigo Diaz de Vivar, "El Cid", all used the dragon as their heraldic device], seemed to eclipse the sun; wherever he rode, severed heads fell to the ground. With his ox-headed mace he

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was like a maddened dromedary that has slipped its tether, and from the center of the army he scattered his enemies like a wolf.

On the right flank Ashkash pressed on like the wind, eager for combat with Garsivaz; on the left, Gorginm Farhad, and Roham pushed back the Turkish warriors; and in the center Bizhan went triumphantly forward as if the battle were a celebratory feast. Warriors' heads fell like leaves from a tree, and the battlefield became a river of blood in which the Turkish banners lay overturned and abandoned.

When Afrasiyab saw the day was lost and that his brave warriors had been slain, he threw away his Indian sword and mounted a fresh horse: he separated himself from the Turkish army and rode toward Turan, having achieved nothing by his attempt to ambush the Persians. Rustam sped after him, raining arrows and blows on the intervening Turks; like a fire-breathing dragon he followed him for two parasangs, but finally returned to camp, where a thousand Turkish prisoners were waiting. There he distributed to the army the wealth his men had captured, loaded up the elephant train with baggage, and set out in triumph to Kai Khusrau.

When news reached the king that the lion was returning victorious, that Bizhan had been released from the prison where he had been held, that the army of Turan had been smashed and all their hopes had come to naught, he prayed to God for joy, striking his face and forehead against the dust.

Gudarz and Giv hurried to Kai Khusrau. The noise of the approaching army's war drums and trumpets could be heard; then the ground in front of the king's palace was darkened by horses' hooves, the clamor of trumpets and horns resounded throughout the city, the banners of Gudarz and Giv were raised, chained leopards and lions were led out on one side and on the

other were mounted warriors. In this fashion, as the king had commanded, the army went out to greet the returning victors.

When Rustam emerged from the approaching group, Gudarz and Giv dismounted, and all the Persian nobility followed suit. Rustam too dismounted and greeted those who had come to welcome him. Gudarz and Giv addressed him, "Great commander, may God hold you forever in his keeping, may the sun and moon turn as you would wish, may the heavens never tire of you; you have made us your slaves, for through you we have found our lost

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son; it is you who has delivered us from pain and sorrow, and all Persians long to serve you."

The nobles remounted and processed toward the king. When they were close to the city, Kai Khusrau came out and welcomed Rustam as the guardian of all his heroes. Rustam saw that the king himself was coming to greet him and he dismounted once more, saying he was humbled that the king had put himself to this trouble. Kai Khusrau embraced him and said, "You are a root stock of manliness and a mine of virtues; your deeds shine like the sun, for their goodness is seen everywhere." Quickly Rustam took Bizhan by the hand and handed him over to his father and his king. Then he brought the thousand Turanian prisoners bound before the king, and Kai Khusrau called down heaven's blessings on him, praising Zal, who had such a son, and Zabol, that had nurtured such a hero.

Next the king addressed Giv: "The hidden purposes of God have looked kindly on you: through Rustam He has restored your son to you." Giv replied, "May you live happily and forever, and may Rustam's luck remain ever fresh and green, and may Zal rejoice in his son."

Kai Khusrau gave a great feast for his nobles, after which the company went to a splendid hall where they were plied with wine and entertained by richly dressed musicians whose cheeks blushed like rich brocade, and who accompanied their songs with the bewitching sound of harps. There were golden trays heaped with musk, and to the front of the hall was an artificial pool filled with rosewater; in his glory, the king seemed like a cypress topped by the full moon, and when the nobles left his palace every one of them was drunk.

At dawn Rustam returned to the court, prompt to serve his prince and with not a care in his heart; he

asked for permission to return home, and Kai Khusrau discussed this with him for a while. He ordered his chamberlain to bring in a suit of clothes sewn with jewels, a cloak and crown, a goblet filled with royal gems, a hundred serving youths - all these he gave to Rustam, who kissed the ground in thanks. The hero then placed the crown on his head, girt himself in the cloak and belt, made his farewells to the king, and took the road to Seistan. And his noble companions, who had seen so much sorrow and joy and suffering at his side, were also given presents, and they too left the king's palace in good spirits.

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When the king had said farewell to his champions, he settled contentedly on his throne and summoned Bizhan. He asked him about the pains and sorrows he had endured, the narrow pit where he had languished, and the woman who had ministered to him. Bizhan talked at length, and as the king listened he was moved to pity, for him and for the torments Afrasiyab's poor daughter had endured. He had a hundred sets of clothes of cloth of gold worked with jewels brought in, as well as a crown, ten purses of gold coins, slaves, carpets, and all manner of goods and said to Bizhan, "Take these to your grieving Turkish friend: speak gently to her, see you do not make her sufferings worse, think what she has gone through for your sake!

"Live your life in happiness with her now, and consider the turnings of Fate, who lifts one to the high heavens so that he knows nothing of grief nor pain, and then throws him weeping beneath the dust. It is fearful, terrible, to think on this. And while one is brought up with luxury and caresses, and is thrown bewildered and despairing into a dark pit, another is lifted from the pit and raised to a throne where a jeweled crown is placed on his head. The world has no shame in doing this; it is prompt to hand out both pleasure and pain and has no need of us and our doings. Such is the way of the world that guides us to both good and evil. Now you should never need for wealth, and I wish you a heart free from all sorrow."

The war between Iran and Turan continued, but Turan's forces were inexorably driven back and defeated by Kai Khusrau's army. In one encounter Piran was killed by Gudarz, and his death was lamented by both Kai Khusrau and Rustam who remembered him as a noble, conciliatory counselor who had protected fugitive Persians in Turan, and tried when possible to make peace between the two peoples.

Piran died stoically, accepting his fate, but when Afrasiyab was finally captured and brought before Kai Khusrau he pleaded for his life and was ignominiously executed.

Still alive, but living in retirement and far from the center of events, Kai Kavus felt that, with the death of his lifelong enemy, his life's last mission had been accomplished."

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We have given considerable information concerning Siyavush, some from the Shah Namah of Firdausi, some from other sources.

The hero Siyavush has not been forgotten in Iran, but in an Islamic context the religious aspects are forgotten or at least largely eclipsed. However, said aspects have left clear traces.

In parts of Iran the celebration of 'Ashura is still called Suvashun, after Siyavush (See Ehsan Yarshater, "Ta'ziye and Pre-Islamic Mouring Rites in Iran", in Peter J. Chelkowski (ed.), Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran, New York, 1979, pp. 88-94.)

Tha'alebi records a tradition according to which at the death of Siyavush "a violent wind began to blow, heavy dust arose and a stagnant darkness spread."(14)

Ibn Balkhi recounts that when news of the death of Siyavush reached Iran, Kai Kavus, his father, lamented:

"It was not Afrasiyab who killed him, it was I who killed the holy Siyavush."(15)

Mahmud al-Kashghari says:

"Every year the Zoroastrians go to the Diz Ru'in, near Bukhara, where Siyavush was killed. They weep and offer a sacrifice there and pour the blood of the

sacrificial animal on the grave, and this is their custom."(16)

Says Ehsan Yarshater concerning Siyavush:

"In the Avesta, Siyavush (Avestan: Syavarshan, Pahlavi: Syavakhsh) is mentioned among the righteous heroes whose Fravashis are celebrated. His treacherous murder by Afrasiyab and the Turanian Garsevaz, and the

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subsequent avenging of his blood by his son Kai Khusrau are also mentioned. But there is little doubt that the legends of his ordeal by fire at the court of his father, his flight to Turan, his building of the marvelous castle of Kang-sez, his marriage to Afrasiyab's daughter and the birth of his son must also have had their origin among the Avestan people and appear to have fed popular fancy from ancient times. Siyavush's renown among the Iranian peoples of Central Asia can be inferred from Biruni's statement that the people of Chorasmia began their era with the building of the city of Khwarazm 980 years before Alexander, and then made Siyavush's entrance into it the beginning of their era, 92 years after the building of Khwarazm. The people of Sogdiana attributed the building of Bukhara, the Sogdian capital, to Siyavush and believed that he was buried there. According to Narshakhi in the History of Bukhara, a 10th century work, the Zoroastrians (mughan) of the city used to venerate his grave and every year on New year's day, before the sunrise, each believer would bring a cock there and would kill it in memory of Siyavush. From the scattered accounts of Siyavush it is apparent that he must have been the focus of a mourning cult dating from pre-Zoroastrian times. Although the non-Zoroastrian context of references to him in Islamic sources, notably Firdausi, Dinawari and Tabari, has robbed his legend of its religious and cultic aspects, enough traces have been left to show its once ritualistic and religious import. Narshakhi, our chief source in this respect, relates that the people of Bukhara have wonderful songs (suruds) concerning the slaying of Siyavush, and that the minstrels call these songs "the vengeance of Siyavush" (kin-i-Siyavush). His subsequent comment leaves no doubt that these songs were in fact mourning songs

(nauha) which the minstrels called "the weeping of the Magi" (giristan-i-mughan).

Tha'alabi and Firdausi record a tradition according to which cosmic disturbances took place when Siyavush was killed. Such legends could point only to belief in the sanctity of the slain hero. This inference finds support in Ibn al-Balkhi, who recounts that when the news of Siyavush's death reached Iran, his father Kai Kavus lamented deeply, saying, "It was not Afrasiyab who killed him; it was I who killed the holy (rauhani) Siyavush." It is to be noted that Siyavush's son, Kai Khusrau, too, has a certain
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holiness about him, and Ibn al-Balkhi tells us that according to the Persians he was a prophet.

The fact that Siyavush was the centre of a mourning cult in Transoxiana can be clearly seen from Kashgari's account: "Every year the Zoroastrians go to the Dizh Ro'in, near Bukhara, where Siyavush was killed. They weep and offer a sacrifice there and pour the blood of the sacrificial animal on his grave; and this is their custom." The existence in Sogdiana of mourning rites for the dead, involving weeping and lamenting and self-mortification, has been asserted by Biruni. Further evidence for Siyavush's connection with mourning rites can be found in other sources. For instance, Tha'alibi tells us of a seven-days' formal mourning by Rustam and other warriors when the news of Siyavush's death reached the Iranian court, and Tabari relates that according to Persian authorities the first man to wear black in mourning was Shadus, son of Godarz, who did so when Siyavush was killed by Firasiyat (Afrasiyab).

What can be deduced from literary sources about the mourning rites concerning Siyavush seems to have found unexpected confirmation in archaeological excavations in Transoxiana. Diggings in the ruins of Panjikert, a Sogdian city sixty-eight kilometers east of Samarkand, have brought to light a series of extensive wall paintings, the focal theme of which is the mourning of men and gods for a young prince. There can be little doubt that the mourned figure is Siyavush. Similar scenes appear on a chest from Tok-Kala in the extreme north of the Amu Darya delta, and on a vase found in Marv.

From a number of references to the manner in which Siyavush was slain, it appears that, as would befit a martyred saint, he was killed cruelly and in a way that could not but arouse deep anguish and

overwhelming pity. After he was wounded, his hands were tied and he was humiliated and driven to the place where he had once excelled in physical prowess. Then he was thrown down "like a lamb" and his throat was slit with a sword. Apparently also he was mutilated and his handsome and radiant face was cut up and destroyed.

Annual mourning rites for Siyavush seem to have been closely connected with those for the dead, whose *fravashis* were celebrated in the days immediately preceding the New Year festival. It was believed in

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Sananian times that on New Year's day Siyavush was avenged by Kai Khusrau. ...

... A trace of the ancient myths may be seen in the story that from Siyavush's blood there immediately grew an herb called "The Blood of Siyavush" (*khun-i-Siyavushan*), even though Afrasiyab had ordered his victim's blood to be shed over a barren rock.

It also appears that the mourning cult of Siyavush, a legacy of Iranian pre-Zoroastrian times, paved the way and provided the mould for the development of the Shi'ite mourning rites in Iran which eventually led to the emergence of the *ta'ziya*. Curiously, Firdausi's account of Siyavush's murder bears striking similarity to the passion of Imam Hussein as depicted in Persian passion plays (*ta'ziya*). In both cases, an innocent holy person of exalted lineage, who has stood up for truth and righteousness, is killed by a treacherous and ruthless enemy. The passion of Siyavush bears too close a resemblance to that of Imam Hussein in ritual, imagery and emotive underpinnings to be ignored in an explanation of the Islamic genre." (17)

The wild Persian tulip, ***Tulipa Montana***, is indeed blood red. It is said to have originated on Mount Demavand just south of Mazandaran. Mount Demavand is the Holy mountain of the Zoroastrians. (18)

As the tulip has five petals, it also represents the *panj-e-tan*, or five pure ones: Muhammad, Fatima, Ali, Hasan and Hussein.

We shall have more to say of the panj-e-tan later in this chapter.

Say Michael J. Fischer and Mehdi Abadi:

"The tulip in Persian is laleh, also the word for a candle lantern with a tulip-shaped glass. In poetry it (the tulip) is associated with the blood of lovers who die in the course of their quest on the battlefields of love; and this is easily transformed

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into the blood shed for the ultimate Beloved, martyrdom in the way of God. These are old associations going back to the pre-Islamic imagery of a tulip growing from the cheek of the martyred Siyavush, an Iranian prince slain for reasons of state by the Turanian enemies of Iran. It is translated into the imagery of the martyrdom (of Imam Hussein) at Karbala. Tears, moreover, water the blood-red tulips of martyrdom: blood and tears provide the nutrient irrigation for making the cause of the martyrs strong in the memory and rededication of the living. The tulip has become the icon of martyrdom for the Islamic Republic (of Iran), and it is one of the most omnipresent symbols in the republic's visual arts."(19)

Numerous examples of the above are seen in posters of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The tulip is sometimes shown as forming part of the emblem of the Islamic Republic of Iran.(20) Some posters show the figure of Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib within a red tulip(21), which certainly reminds one of Siyavush. There is also a poster showing a tulip-man collage with the skyline of Qum and a crowd holding a poster of Khomeini.(22) Finally, there exists a poster which shows a woman and child on a desert road of petroleum seeking salvation in tulips and Khomeini.(23)

In Iran it is widely believed that blood red tulips grow spontaneously where Iranian soldiers were killed in action during the Iran-Iraq War. Some Iranian war veterans say that they have seen this with their own eyes.(24)

As is well known, in Catholic and Eastern Orthodox iconography, the white dove is the symbol of the Holy Spirit.

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In the Catholic Church the commemoration of the baptism of Jesus by St. John the Baptist (Yahya) in the River Jordan has no fixed date, but is the first Sunday after January 6. January 6 is the "Twelfth Day of Christmas", commemorating the arrival of the three Magi (Persian Zoroastrian priests) at Bethlehem to offer their gifts to the newborn Jesus. In Spain, January 6th is called "Day de los Reyes Magos", i.e., "Day of the Magian (Persian Zoroastrian) Kings".

In Eastern Orthodox Christianity, the commemoration of the baptism of Jesus by St. John the Baptist is January 6th, on which date, in the Greek Orthodox Church (the climate in Russia and Ukraine does not permit this) is celebrated the rite known as the "Blessing of the Waters", which rite I have personally witnessed on several occasions. In said rite, a large brass or bronze cross is thrown into a lake or pond, and young men dive

to retrieve it. When the cross has been retrieved and returned to shore, a white dove is released.

In many places the climate does not permit the "Blessing of the Waters" to be celebrated in the manner described above; however, this does not mean that it is not celebrated, though in this case I have not witnessed it personally. Below is a description of the Blessing of the Waters" as celebrated in pre-Revolutionary Russia:

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"In a rare performance of public ceremonial, Tsar Nicholas II attended the ritual of the Blessing of the Waters, traditionally marking the end of the Christmas festival, held on 6th January in the Orthodox calendar. The key moment came when he (the Tsar) descended the Jordan Staircase of the Winter Palace to the edge of the frozen River Neva, to witness the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg dip the gold cross into the water three times through a hole in the ice in commemoration of the baptism of (Jesus) Christ. After this a flagon of the sacred water was presented to the Tsar to cross himself with."(25)

Whether the blessed water of the stream, lake or pond becoming holy water in which one dips one's fingers before making the Sign of the Cross is a custom in all Orthodox countries in which the climate does not permit the celebration of the Blessing of the Waters in the manner described in relation to the Greek Orthodox Church, or is a local, Russian custom, I do not know.

Obviously, where the climate requires that the Blessing of the Waters must involve a hole in the ice of a stream or pond,

the releasing of the white dove would also be precluded, as doves cannot tolerate intense cold.

As we mentioned earlier, the white dove is a symbol which also appears in Shi'a iconography and graphic design, particularly in Iran. A lovely example of this is the image of the emblem of the Islamic Republic of Iran formed by a tulip and the wings of two white doves.(26) There is also a poster showing the flag of the Islamic Republic of Iran with the emblem of said

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republic, tulips and two wounded white doves with blood on their chests and wings.(27)

In the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches it is said that for a sin against the Holy Spirit there is no pardon on earth nor in Heaven, in other words, such a sin is impardonable. On the cover of a book published in Qum, Iran I saw a reproduction of a painting which was a partly schematic, partly symbolic representation of the martyrdom of Imam Hussein at Karbala.(28) In the foreground of said painting are two white doves with blood on their chests and with their wings broken and bloodied. To someone such as myself, with a strong Catholic and Eastern Orthodox background, the clear message of the above-mentioned painting is that those who had martyred Imam Hussein at Karbala had committed a sin against the Holy Spirit, a sin for which there is no pardon. As we shall see later in this

chapter, in both Sunni and Shi'a Islam, Jesus is often called "The Spirit of God".

It would be too much to say that the mourning for Imam Hussein typical of Ashura is simply an imitation of earlier, pre-Islamic rites. However, it is true that said Ashura rites do have pre-Islamic antecedents, both Zoroastrian and Christian. Nor should this scandalize anyone, except perhaps for Calvinists and Wahhabis, whose intellects and spirits are poisoned by

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Manichaeism and Nominalism. As we said before, it seems that Imam Hussein did identify with St. John the Baptist, and he married the daughter of Yazdigird III, last Sassanian Emperor. This Persian princess, named Shahr Banu, literally "Daughter of the Country" in Persian, and called "The Gazelle" by Imam Hussein, became the mother of Ali Zain al-Abidin, who became the 4th Imam, and thus, Shahr Banu is called "the mother (or female ancestor) of Nine Imams" Shahr Banu is renowned in Iran. A few miles south of Teheran is a mountain called Kuh-i-Bibi-Shahr-Banu, the "Mountain of the Lady Shahr Banu". Kuh-i-Bibi-Shahr-Banu is sacred to the memory of Shahr Banu, and no male foot may profane it. Iranian women visit Kuh-i-Bibi-Shahr-Banu to ask that Shahr Banu intercede for them with God.(29) The parallel with many sanctuaries devoted to the Virgin Mary or to female saints in Catholic and Eastern Orthodox countries is obvious.

As we said in the previous chapter, Zoroastrians join in the Ashura mourning rites for Imam Hussein, because, having been the husband of Sharh Banu, they consider Imam Hussein to be their "beloved son in law"(dâmâd).

In this chapter we will deal mainly with the rites of Ashura as practiced in Iran and the Indian Subcontinent. However, first we will note an element of these rites peculiar to Iran.

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As we mentioned earlier, the Celtic hero Brigo or Breoghan is well known in both Ireland and Spain. In my newspaper column I wrote that Brigo or Breoghan really lived. Shortly thereafter, someone scoffed at the idea, saying that Brigo or Breoghan was only a "fable" or "myth". I replied, giving reasons why I believe Brigo or Breoghan was a real person. The scoffer replied that my proofs were inconclusive, to which I answered:

"They may be not be conclusive, but they are not negligible either. What proofs have you that Brigo or Breoghan never lived?".

The reply was silence.

Modernity has produced a vast number of professional scoffers inspired by sophomoric impertinence and Ich und Gott arrogance. Said professional scoffers will claim that Abraham, Moses, Zoroaster, Buddha, Socrates, Jesus and the Prophet Muhammad never lived. Perhaps in the future someone will say that Karl Marx never existed, that he is merely the personification of bourgeois

materialism and envy, and that Sigmund Freud never existed, that he is merely the archetypical prurient mind.

There are those who say that Shahr Banu, who, as we said before, was wife of Imam Hussein and mother of Imam Zain al-Abidin, never lived, that she is fictitious, a creation of Persian nationalists.

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Few are those who deny that Imam Ali Zain al-Abidin is an historical figure. In his work Al-Sahifai al-Kamilat al-Sajjadiyya, Imam Ali Zain al-Abidin, though he does not mention her name, speaks of his mother with great respect and a tenderness which reveals a nostalgia and sense of loss obviously based on real memories.(30) Certainly Imam Zain al-Abidin knew the identity of his mother. Would he have told a lie in this respect? Would his devoted followers, nearly all of whom were at this early date Arabs rather than Persians, have been ignorant of the identity of the mother of Imam Ali Zain al-Abidin or lied about it? Could the identity of the mother of Imam Ali Zain al-Abidin have been forgotten in such a short time? Al-Yaqubi, an Arab (not Persian) historian of the 9th century AD, affirms that Shahr Banu was the mother of Imam Ali Zain al-Abidin.(31)

Being an Arab, al-Yaqubi was most certainly not a Persian nationalist, and no doubt derived his information from Arab sources.

In summary, those who claim that Shahr Banu never lived are on a level with the fictitious scholar who claimed that the Allied invasion of Normandy in 1944 never happened because of too many uncanny coincidences with the Norman invasion of England in 1066.

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In Iran, Shahr Banu plays a prominent role in the poetic and dramatic literature connected with Ashura, the commemoration of the martyrdom of Imam Hussein.(32)

This is NOT to say that Shi'as outside Iran claim that Shahr Banu never lived; on the contrary, as we shall see, she is recognized as the wife of Imam Hussein and mother of Imam Ali Zain al-Abidin. We are only saying that only in Iran does Shahr Banu have a large role in the poetic and dramatic literature dealing with Ashura, though, as we shall see, Shar Banu has at least a small role in Urdu poetry dealing with the martyrdom of Imam Hussein.

In most of the above-mentioned literary works, Shahr Banu is shown as weeping for her martyred husband Imam Hussein, her martyred stepson (not son) Ali Akbar and for her son Imam Ali Zain al-Abidin, taken into captivity when gravely ill, and who at the time must have appeared to be doomed to die either by illness or murder.

There is, of course, an anachronism here; Shahr Banu, like Fatima bint Muhammad, died a number of years before the martyrdom of Imam Hussein.(33) However, in this case the literature is presenting symbolic rather than literal truth; had Shahrbanu and Fatima bint Muhammad been alive at the time of the tragedy of Karbala, they would certainly have lamented for the death of Imam

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Hussein and the apparent doom of Imam Ali Zain al-Abidin. We have seen the same sort of thing in Irish Gaelic songs concerning the sorrows of the Virgin Mary.

There is thus a certain parallel between the role of Fatima bint Muhammad, Shahrbanu and Zainab in the story of the martyrdom of Imam Hussein and the role of the three Marys, i.e., the Virgin Mary, Ste. Mary of Bethany and Ste. Mary of Magdala in the Gospel accounts of the Crucifixion of Jesus.

The above does not mean to say that there is any sort of copying or imitation involved. Though not with absolute consistency, the Islamic Tradition in general affirms that Jesus was not crucified, and therefore not martyred. As we said before, the Shi'a Tradition identifies Imam Hussein with St. John the Baptist - who was indeed martyred - rather than with Jesus, though, as we have seen, in some sources Jesus in Heaven is portrayed as mourning for Imam Hussein. Also, if imitation, even unconscious imitation, were involved, the parallels could - and no

doubt would - have been much more exact. Nevertheless, it is interesting that three women should have such important roles in both the Gospel (Injil) accounts of the Crucifixion of Jesus and in the literary accounts of the martyrdom of Imam Hussein, that the image of the Mater Dolorosa (Sorrowful Mother) should be so prominent in both traditions.

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Below is a biography of Shahr Banu by Baqir Sharif al-Qarashi. Though very brief, said biography is both scholarly and informative.

THE ANOINTED PRINCESS LADY SHAHZANAN

(The above in Persian would be: [**Banu Begam Shahzanan Shahzadeh**], i.e., The Lady Shahzanan, the Anointed Princess.) The above word order is perhaps best, as the gender of the word **Shahzadeh** is ambiguous, while **Banu Begam** unquestionably means "Lady".)

"We have before us a noble lady and anointed, royal princess. This lady was among the honorable, pure women of the Muslims. She was a great lady, Shahzanan. She was the daughter of the Persian kings and was mother of Imam Zain al-Abidin, peace be upon him. This great lady occupied an important position in the world of the Muslim women. Indeed, she was among the great ladies of her time. She was prominent among the Muslim women and was distinguished by noble qualities. Among them are:

A.)She had a very distinguished lineage. She was the daughter (I.e., descendant of) Choesroe (i.e., the Sassanian Emperor Khusrau I Anushirvan), the just king and pride of the kings of the East. Concerning him, the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, said with pride: "I was born at the time of the just king, Choesroe."

B.)She was the wife of the Lord of Martyrs, Imam Hussein, peace be upon him.

C.)She was the mother of Zain al-Abidin and Sayyid al-Sajidin, peace be upon them.

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D.)She was the grandmother of the pure Imams from among the children of Zain al-Abidin, peace be upon him.

E.)She was the holy bond between the Arabs and the Persians. (And, by extension, between the Semites and the Indo-Europeans or Aryans.)

Indeed, these qualities added honor to her honor and glory to her glory.

Her Psychological Traits

As for her psychological traits, they were chastity, purity, perfection, moral standards, and cleverness. As she had good inclinations and honorable traits, the Commander of the faithful (Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib), peace be upon him, hastened to marry her to his son Imam Hussein, peace be upon him. He ordered him to treat her kindly and to do good to her. We will briefly present some of her biographical data according to what the scholarly authorities have mentioned.

Reports of Her Marriage

The reports differ as to the date of her marriage to Imam Hussein, peace be upon him. Below are some of said reports:

At the Time of Umar

Al-Kulayni affirmed on the authority of Imam Abu Ja'afar al-Baqir, peace be upon him: he said: "When Yazdigird (last Sassanian Emperor)'s daughter came, 'Umar made the virgins of Medina honor her. When 'Umar

looked at her, she covered her face and said: "Uf birujj bada Hurmuz." These words meaning the day of Hurmuz has become black because his daughters have become prisoners.

"Is she abusing me?" asked 'Umar. That is not for you to decide," said the Commander of the Faithful. "Let her choose a person from among the Muslims."

She walked until she put her hand on the head of (Imam) Hussein, peace be upon him.

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Some historians have mentioned a report similar to the above. They said: "Yazdigird had two daughters. They were taken prisoners during the time of 'Umar. Thus, the Commander of the Faithful (Imam Ali), peace be upon him, took them. One of these he had given to Imam al-Hussein and she bore him Zain al-Abidin. He had given the other to Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr and she bore him al-Qasim.

Ibn Kullakan has mentioned a report similar to this. However, he has added that there were three daughters. So he (the Commander of the Faithful) had given the third to 'Abd Allah ibn 'Umar.

B.) At the Time of 'Uthman

Al-Sadiq has reported: "When 'Abd Allah ibn 'Umar conquered Khurasan (northeastern Persia) during the days of 'Uthman, he took the two daughters of Yazdigird prisoners. He sent them to 'Uthman. Of them the elder had been given to al-Hasan. He gave the other to al-Hussein.

C.) At the Time of the Caliphate of the Commander of the Faithful

A group of historians and narrators has reported: "When the Commander of the Faithful (Imam 'Ali), peace be upon him, had assumed the Caliphate, he appointed Hurayth ibn Jabir as governor over part of the eastern provinces. The latter had sent him two daughters of Yazdigird. Of these he had given the one named Shahzanan to his son al-Hussein, peace be upon him, and she bore him Zain al-Abidin, peace be upon him. He had given the other to Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, and she bore him al-Qasim, the famous jurist."

These are the reports which have mentioned her marriage to Imam Hussein, the Lord of Martyrs, peace be upon him. Worth mentioning, the last two reports did not mention the capture of Lady (**Banu Begam**) Shahzanan and her two sisters, rather, they have noted that they were sent to the Caliph. But the first report clearly mentions their capture.

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Checking the Reports

We must check these differing reports. We think that the first report is incorrect for the following reasons:

➤ 1.) Yazdigird was alive throughout the Caliphate of 'Umar. 'Umar preceded Yazdigird in death. He was killed in Maru in the year 30 A.H. That was in the sixth year of the Caliphate of 'Uthman. We firmly believe that Lady (**Banu Begam**) Shahzanan and her two sisters disappeared after the murder of until the time of the Caliphate of the Commander of the Faithful (Imam 'Ali). The Commander of the Faithful appointed Hurayth ibn Jabir as governor of that area. The latter found them and sent them to the Imam, peace be upon him.

➤ 2.) The words of Abu Hanifa indicate that the first report is incorrect. When the daughter of Yazdigird was brought to the Commander of the Faithful, he, peace be upon him, said to her:

"Choose whomever you want from among the Muslims."

She answered with awareness and high purpose:

"I want a head over whom there is no other head."

This indicates the strong awareness of this Princess.

The Imam answered her kindly, saying:

"Indeed 'Ali is an old man."

This means that the Imam was in no need of women, for he was an old man. Besides, he was busy dealing with the affairs that surrounded him.

But the Princess insisted on her idea, saying:

"I spoke only to you."

Some Persian leaders asked the Imam to marry her to one of them.

The Imam answered, saying: "That is up to her. If she wishes to refuse marriage, then she can refuse it.

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If she wishes to accept marriage, then she can accept it.

The Imam had no right to impose marriage on her, rather that was her decision. No one had the right to force her to do his will. The Princess refrained from answering him. We firmly believe that it was Lady Shahzanan who decided of her own free will. Her marriage took place during the Caliphate of the Commander of the Faithful, peace be upon him.

➤ 3.)The third report is more famous than the first two. Most jurists think that fame makes this report superior to the other reports. A-Muqrim, a researcher, believed in this report.

Irregular Ideas

Some historians have mentioned irregular ideas concerning the lineage of Lady Shahzanan. They are as follows:

➤ A.)She was from the country of Sind.

➤ B.)She was among those who were taken prisoners in Kabul.

These two theories are opposed to what the narrators and historians are full, unanimous agreement, because they said that she was the daughter of Yazdigird, the king of the Persians. That was well known even during the time of the Imam Ali. All the people were aware of this. In this connection, Abu al-Aswad al-Du'ali, who was a contemporary of the Imam, said:

Indeed there is a son between kasra and Hashim.

He is more noble than he to whom the charms were entrusted

He is the light. The place of his secret is the Light of Allah.

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He is the source of the fountain of the Imamate.

He is knowledgeable.

Imam Zain al-Abidin, peace be upon him, confirmed that when he said: "I am the son of two good (communities)." (i.e., Arabs and Persians, or, in broader terms, Semites [Arabs are Semites] and Indo-Europeans or Aryans [Persians are Indo-Europeans or Aryans]). With this he, peace be upon him, referred to the well-known tradition: "Allah, the Most High, has two good (communities) among His creatures. His good (community) among the Arabs is Quraysh, and from the non-Arabs is Persia." Some historians have said: "Indeed 'Ali ibn al-Hussein (Zain al-Abidin) gathered prophethood and authority on the side of his grandfathers." (I.e., Muhammad, father of Zain al-Abidin's grandmother Fatima, and Yazdigird, the Sassanian Emperor, the father of his mother.)

Her Holy Name

The mother of the Imam (Zain al-Abidin), peace be upon him, was known as **Shahzanan**. This was not her name. Rather it was her nickname. It means the queen of the women. However, the historians have differed concerning her name. The following are some of her reported names:

- 1.) Salama.
- 2.) Salafa.
- 3.) Ghazala.
- 4.) Salama.

➤ 5.) Sadira.

➤ 6.) Shaharbanawayh (Pahlavi form of Shahrbanu.)

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These are some of the theories which have been put forth concerning her name. It need not concern us which name is correct, for it does not avail the readers.

The Holy Connecting Link

Banu Begam Shahzanan was the holy connecting link between the Arabs and the Persians. This is because she was the mother of Zayn al-Abidin, who was therefore of the blood of both peoples, i.e., Arabs and Persians, who are, respectively, Semites (Arabs) and Indo-Europeans or Aryans (Persians), and father of the pure progeny who filled the world with the virtues of awareness and dignity. Sayyid 'Abid al-'Aziz Sayyid al-Ahal said. "Zayn al-Abidin is a strong link between us, we, the Arabs, and the Persians. He is also a firm link connecting all people. It is as if he is among the providential factors with which the Subtle, the All-Powerful (Allah) blessed humanity in order to erase divisions, to strengthen unity, and to bring people closer to one another." He, Imam Zayn al-Abidin, was the strongest link between the Semitic Arabs and the Indo-European or Aryan Persians because he was the cause of the propagation of love, affection and unity between the two otherwise very diverse peoples.

Pre-Islamic Beliefs

Islam destroyed the pagan beliefs that divided the Arabs and prevented their unity. Among those beliefs was that an Arab did not marry a non-Arab (woman), This is because they wanted to preserve Arab blood and lineage. Surely this phenomenon divided the Arabs and destroyed their unity. Islam indeed cast away this hollow arrogance and these vain titles. It supported the honor and beauty of the soul. Hence the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, said: "Surely, the most honorable of you with Allah is the most pious among you." Islam has denoted in a positive way the just equality among the Muslims. It has destroyed class differences and all racism. Allah's Apostle, may Allah

bless him and his family, married his relative Zainab, the daughter of Jahash, who belonged to the chiefs of the Hashemites, to his retainer, Zain ibn Haritha. He, may Allah bless him and his family, wanted the Islamic community to learn a lesson from that and to follow this clear, straight path. The Imams of the members of
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the House (ahl al-Bait), peace be upon them, followed this prophetic precedent. They waged war against racism and resisted pre-Islamic beliefs by marrying female slaves after they had manumitted them. This had great influence on the Arabs, and they abandoned their pre-Islamic beliefs. The historians said: "Imam al-Hussein, peace be upon him, married Lady (**Banu Begam**) Shahzanan and she bore him the great figure of guidance, Imam Zain al-Abidin, peace be upon him. The Arabs saw his perfection and his exalted being. Hence Quraysh hurried to marry slave wives." Al-Mubarrad has narrated the following on the authority of a man from Quraysh. The man's mother was a slave wife. The man said: "One day I sat with Sa'id ibn al-Musayyah, and he asked me: 'Who are your maternal uncles?' "My mother is a slave wife, I answered."

Sa'id disdained the man. However, the man was clever. He waited for a while. In the meantime Salim ibn 'Abd Allah ibn 'Umar came. The latter was a great figure among the Quraysh, but his mother was a slave wife. Sa'id talked with Salim. Then the latter went away. So the man asked Sa'id:

"Uncle, who is this man?"

Sa'id became angry. He shouted at the man, saying:

"Glory be to Allah! Do you ignore this man who is from your own people? This is Salim ibn 'Abd Allah ibn al-Khattab."

"Who is his mother?" asked the man.

"A slave wife", replied Sa'id.

Then al-Qasim ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr came to Sa'id. The former's mother was a slave wife. A conversation took place between them. When al-Qasim went away, the man asked Sa'id the same question. The man answered him again in the same manner. Then Imam ain al-Abidin came. Sa'id welcomed him warmly. When the Imam

went away, the man asked Sa'id: "Uncle, who is this man?"

"This is he whom no Muslim can ignore. This is 'Ali ibn al-Hussein ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Talib," replied Sa'id angrily.

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"Who is his mother?", asked the man.

"A slave wife", replied Sa'id.

"Why did you disdain me when I said that my mother was a slave wife? Is my mother not similar to theirs?", asked the man.

Sa'id confessed his mistake. He admired the man and took care of him. (Of course, it should be noted that Lady (**Banu Begam**) Shahzanan, the mother of Imam Zain al-Abidin, was born an anointed, royal princess. No one could be ashamed of having such a "slave wife" as his mother!)

This bad phenomenon prevailed at that time. It resulted from the intellectually and socially backward heritage of pre-Islamic times. One has no shortcoming when his mother is from Byzantium, Persia etcetera. For this reason the poet said:

Do not curse the person whose mother is from the Byzantines.

Or is a black from the non-Arabs

Indeed the mothers of people are entrusted containers.

And the lineage of his fathers.

The only thing that increases the importance of the person is his good deeds, his services for his community, and his exalted person, even though his mother is black from among the non-Arabs. If the person's deeds are bad, then he is a low person even if he be a Sharif from Quraysh. Islam has underlined that. It gives no importance to anything except good deeds, for they are the only criterion for judging a high or a low position.

Imam 'Ali Estimated Her and Cared for Her

Imam 'Ali, the commander of the Faithful, peace be upon him, took care of Lady Shahzanan, for he was aware of her belief and her perfect intellect. A number of

traditions were redacted on his authority. Said traditions praise her outstanding qualities. Some of them are as follows:

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A.)He recommended that his son, Imam Hussein, treat her kindly, saying: "Treat **Shahrbanawayh** (Pahlavi version of **Shahrbanu**) kindly, for she is satisfactory. She will bear you the best of the people on earth who will come after you."

B.)He told his family that she would be the pure mother of the pure Imams. He, peace be upon him, said: "She is the mother of those entrusted with authority, the pure progeny."

The pure Imams, whom Allah purified thoroughly, and protected from uncleanness, descended from this noble Lady (**Banu Begam**) Princess.

Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, took care of Lady (**Banu Begam**) Shahzanan, for he knew that she had good qualities such as virtues, perfection, and politeness. He, peace be upon him, asked her: "What have you memorized from the words of your father concerning the Event of the Elephant?"

She answered him with the golden words that denote her father's vast intellect and his great experience in the affairs of life.

She said: "(My father said) When Allah terminates and affair, the ambitious become humble afterwards. When the time has come to an end, death is the means."

The Imam was astonished at the wise words that indicate the reality of life. Hence he admired her, saying: "What wise words your father said! All matters are subject to destiny, so much so that sometimes death results from the effort."

Everything in this existence is subject to Allah's will. Indeed Allah, the Most High has power over

everything. Man may trust in powerful means. He thinks that said means protect him from dangers. However, they avail him nothing. This is because they might lead him to danger. Therefore, his death results from them.

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Al-Hussein Loved Her and Cared for Her

Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, loved and cared for his wife, Lady (**Banu Begam**) Shahzanan very much indeed.. He preferred her to any of his other wives. As a result this Lady found respect and honor with the Imam. So she forgot the luxurious life which she had led during the reign of her father. The Imam taught her the spiritual teachings of Islam so that she renounced her life as royal, anointed Princess. Sayyid 'Abd al-Aziz Sayyid al-Ahal said: "Al-Hussein, peace be upon him, taught her the teachings of Islam to such an extent that she forgot the palaces of al-Mada'in (Ctesiphon) and the meadows of Kabul."

The Historians Praised Her

Some historians praised this noble Lady (**Banu Begam**). The following are their words (concerning her):

➤ A.) Al-Mubarad

Concerning this great Lady, al-Mubarad said:

"Shahzanan was among the excellent women."

Indeed Shahzanan was among the noblest of women. She was chaste, and her intellect was perfect. Moreover, her morals were exemplary.

➤ B.) Ibn Shadqam

Ibn Shadqam said: "Shahzanan had many outstanding merits."

➤ C.) Al-Kunji

Imam al-Hafiz, Muhammad ibn Yusuf al-Kunji, said: "Allah, the Blessed and exalted, created the rightly

guided Imams, from among the progeny of al-Hussein, from the daughter of Choesroe (the Sassanian Emperor) to the exclusion of the rest of his wives." Indeed

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Allah bestowed His favors and His care on this noble Lady. He endowed her with great talents. He made her a noble mother for Imam Zain al-Abidin and a good, pure grandmother for the pure Imams, who exalted the Word of Allah in all the earth.

With this we end our discussion concerning the life of this great lady."(34)

Below is Baqir Sharif al-Qarashi's account of the death of The Anointed Princess, the Lady Shahzanan, **Shahzadeh Shahzanan Banu Begam**, perhaps more widely known as: **Shahzadeh Shahrbanu Banu Begam**:

"The first misfortune which befell the Imam Zain al-Abidin occurred in his early childhood, the death of his mother, who suffered from childbed fever. Imam al-Hussein, peace be upon him, did his best to save her from this dangerous illness, but he was unable to do so. The illness caused her to lose her vitality so that she died and became a lifeless body. She looked with pain and sorrow at her thin son, who was deprived of her affection and love.

The fever was very severe, and she suffered from terrible pain for many days until her soul ascended to heaven, the most sublime soul that ever went to heaven. When she died, one of the epics of virtue, chastity and modesty came to a lamentable end. It was a sad day for the Prophet's family when this great lady died, for she represented honor and virtue. Imam Hussein, many other prominent figures among the Muslims, and a large number of other Muslims escorted her to her final resting place. They buried her holy body in Kufa. Imam al-Hussein felt great pain because of the death of this Lady (**Banu Begam**), who lived among them for days like the days of flowers, which is to say, she did not have a long life.

Imam Zain al-Abidin, peace be upon him, suffered the death of his mother while he was yet in early childhood. This was the beginning of the adversities and misfortunes which plagued no one else but him."(35)

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The above paragraph shows that Lady Shahzanan or Lady Shahrbanu died a number of years before the martyrdom on Imam Hussein and his followers at Karbala.

The Persians are very much an Indo-European or Aryan ethnica. So, when a Persian affirms that Lady Shahzanan or Lady Shahrbanu really lived, he may be - and often is - accused of "Persian chauvinism" and/or "pro-Aryan bias". When anyone of another Indo-European or Aryan (though NOT Germanic) ethnicity - especially Persian, Kurdish, Afghan, Indo-Pakistani, Celtic, Lithuanian or Slavic - defends the historicity of Lady Shahzanan or Lady Shahrbanu, he is often accused of "pro-Aryan bias". This I know from personal experience; because of my Celtic ethnicity, on occasion when I have defended the historicity of Lady (**Banu Begam**) Shahzanan or Lady (**Banu Begam**) Shahrbanu, I have immediately been accused of "pro-Aryan bias".

Therefore it is most significant that Baqir Sharif al-Qarashi strongly affirms the historicity of Lady Shahzanan or Lady Shahrbanu, because he is an Iraqi Arab from the holy city of Najaf, and therefore could not possibly be accused of "having an axe to grind" nor of having a "pro-Aryan bias". I prefer not to speculate on the motives of those who deny the historicity of Lady Shahzanan or Lady Shahrbanu, though I am not by any means

sufficiently naïve to believe that all their motives are necessarily honorable; in fact, I have no doubt that in the great

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majority of cases their denial of the real existence of Lady Shahzanan or Lady Shahrbanu rather thinly conceals utterly evil and totally dishonorable hidden agendas.

The above should serve as an introduction to an aspect of Shi'a commemorations of Ashura peculiar to Iran and to avoid future degressions. We refer to the Taz'iyeh, or "Passion Play".

Below is Heinz Halm's Account of the origin and development of the Ta'ziyeh in Islamic Iran:

"The usual Arabic and Persian term ta'ziya means "offering condolence" (the verbal noun from azza) and it originally embraced all the mourning rites in remembrance of (the martyrdom of Imam Hussein in) Karbala. The dramatic portrayal of the events of the Passion (of Imam Hussein) as a roleplay with spoken dialogue seems to have developed from the recitation of martyrologies (maqatil, singular maqtal) and elegies (marathi, singular marthiya) on the deaths of the Imams, which is attested as early as the Buyid and Seljuq periods, although texts are available only from the time of the Safavids. In Iran, the recitation of such poems, which are given throughout the year on Fridays and on all Shi'a festival days in private houses, mosques and bazaars, are called rawza-khwani, i.e., "Rawza Declaration", after the title of the model still used today, the "Garden of the Martyrs" (Rawzat al-Shuhada) by Kamal al-Din Husayn Wa'iz Kashifi (died 910/1054)."(36)

Unfortunatly, the scholarly emphasis on documentation sometimes leads to what the Spanish call positivismo atontado,

i.e., "idiotized positivism". There is much disagreement as to when the Iranian Ta'ziyeh or "Passion Play" began. Some, basing

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themselves on available, datable written documents, say that the Ta'ziyeh began only in the early 19th century.

*However, I agree with those who believe that the Iranian Ta'ziyeh began much earlier, probably in the Safavi Period, though its roots could be much older. Even the Ta'ziyeh texts available to us, without counting those which are not now extant or which have yet to be discovered and edited, comprise such a vast number and are so diverse and varied that it would appear obvious that the Ta'ziyeh tradition must be far older than the early 19th century. Note that Halm affirmed that the roots of the Iranian Ta'ziyeh go back at the very least to the 10th century. In a parallel situation, medieval Europe developed two dramatic forms, *i.s.*, the Passion Play and the Liturgical Drama (of which we shall speak later) by the 12th century at the very latest, perhaps earlier. I see no reason why the development of the Iranian Ta'ziyeh should have been so much slower than its medieval Christian European equivalents.*

Passion plays, dramatic representations of the events of Holy Week, occur in many places, that of Oberammergau in Bavaria being perhaps the best known. However, Passion Plays are not peculiar

to Bavaria, nor to a Roman Catholic environment; as we shall see, the oldest surviving Passion Play is of Greek Orthodox procedence.

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Below is a brief comparison between the Christian passion plays and the Iranian Taziyeh:

"For Christians raised on the story of the Crucifixion of Jesus and related passion plays, the story of the martyrdom of Imam Hussein sounds remarkably familiar. Indeed, if we compare taziyeh performances with the longest surviving (i.e., still being regularly performed), passion play in Europe, one that has been held in the village of Oberammergau (Bavarian Alps) since 1634, we can note numerous similarities. The Oberammergau play centers on Jesus and his supporters. The taziyeh centers on (Imam) Hussein and his clan. Jesus is betrayed by those who are initially loyal to him, while (Imam) Hussein is betrayed by the once-loyal Kufans. The Christian (passion) play is devoted to the 'passion' of Jesus, meaning his suffering and gruesome death, just as the taziyeh is devoted to the tragic suffering and death of (Imam) Hussein and his family. A significant part of both stories deals with grieving, as well as the courage of women, whether of (the Virgin) Mary who Mourns the loss of her son, and of Zainab, who lives to tell the tale of her brother's martyrdom. ...

...The Iron Guard and the Legion of the Archangel St. Michael in Romania had some similarities to militant Shi'ite movements of late twentieth century Iran. Romanian fascist(?) [I am reminded of a comment by the French actor Alain Delon: "What is a fascist? Anyone that the communists do not like." The only thing "fascist" about the Romanian Iron Guard and the Legion of the Archangel St. Michael is that the communists did not like them.] organizations employed the (Romanian Orthodox) priests and the churches in their appeals to the masses (a word from the Marxists' vocabulary, not mine; to me, people are individuals, NOT part of a faceless mass) and drew their inspiration from religious icons. They were also characterized by 'extraordinary cults of suffering, sacrifice, and martyrdom' and

regarded their ultimate goal as 'resurrection in Christ'.(37)

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I am a militant anti-communist, which should be obvious, and is something of which I am very proud. At times I have been accused of "calling anyone with a red tongue a communist". However, in the case of Janet Afary, author of the above paragraphs, her reference to the Romanian Iron Guard and the Legion of the Archangel St. Michael and her use of the expression "the masses" to refer to people are obvious indications of her being a communist. In fact only someone with a Marxist mentality could refer to people as "the masses".

Though I fear "going off on a tangent", in the final paragraph by Ms. Afary cited above there is a lie and a slander which must not be allowed to pass without being denounced.

Communists and leftists in general are bald-faced liars, something which I know from abundant personal experience. Karl Marx said that anything which furthers the revolution is moral. Lenin was frequently caught lying, and he would always respond: "Lying for justice is perfectly justified", which is really a paraphrase of Marx. Apparently the paradoxical nature of his statement never penetrated the frozen mind of Lenin. How can justice be based on or be dependent on lies? At the beginning of

the Spanish Civil War of 1936-39, Onesimo Redondo noted: "La mentira es para los Marxistas lo que el agua es para los peces; un elemento necesario para la vida; i.e., Lies are to Marxists what water is to fish; an element necessary for life".

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The word "fascist" was invented by Mussolini, and I never use the word "fascist" unless I am talking about Mussolini; any other use of the word "fascist" is abuse of language, dishonest, mendacious, and almost always libelous and slanderous. The promiscuous use which the communists and the left in general make of the word "fascist" in conclusive proof of their dishonesty and shameless mendacity, not to mention their promiscuous use of obfuscation. Does this mean that Hitler was not a fascist? Yes, it does; to call Hitler a "fascist" and Hitler's National Socialism "Fascism" is a gross libel and slander against Mussolini.

Due to the close and numerous resemblances between Communism and Hitler's National Socialism, Hitler's proclaimed anti-Communism reeks of mendacity, chicanery, thimble-rigging, insincerity, obfuscation, political cant, demagoguery and opportunism. So fine is the line between Communism and National Socialism that at times it vanishes completely. In Germany during the decade of the 1930s there were what were known as "National Bolsheviks", who found no difficulty nor contradiction whatever in being a communist and a National Socialist at one and the same time. For propaganda purposes it has often been claimed that

Communism and National Socialism are diametrically opposed, which is very far indeed from the truth; Hitler was very much a man of the extreme left, anti-Catholic, anti-Monarchist, anti-aristocratic, as much a modern man and child of the so-called

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"Enlightenment" as Robespierre, Lenin and Stalin. Hitler often proclaimed: 'I am a fanatical socialist', and praised the advantages of a state-controlled, command economy over private enterprise of any kind (there are various kinds of private, non-government enterprise). Hitler and Stalin were not ideological opposites, they were leaders of rival criminal gangs.

To say that Mussolini was the lesser of evils compared to Lenin, Stalin, Hitler, Mao, Pol Pot and Saddam is very close to "damning with faint praise", but to "give the devil his due", Mussolini's anti-communism was perfectly logical, consistent and sincere. Below is an Italian fascist quatrain, with the words for "fascist" and "communist" left in the original:

*They killed Giovanni Berta
Fascista di fascisti
Therefore we are going to kill
All the comunisti.*

Though I am neither a follower nor an admirer of Mussolini, and am therefore an anti-fascist (though at times I have hummed the Giovanezza in order to irritate certain people), I totally agree with the sentiments expressed in the last two lines of the above quatrain.

The final paragraph by Janet Afary cited above says that Corneliu Codreanu was a fascist, along with the organizations that he founded, i.e., the Iron Guard, whose name was later changed to

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the Legion of the Archangel St. Michael, of which the great scholar Mircea Eliade was a member. Said paragraph also implies (indeed, virtually affirms) that the militant Shi'a movements of late 20th century Iran are also fascist.

To call Corneliu Codreanu a fascist is a lie and a slander. The truth is that Mussolini and Corneliu Codreanu mutually hated and despised one another (and both hated and despised Hitler). Ideologically, the only thing which Mussolini and Corneliu Codreanu had in common was that both were militant anti-Communists, though not for all the same reasons.

Among the many things which Communists and National Socialists have in common is that both hate Corneliu Codreanu, who was murdered on Hitler's orders.

As we said above, someone once asked the French actor Alain Delon if he were a fascist, to which he replied: "What is a fascist? A fascist is anyone that the communists do not like." So it is. The communists do not like Corneliu Codreanu, nor Alain Delon, nor do they like the militant Shi'a movements of late 20th century Iran; therefore, according to the communists and their fellow travelers, Corneliu Codreanu, Alain Delon, and the Iranian

Shi'a militants of late 20th century Iran are all fascists, though they have nothing in common with Mussolini except militant anti-Communism.

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By her vocabulary and her blind and indiscriminate use of the term "fascist", Janet Afary betrays her Marxist orientation.

Since we have been speaking so much of Christian passion plays and their parallels with the Shi'a ta'ziyeh-s of Iran, it would seem to be a good idea to give an example of a Christian passion play; as my master Walter Havighurst said: "Do not tell, show".

Though there are notices of earlier ones, and others survive in fragments, the earliest complete passion play which has survived is The Cyprus Passion Cycle, written in the 13th century by Konstantinos Euteles Anagnostes, a Greek Orthodox monk of the island of Cyprus, who was not only learned and well-resd, as we shall see, but also a highly skilled dramatist and scenarist.

*The above-mentioned passion play was inspired by the Kontakia for Holy Week by St. Romanos Melodos (St. Roman the Melodist), who lived in the 6th century. In spite of his name, St. Romanus Melodos was a Syrian from Emesa (today Homs), and his first language was **NOT** Greek but Syriac.*

St. Romanos Melodos is of great importance to our study, but first some preliminary observations.

After the Babylonian Captivity, the Jews ceased to speak Hebrew and spoke only Aramaic. Thus, in the time of Jesus Hebrew was not a spoken language. Hebrew and Aramaic are both

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northwestern Semitic languages, and thus are not very far apart, but are by no means mutually intelligible. Thus, in the Palestinian synagogues in the time of Jesus, Aramaic **targumim**, or "translations" were used for the benefit of those who did not understand Hebrew. In the Gospels are various words and phrases in Aramaic, and quotations from various targumim. The Gospel According to St. Matthew was originally written in Aramaic (not Hebrew), though the original Aramaic version has survived only in fragments.

Syriac is a northern Syrian variant of Aramaic which has its own unique alphabet; it became the literary and liturgical language of the Christian Church in Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and Mesopotamia. Why the question if of any importance I really do not see, but there exists a lively polemic as to whether or not St. Romanos Melodos was of Jewish origin. I really have no opinion on said question; however, I wish to note that it seems to me that those who claim that St. Romanos Melodos was of Jewish origin often forget that Syriac is a northwestern Semitic language, close to Hebrew but totally unrelated to Greek. Thus, it seems doubtful to attribute all the Semitisms in the works of St. Romanos Melodos to a Jewish origin.

As has been noted:

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"Romanos, called the Melodist (circa A.D. 540), is the greatest poet of the Greek Orthodox Church, and one of the most distinguished writers of the early Middle Ages. Modern scholarship has called his major cantica 'masterpieces of world literature'."

Says C. A. Trypanis:

I.) THE KONTAKION

"To the student of Byzantine literature the Cantica of Romanos are known as Kontakia. The kontakion is a sermon in verse accompanied by music. In character it is similar to the early Byzantine festival sermons in prose, though metre and music must have greatly brightened the effect. The form generally consists of 18-24 metrically identical stanzas (called oikoi) preceded by a short prelude (called koukoulion) in another metre. The first letters of the stanzas form an acrostic, which frequently includes the name of the poet. The last line of the prelude introduces a refrain, with which all the following stanzas end.

How the kontakion was delivered is not known, but from the surviving texts we gather that the main body of the metrical sermon was chanted from the pulpit by the preacher himself after the reading of the Gospel, while a choir, or even the whole congregation, probably joined in the refrain. The length of many kontakia, and the epic character of some, point to a kind of recitative. The music, which accompanied the sixth-century kontakia, and which was undoubtedly closely integrated with their metres, is now all lost. The musical notation which is found on the manuscripts goes back only as far as the thirteenth century. The melody is classified according to the mode (echos) and by name (pros to If no name of a mode is given, the kontakion is called an **idiomelon**). ...

[The Byzantine system of eight modes (Greek: **Octoechos**, Syriac: **Ikhadias**) is the work of Severus, who was Patriarch of

Antioch from 512 to 519. Some say that Patriarch Severus merely copied the Classical Greek modes. However, this is patently false:

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➤ 1.) The substance of the modes of Patriarch Severus' **Octoechos** or **Ikhadias** is radically different from the Classical Greek modes; in other words, they have no Classical Greek equivalents, though they do have Indian equivalents.

➤ 2.) Patriarch Severus nowhere uses the names of Classical Greek modes; to this day, said Classical Greek names have not been adopted by the Eastern Orthodox Church, which continues to use the names given by Patriarch Severus:

➤ 3.) The Classical Greek modes were reckoned from the top (or highest pitched note) downwards, while Patriarch Severus' modes are reckoned from the bottom (or lowest pitched note) upwards as are the modes of ancient Hindu or Indian music.

Below are the modes of Patriarch Severus and their Hindu or Indian equivalents:

BYZANTINE

HINDU

I Echos Kyrios Alpha =	Shuddha Shadja Murchhana
II Echos Kyrios Beta =	Bhairavi
III Echoes Kyrios Gamma =	Gaur Sarang
IV Echos Kyrios Delta =	Matsarikrita Murchhana
I Echos Plagios Alpha =	Yavanapuri Todi
II Echos Plagios Beta =	Ashvakranta Murchhana
III Echos Plagios Barys =	Khammaj

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[For a detailed treatment of this topic, see Chapter 4.]

...The oldest datable kontakia are by Romanos, and belong to the years 537-555, the great period of that literary genre. But a number of more primitive kontakia have survived which may well be considered older.

It has been suggested with much probability that the impulse towards this new Byzantine literary genre came from types of Syriac poetry of the early Christian centuries, the Memra, the Madrasa, and the Sugita, most of the elements that came to form the kontakion can be traced. The Memra was a metrical sermon similar to the kontakion, but its metres were very simple and it had no acrostic and no refrain. On the other hand more complicated metres, acrostic and refrain can be found in the Madrasa, but this differs considerably in tone from the kontakion. Finally in the Sugita biblical episodes are presented in dialogue form.

There is nothing similar to these Syriac forms in the Greek literature of the same period. The only surviving Greek writings which may be considered as "forerunners" of the kontakion are either translations from Syriac, like the Greek metrical translations of St. Ephrem, or are directly influenced by Syriac literature, like the Parthenion of Methodius (died 312) and the Dialogue Between Mary, Gabriel, and Joseph attributed to Proclus (circa 440). It is therefore reasonable to assume that it was the Syrian poets of the fourth century, St. Ephrem, Narsai, Cyrillona, and Jacob of Serugh, who, unhampered by the weight of the classical Greek tradition, gave the new impulse to Byzantine religious poetry, since Synesius, St. Gregory of Nazianzus, and their Greek contemporaries had failed in the endeavor to unite the classical and the Christian spirit in their verse. The Syrian poets thus provided the model into which the Greeks of the sixth century infused new life. By combining the metrically primitive lines of the Memra and the endless 'strophomythia' of the Sugita with the variety and refrain of the Madrasa, the Byzantine writers fashioned the long and disciplined strophes of their kontakia, in which argument and form were clearly and closely integrated in a manner which is essentially Greek. Moreover, they added the prelude, the koukoulion, which appears to be a purely Byzantine creation.

Undoubtedly the most impressive achievement of the Greek writers is the metrical perfection and variety they introduced. Only once before in the history of Greek literature from the eighth to the fourth centuries B.C. had the Greek genius invented metrical forms of similar intricacy and originality. Then they had based their system of metric on quantitative rhythm. In the early Christian centuries, however, when that had been superseded, the rhythms of the new religious poetry were governed by a stress accent and the number of syllables in each line.

[In other words, they used syllabic-accentual metres.]

Thirty-nine types of 'pattern-stanzas' attributed to Romanos have survived and they reveal a wealth of rhythmic effects that is indeed impressive.

The true precursors of these rhythms were the isocolons, in which the rhetoric of the fifth century delighted, and the rhythmic period endings found in fourth-century prose⁴. But there is nothing comparable there to the regulated accents within I colon, which we find in the fully developed kontakion. Rhyme, it is interesting to note (the homoioteleuton of ancient rhetoric), which was so closely connected with the isocolon, never became an integral part of Greek poetry before the thirteenth century. The only important exception is the Akathistos Hymn, where the pairs of lines of equal length in the long strophes were undoubtedly introduced with the use of rhyme in mind.

In the hands of Romanos and the other sixth-century poets of kontakia like Anastasios, Dometios, Kyriacos, and the author of the famous Akathistos Hymn, the literary genre of the kontakion reached its peak. These writers succeeded in combining the solemnity and dignity of the sermon with the delicacy and liveliness of lyric and dramatic poetry and out of their somewhat intractable form and material created some of the most vivid and yet impersonal masterpieces written in the Greek language. In Greek their poetry has not been matched in subsequent centuries, and the kontakion remains the one and only great original achievement of Byzantine literature.

From the seventh century onwards the kontakion began to decline. Such a decline must be connected with the storm of the iconoclastic controversy, which broke out in the reign of Leo III (717-741), and with the

rise of a new type of poetry, the *kanon*, believed to have been introduced by Andrew, bishop of Crete (circa 660-740). In this new and less disciplined form, music is more significant than words. Inevitably, therefore, the *kanons* present less interest from a literary point of view. Their popularity, however, was great, and it is the *kanons* of the later poets which enlarged and embellished the liturgy of the Orthodox Church in the years following the iconoclastic controversy and so gradually replaced the *kontakia* of the sixth-century writers. These had already been curtailed, and having lost the moral character of a sermon, became mere hymns. The *koukoulion* and the first stanza of many of the famous sixth-century *kontakia* are still chanted as hymns in the Greek Orthodox Church upon the feast-day for which they were written.

The new florescence of the *kontakion* which we find in the ninth and tenth centuries is of little literary significance. Neither in spirit nor in form are the later *kontakia* comparable with the great metrical sermons of the sixth century, nor did they exercise any noticeable influence upon the subsequent course of Greek poetry.

2. THE LIFE AND WORKS OF ROMANOS

Little is known about the life of Romanos. Even the century in which he lived was for long years hotly debated. Today, however, it has been established beyond reasonable doubt that he belongs to the sixth century. It is likely that he was born in Syria in the city of Emesa (today Homs), and that he was of Jewish origin. In support of Romanos' Jewish origin, attention should be drawn to the Jewish forms of Jewish names he uses, whenever the metre demands it, the frequent use of Semitisms or 'Translation Greek' we find in his writings, as well as the occasional translation of Jewish words. He served as deacon in the church of the Resurrection in Beirut, before coming to Constantinople during the reign of Anastasius I (491-518). In Constantinople he was attached to the church of the Virgin in the Kyrour quarter.

According to the legend preserved in the life of St. Romanos, he was miraculously endowed with the gift of writing *kontakia*. The Virgin, it is said, appeared to him in a dream on Christmas Eve, and gave him a scroll which he swallowed. The poet rose from his

sleep, gave praise to God, went straight to church, and mounting the pulpit, chanted the most celebrated of his works, the kontakion On the Nativity. According to the same source, he composed some thousand kontakia for various festivals of the Christian calendar.

His fame as a poet and a musician, a melodist, must have been established in his lifetime, if we are to believe that he became known to the Emperor and the Palace circle. However, there is no indication that he ever occupied an official position at court.

We do not know when Romanos died, but his second kontakion on the Ten Virgins refers to the violent earthquake which shook Constantinople of 9 July 552 and 15 August 555, so he must have survived beyond the middle of the sixth century. He was buried in the Church of the Virgin in the Kyrou quarter, and many of his works, written in his own hand, are said to have been long preserved there. Later, but the date is again obscure, he was canonized as a saint of the Orthodox Church, and is commemorated to this day on the 1st of October together with his disciple Ananias.

Eighty-five kontakia attributed to Romanos have survived. Of these thirty-four are on the person of Christ, the rest dealing with other figures of the New and Old Testament, various martyrs and saints of the Christian Church and other religious subjects. A great number of these appear to be spurious, but the problems of authenticity are very involved, as the inclusion of the poet's name in the acrostic does not prove the genuineness of the poem, and genuine works have been claimed by lesser writers of kontakia. The inclusion of a work in the sixth century does not allow the modern scholarship to attribute a work to Romanos with any degree of certainty on purely stylistic grounds. The Christological kontakia are undoubtedly the most important writings of the poet, though striking examples of his art can be found among the cantica on other figures of the New and Old Testaments. Opinion would no doubt differ as to which are the best of Romanos' cantica, but **1**, On the Nativity, **4**, On the Presentation in the Temple, and **29**, On the Resurrection, would be a reasonable selection. A few shorter prayers have also survived, and some fragments of kontakia, which are attributed to Romanos, but they are of little significance. Modern scholarship has also repeatedly attributed to him the Akathistos Hymn, the

most famous of all hymns of the Orthodox Church. But this is by no means a settled question.

The poet composed more than one kontakion for certain festivals. We find, however, no rehandling or recasting of the same material in another metrical form among the extant genuine cantica.

The language of Romanos is the Atticized 'literary' **koine**, or Hellenistic Greek, which does not escape, however, the influence of the simple 'popular' language, nor that of Scripture (New Testament Greek) with many Jewish-Greek elements found there. In fact, the Jewish-Greek elements ('translation Greek') are so abundant that one should perhaps consider them an extra arguments in support of the view that Romanos was of Jewish origin. Many of these non-Attic usages which appear side by side with, though less frequently than, the normal Attic practice in the writings of Romanos, were seen as 'errors' by later Atticizing scribes and were often corrected to the detriment of the metre. Arresting imagery, sharp metaphors and similes, bold comparisons, antithesis, coining of successful maxims and vivid dramatization of his material characterize the style of Romanos.

Only a few of Romanos' cantica can be dated with any accuracy. No. **54**, *On Earthquakes and Fires*, contains direct reference to the Nika revolt of 532 and alludes to the destruction of the older churches of Ste. Sophia and Ste. Irene, as well as to the building of the great Ste. Sophia which was consecrated in 537, so it must have been composed between the years 532 and 537. No. **48**, *On the Ten Virgins II*, refers, as already mentioned, to the earthquakes of 9 July 552 and 15 August 555, so it is fair to assume that it was composed at the time. No. **53**, *On Baptism*, may well have been written soon after Justinian's law, which circa 528 enforced baptism on all non-Christians at the penalty of losing their property, and **4**, *On the Presentation at the Temple*, when Justinian altered in 542 the date of the Hypapante festival from 14 February to 2 February. Moreover, **35**, *On the Nativity of the Virgin Mary*, in which the poet refers to the Emperor and the Empress jointly as *Basileis* must have been composed before Theodora's death, which occurred in 548. At the same time, in view of the part Theodora played in the affairs of the empire, it is unlikely that **59**, *On the Forty Martyrs of Sebasteia II*, was

written in her lifetime, because the Emperor alone and not the Basileis are mentioned there.

No. 41, On Isaac, is of special interest in this connection. This appears to refer to the poet himself as a young man drawing the contrast between the deep faith of old Isaac and his own. If that is so, the whole canticum must be one of Romanos' early works, and this may well be supported by the fact that originally it appears to have had no refrain and to belong to a period of the poet's experimentation with the literary genre of the kontakion.

The assessment of Romanos as a poet of creative genius is closely connected with the problem of his sources. As research in the field proceeded, his originality became increasingly open to doubt. Pitra's unqualified approval gave way to the skepticism of Krumbacher and Maas.

The most important sources for Romanos' poetry were the Old and New Testaments, the Apochrypha, and the lives of Martyrs and Saints.

Second to these, and of special importance for the moralizing and dogmatic passages, come the writings of celebrated early Fathers of the Church, such as (St. John) Chrysostom, (St.) Basil, (st.) Gregory of Nyssa, Basil of Seleucia, and others. Romanos did not hesitate to borrow even from heretical writers like Nestorius, whom he also attacked. Whether, or how far, Romanos depended on the Greek translations of (st.) Efrem remains an open question. The frequent 'semitisms', or 'translation Greek', however, of certain passages of his cantica may be due to Syriac (Aramaic) sources he could have used.

The technique Romanos followed in his borrowings varied. When drawing on biblical material he generally expanded and elaborated the brevity of the sources. On the other hand, when relying on writings of the early Fathers of the Church or on the lives of the martyrs and Saints he compressed and curtailed the long and often loose narratives to adapt them into the framework of his stanzas. This dependence on a multitude of sources is also responsible for a certain lack of uniformity and therefore of individuality of style, which is evident in the writings of Romanos. But it is not just to accuse him of no originality, as some of his critics have done. For, though often starting from a borrowed passage, he proceeds to develop it freely and to dramatize it by introducing lively dialogues,

monologues, and vivid descriptions, many of which are undoubtedly of his own creation. Thus, in his works, the pageantry of Christ, the Apostles, the Virgin, the Patriarchs of the Old Testament, and certain martyrs and saints of the Christian faith, are brought to life before our eyes. We are constantly aware of an aura of religious awe and hope. And this impression must have been still more arresting when the kontakia were chanted in church, where many of the traditional subjects treated were also painted on the walls, or towered over the congregation in brilliant mosaics. Perhaps the greatest quality of some of his works is a felicity of structure rarely deriving from his sources. Many of his kontakia are conceived on two or even three levels of action, the heavens, the world of the living, and the world of the dead, in which lyrical and tragic elements are skillfully blended. The still quality of religious awe which permeates Romanos' writings occasionally erupts into passion, where the outraged Christian piles contempt and abuse on the betrayers of the Lord.

But it is proper to add that not all his kontakia are successful. A number of them - especially those that display an 'epic' rather than a dramatic impulse - tend to be excessively long and tedious. Moreover, the lively dialogue is occasionally sacrificed to dogmatic or exegetical digressions, always tiring, but even more so when introduced by a man with no real philosophic or theological training. For when Romanos attacks the teachings of Arius, Nestorius, the Manichees, or the Novatians, he shows hardly any understanding of their views, nor does he introduce any convincing argument to support his polemics. He is usually content with naming the heresy and adding an obvious play upon words or a line of abuse. Not unexpectedly the dogmatic views of Romanos are very close to those of the Council of Chalcedon (451) and support Justinian's religious policy. It is interesting, however, to notice that he treats the Monophysites with caution, probably because the Empress Theodora was well known for her Monophysite sympathies. He rarely refers to them by name, but indirectly attacks them by praising the twofold nature of Christ.

Along with the heretics Romanos attacks the whole of pagan culture. It appears that his historical and literary education was limited. Homer, Pythagoras, Plato, or Demosthenes were mere names to him to be used
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for rhetorical tricks, a play on the sound of words. He shows none of the understanding of ancient culture which we find in the writings of the Cappadocian Fathers. The

attitude of Church and State in the sixth century, which culminated in Justinian's decision in 529 to close the philosophic schools of Athens is faithfully reflected in the cantica of Romanos.

In religious poetry Romanos represents the spirit of expansion and innovation which characterizes the era of Justinian in so many fields. It was roughly at the same time that Musasus wrote *Hero and Leander*, which has been called the last flower of the ancient Greek garden. The ancient world with all it had felt and thought was passing away. But in the solemn surroundings of the Byzantine churches with their brilliant interiors and flickering candles it was Romanos who gave new life to the long and glorious tradition of Greek poetry; It was he who revived the dramatic element and handed it down to the medieval Greeks in the stanzas of his great cantica, for which he has been fittingly called Theopator, 'the Orator of the Lord'.(38)

Below is a brief description of Melodos' metres:

METRICAL APPENDIX

"This is not the place for a detailed examination of the metres of Romanos. There are, however, a few general observations which, if included in an appendix, may be helpful to the reader of this book.

In the poetry of Romanos, which completely disregards the ancient Greek metres, the rhythmic effects are achieved through the number of syllables included in each metrical unit, and the placing of the accent on certain set syllables. As this is a stress accent, acute, grave and circumflex are metrically equivalent. [In other words, the metres used by Romanos are syllabic-accentual, very much in contrast to the quantitative metres of Classical Greek verse.]

In a kontakion the prooemium (koukoulion) is always in a different metre from that of the stanzas of the main body of the poem (oikoi).

In the stanzas of the main body we have an Outer and an Inner Correspondence. By Outer Correspondence is meant the exact metrical equivalence of all the stanzas (oikoi), for they are all fashioned on the metrical

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pattern of the first. This Outer Correspondence is not limited to the number of syllables and the placing of set accents in every half or full line. It also embraces the Sense-pauses. Of these there are three kinds: (a) the Weak Sense-pause, where a word regularly ends at the

same point within the line (end of a colon, which in print is indicated by a short blank space), (b) the Medium Sense-pause, where a word always ends at the same point and is followed by regular stronger punctuation (end of a period, indicated in print by beginning the following line more to the left).

By Inner Correspondence is meant the metrical correspondence of certain colons and periods within the framework of the same stanza. The number varies from metrical pattern to pattern. In some it is frequent, in others less so. Inner Correspondence is also found within the framework of the prooemium. ...

...Some of the metrical patterns attributed to Romanos became very popular (e.g., that of the kontakia On the Nativity (1) or On the Resurrection VI (28), and later poets used them in their own works, obviously wishing to keep the same popular melody of the original. Romanos himself appears to have written more than one kontakion in the same metre (and melody) to the Prooemium that introduced the later work. He himself seems to have composed kontakia to fit famous metres and melodies composed by others, as can be seen from 44 On Joseph II, which is fashioned on the metres of the long stanzas of the famous Akathistos Hymn.

The popularity of the words of a kontakion and that of its metre and melody do not seem to have always coincided, for there are instances when genuine kontakia by Romanos were later rewritten to fit into different metrical pattern, because the melody which accompanied it had captured the popular taste.

Finally it should be borne in mind that later atticizing scribes often 'corrected' the text of the kontakia by changing the grammatical forms which were used by Romanos, in many cases to the detriment of the metres.

Early Medieval Greek Accentuation:

In the early Middle Ages Greek authors put no accents on their words. In later Byzantine copies we find Hellenistic accents employed. The only means, therefore, by which we can discover early medieval Greek accentuation is a close examination of the

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regular set accents in the poetry and rhythmic prose of that period.

Romanos is the most important example we possess, because the internal and external correspondence of the metres help us in a number of instances to establish the right accent of words in the sixth century."(39)

Though, at least after moving to Constantinople, St. Romanos Melodos wrote in Greek, there is no doubt concerning his dependence of Syriac source, particularly St. Ephrem the Syrian (4th century), who, though a native of Nisibis in Mesopotamia, is called "the Syrian" because he wrote in Syriac.

It has been demonstrated that the Kontakion of St. Romanos Melodos is based, in its poetic form, on the Syriac verse forms called Memra, Madrasa & Sogitah.(40) It has also been shown that St. Romanos Melodos was dependent on St. Ephrem the Syrian in style and doctrine as well as literary form.(41) Indeed, the hymns of St. Ephrem the Syrian are now universally recognized to be the models for the Byzantine Kontakia, whose leading exponent was St. Romanos Melodos.(42) As Barry Baldwin and Nancy Patterson Shevchenko have noted:

"Most important is his (St. Ephrem the Syrian's) liturgical poetry, which includes hymn cycles on church feasts (the obvious model for the Byzantine Kontakia, including those of St. Romanos Melodos), and funeral hymns. St. Ephrem was a major influence on the development of Syriac and Byzantine [Greek] hymnography. Despite some modern skepticism, his impact on [St.] Romanos Melodos in terms of theme and imagery (e.g., heat, light, the "thorny nature of man) seems certain."(43)

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As we shall see, there are yet other motives for considering St. Ephrem the Syrian to be the "godfather" or "grandfather" of The Cypus Passion Cycle.

In The Cyprus Passion Cycle, Konstantinos Euteles Anagnostes is obviously inspired by the cycle of kontakia for Holy Week by St. Romanos Melodos, as Konstantinos follows the order of St. Romanos Melodos' cycle of kontakia.(44)

The order of both works is as follows:

<i>Name of kontakion or act:</i>	<i>Day of Holy Week:</i>
1.) <i>The Awakening of Lazarus</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
2. <i>The Pageant of the Palms</i>	<i>Palm Sunday</i>
3.) <i>The Supper at the Home of Simon</i>	<i>Holy Wednesday</i>
4.) <i>The Feet Washing</i>	<i>Holy Wednesday</i>
5.) <i>The Betrayal</i>	<i>Holy Thursday</i>
6a.) <i>Peter's Denial</i>	<i>Holy Thursday</i>
6b.) <i>The Questioning by Pilate</i>	<i>Holy Thursday</i>
7.) <i>The Mockery of Herod Antipas</i>	<i>Good Friday</i>
8.) <i>The Crucifixion</i>	<i>Good Friday</i>
9.) <i>The Resurrection</i>	<i>Easrer Sunday</i>
10.) <i>The Touching of the Wounds</i>	<i>Sunday After Easter.</i>

However, the reader who compares the two will note a crucial, and, at first glance, inexplicable difference between the Kontakia for Holy Week by St. Romanos Melodos and The Cyprus Passion Cycle.

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The most important event of Holy Thursday is the Last Supper and the Institution of the Sacrament of the Eucharist, included by St. Romanos Melodos, but omitted by Konstainos Euteles Anagnostes.

Why? The only possible answer is that Konstantinos feared committing a sacrilege by presenting on stage what should only be approached in terms and forms of holy ritual, i.e., the Last Supper and the Institution of the Sacrament of the Eucharist.(45)

Some passion plays are based on the events of Holy Week as contained in only one of the canonical gospels. Konstantinos Euteles Anagnostes does not do this. In The Cyprus Passion Cycle he uses material from all four canonical gospels, as well as from apochryphal gospels, especially the Gospel According to Nicodemus, of which we have spoken in an earlier chapter. Said apochryphal gospel is quite ancient, going back to the 2nd century or perhaps even earlier. There is some dispute as to whether it was originally written in Greek or Aramaic; personally, I believe that it was originally written in Aramaic and later translated to Greek and other languages. The author himself says that said apochryphal gospel was originally written in Aramaic. Those who believe that The Gospel According to Nicodemus was originally written in Greek insist that the prologue in which it is stated that said apochryphal gospel was originally written is a later addition, though giving no real evidence for this assertion.

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This sort of thing makes me highly suspicious. When Martin Luther translated the Bible from Latin to German, he omitted the Epistle of St. James because he did not agree with it, saying that it was not authentic, though offering no proof of this. Much later

Thomas Jefferson composed what is called The Jefferson Bible. Though this is totally anachronistic, Jefferson believed that Jesus was simply a very early 18th century philosophe, rationalist and Deist. Jefferson extracted the sayings of Jesus from the four canonical gospels, and systematically deleted all those sayings with which he did not agree or which did not fit his pre-conceived concept of Jesus as 18th century philosophe and Deist, saying that they were "not authentic". What Luther and Jefferson did was dishonest at best, perhaps blasphemous and sacreligious. Jefferson sometimes affirmed that he was a Christian, but his concept of Jesus or Christology was very far indeed from that of either traditional Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Christianity or that of Islam.

Konstantinos Euteles Anagnostes often intermingles material from all four canonical gospels as well as apochryphal gospels that it is difficult to untangle them, and do do so would require many pages. We will give a few examples which demonstrate Konstantinos' use of The Gospel According to Nicodemus:

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"Then the Jews said to him (Pilate): "Listen, we ask you in your majesty that you order Him (Jesus) to come here before your judgement seat, and listen to His words." Then Pilate did so, ordered one of his messengers to be called, and said to him: "Go with careful discretion and call here to me the one who is called Jesus." The messenger didso, and went running

with great haste, and finding ths Saviour, and prostrating himself before Him (Jesus), he immediately stretched out on the earth and said: "Listen, Lord, the judge has ordered you to be summoned to go in to him." But the Saviour did not yet answer him, and furthermore the Jews saw how the messenger had prostrated himself before the Saviour, and called out to Pilate and said: "Did you order your herald and your messenger to approach Him (Jesus) and prostrate himself before Him in this way?" And they immediately told (Pilate) everything that they has seen the messenger do. Pilate then ordered the messenger to be called in to him, and immediately asked why he had done so. The messenger answered him and said: "When you sent me to Jerusalem to King Alexander, I saw where the Saviour sat upon an ass, and the Jewish boys held palm branches in teir hands, and others their clothes, and they spread out those clothes and strewed those palm branches on the ground in front of the Saviour, and all cried with one voice: Hosannah, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

The Jews then said to the messenger: "Those boys were Jews and they spoke in Aramaic; how is it that you should speak in Aramaic when you yourself are Greek?" The messenger answered them and said: "I asked one of the Jews what they said, and he immediately interpreted it all for me." Then Pilate said: "What did they call out, and what does it mean in Aramaic?" The messenger answered him and said: "O Lord, may you be whole, and may he be blessed who comes in the names of the Lord, and save us, you who are on high." Then Pilate said to the Jews: "Now you are also able to bear witness to what those boys said. How has this messenger sinned?"

They (the Jews) were silent and could give no answer. Then the judge said again to the messenger: "Go, and wherever you find Him (Jesus) bring Him to me." Then the messenger did so immediately; he went out and found the Saviour, and then he did just as he had done previously, prostrated himself before the Saviour and said to Him: "Behold, dear Lord, the judge orders

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you to be summoned in." The messenger earnestly entreated Him to walk in over his clothing, and prostrated himself before the dear Lord." (46)

Compare the above to the relevant parts of act 6a of The Cyprus Passion Cycle, keeping in mind that the incident of the

messenger or runner does not appear in any of the four canonical gospels.

Below is another example from The Gospel According to Nicodemus:

"But while they (the Jews) spoke about it and wondered about it, one of the (Roman) soldiers who had to guard the Saviour's tomb stood there and immediately said:

"I know that while we were guarding the Saviour's tomb there was a great earthquake and we saw an angel of God, how he rolled back the stone from the tomb and sat upon it, and I know that his face was like lightning and his clothes were like snow, so that we were afraid, and we lay there as if we were dead. And we heard the angel speaking to the women who came to the Saviour's tomb. He said: "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek the Saviour who has been crucified, but he is not here. He is risen as He foretold. But come and see the place where He was laid, and go quickly and tell His disciples that their Lord is risen from death, and is gone before them into Galilee, where they may see Him, just as He foretold to them."

The Jews, when they had heard that, called all the (Roman) soldiers to them who guarded the Saviour's tomb, and said to them: "Who were the women to whom the angel spoke, and why did you not detain them?" The soldiers answered and said: "We did not know who the women were, nor could we know it, because, for fear of the angel and because of the sight that we saw there, we had become as though we were dead men, and therefore we could not detain the women." Then the Jews said: "As Our Lord lives, we do not believe you." Then the (Roman) soldiers answered and said to the Jews:

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"Listen, for as many miracles as the Saviour wrought and you saw and heard, why will you not believe in Him in Whom you should believe? And yet you spoke truly when you said: "As Our Lord lives"; though you did not know what it meant. It is true that the same and most righteous Lord lives, whom you hung on a cross. And we have heard that Joseph of Arimathaea, who buried the Saviour's body, you shut up in a very secure prison and sealed the lock with a seal; and when you came back you did not find him. But in all seriousness, you give us

Joseph whom you locked up in prison, and we will give you the Saviour, whom we should have guarded in the sepulcher." Then the Jews answered and said: "We can Joseph, because Joseph is in his city of Arimathaea." The (Roman) soldiers answered them and said: "If Joseph is in the city of Arimathaea, then we say to you that the Saviour is in Galilee, just as we heard the angel say to the women."

Then, when the Jews had heard this, they were afraid and said amongst themselves: "If this report spreads too widely, all too many will believe in the Saviour." But I know that the Jews gathered together a great deal of money and gave it to the (Roman) soldiers, and said as follows: "We beg you, dear friends, that you say as follows: that his disciples came in the night and stole the body while you were sleeping. And if this becomes known to Pilate the judge, we will be on your side and secure your safety (from punishment)." Then the (Roman) soldiers took the money and said just as they had been told by the Jews. But all their report was made known and spread abroad." (47)

Compare the above to act 9 of The Cyprus Passion Cycle.

The Cyprus Passion Cycle also contains material, though not a great deal, which derives neither from the canonical gospels nor from apochryphal gospels. Most of said material is derived from the homilies of various church fathers. Perhaps the most obvious example of this is the conversation between the ointment seller and the reformed harlot who anointed Jesus with costly ointments,

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which incident is found in Act 3 of the Cycle, which deals with the supper in the house of Simon the Pharisee. This incident is found neither in any of the canonical gospels nor in any surviving apochryphal gospel. However, it in no way conflicts with the gospel accounts, because it is to be assumed that the woman bought the ointments rather than stealing them.

It is obvious that Konstantinos Euteles Anagnostes derived his version of the conversation between the reformed harlot and the ointment seller from the Holy Week Kontakia of St. Romanos Melodos. In his turn, St. Romanos Melodos derived his version of said conversation from a Syriac homily by St. Ephrem the Syrian titled The Homily of the Sinful Woman Whose Work Was Sin, in other words, "The Homily of the Sinful Woman Who Worked as a Professional Prostitute". However, the Syriac original of St. Ephrem the Syrian differs in some respects from the later Greek and Latin versions of said homily:

- ❖ 1.) In the original Syriac of St. Ephrem the Syrian, the reformed harlot gives a highly detailed account of the various steps of divesting herself of the "apparel of whoredom" and putting on the sackcloth and ashes of repentance. St. Ephrem the Syrian made extensive use of the metaphor of clothing, though generally in contexts radically different from the above.(42) St. Romanos Melodos and Konstantinos Euteles Anagnostes take only the briefest notice of the image or metaphor of clothing. In other Greek and Latin versions of said homily of St. Ephrem the Syrian not only is there only the briefest reference to the metaphor of the changing of
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clothing", but, unlike St. Ephrem the Syrian, St. Romanos Melodos and Konstantinos Euteles Anagnostes, most later Greek and Latin versions place great emphasis on the images of "Jesus the Great Physician" and "Jesus, Saviour of All the World", on which St. Ephrem the Syrian, St. Romanos Melodos and the author of The Cyprus Passion Cycle put much less emphasis. Remember, St. Romanos Melodos derived his Kontakia directly from said Syriac homily by St. Ephrem the Syrian, while Konstantinos Euteles Anagnostes derived his version from that of St. Romanos Melodos.

❖ 2.) The conversation between the harlot and the seller of ointments is relatively brief in the original Syriac version of St. Ephrem the Syrian, but is long, wordy and containing much theology in all later Greek and Latin versions, including those of St. Romanos Melodos and Konstantinos Euteles Anagnostes. All versions, Syriac, Greek or Latin, deal at some length with the high price which the harlot was willing to pay for the ointments.

❖ 3.) In the original Syriac of St. Ephrem the Syrian, Satan appears in the guise of one of the harlot's former lovers, attempting to lure her back to her former life of sin, though with no success. This incident is absent in all Greek and Latin versions, including those of St. Romanos Melodos and Konstantinos Euteles Anagnostes. Some have suggested that the reason for this is that St. Ephrem's portrayal of Satan as the tempter and enemy of man rather than the adversary of God was too Palestinian to appeal to those who wrote in Greek or Latin. I find this unconvincing, because St. Ephrem the Syrian was, in reality, from Nisibis in Mesopotamia, very far from Palestine, while St. Romanos Melodos was from Emesa (now Homs) in Syria, very much nearer to Palestine than is Nisibis.

❖ 4.) The conversation between Satan and Simon the Pharisee, which appears in the original Syriac version of St. Ephrem the Syrian, is absent in all Greek and

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Latin versions, those of St. Romanos Melodos and Konstantinos Euteles Anagnostes not being exceptions.

❖ 5.) The attempt by Simon the Pharisee to bar the harlot from entering his house is present in the original Syriac of St. Ephrem the Syrian, but absent in all Greek and Latin versions, including those of St. Romanos Melodos and Konstantinos Euteles Anagnostes.

❖ 6.) Unlike all the other Greek and Latin versions, in the versions of St. Romanos Melodos and Konstantinos

Euteles Anagnostes, the harlot approaches Jesus, washes his feet with her tears, dries them with her hair, and anoints him with the ointment, "speaking within herself" in the words of many Greek versions. The above mentioned outward acts of her submission to Jesus are almost totally neglected in the original Syriac version of St. Ephrem the Syrian, and barely mentioned by St. Romanus Melodos and Konstantino Euteles Anagnostes.(48)

In summary, because St. Romanos Melodos derived his version of the incident of the harlot and the ointment seller directly from the Syriac version of St. Ephrem the Syrian, and because Konstantinos Euteles Anagnostes derived his from the Kontakia of St. Romanos Melodos, in some ways the version given in The Cyprus Passion Cycle follows the original Syriac version of St. Ephrem the Syrian, while in other aspects it more closely resembles the majority of the Greek and Latin versions.

In the act (6a) of The Cyprus Passion Cycle which deals with St. Peter's denial of Jesus occurs the incident of St. Joseph of Arimathaea "reading in the temple" This does not occur in any of the canonical gospels nor in any apochryphal gospel which has come

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down to us. It appears to proceed from a homily by St. John of Damascus (8th century), as we shall demonstrate below:

"He (St. Joseph of Arimathaea) did not echo the voice of the wretches, drawing upon himself and his house the vengeance for the for the innocent and divine blood, but, always bent upon the Law of the Lord, and, whether resting or standing up, meditating on

His Law, he irrigated his inmost mind with the Holy Spirit's streams emanating from God."(49)

Konstantinos Euteles Anagnostes draws upon a work attributed to St. Gregory Nazianzen (4th century), one of the Cappadocian Fathers, titled The Suffering Endured by Christ, in which the virgin Mary describes the piercing of Jesus' side by "one of those cursed wretches", i.e., the Roman soldiers. Said work is now considered to be no older than the 11th or 12th century, though the author of The Cyprus Passion Cycle certainly believed it to be the work of St. Gregory Nazianzen. Below is given the relevant passage:

"But he who had done the spearing, in bewilderment cried out: This dead man truly is the Son of God. He runs, behold, he hurls himself upon the Cross. And, overwhelmed by the sight, he falls upon the ground. He beats his breast, and with his arms he enfolds the earth, implanted with the Cross and wholly blended with the stream that from the pierced side (of Jesus) is oozing still. And with his hands, filled at the well, he anoints his eyes, so as to thus gain purification."

Among the stage directions for the act (8) of The Cyprus Passion Cycle which deals with the Crucifixion, we read:

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"But the Centurion shall pierce His (Jesus') side with a spear, and the Captain, ready beneath, shall catch the blood and water."

This stage direction is the only instance, save that given above by whom we must call "the pseudo-Nazianzen" in which the blood and water from the lanced side of Jesus is deliberately collected, directly from the wound, by the soldier who did the spearing.(50)

In some versions of the "Legend of Longinus", Blood from Jesus' side accidentally touches the soldier's eyes, and he is

cured of an eye disease. Konstantinos Euteles Anagnostes says nothing about the use that the captain makes of the blood, while in the work by the pseudo-Nazianzen quoted above, the soldier "anoints with it his eyes in order to obtain purification"; here No eye disease is indicated, as is shown by the phrase "overwhelmed by the sight". The last sentence of the work of the pseudo-Nazianzen quoted above, i.e., "so as to thus obtain purification" emphasizes the purifying quality of the blood from Jesus' side, a mystic notion found among Christian mystics and theologians at least as early as St. Ambrose of Milan (4th century). The author of The Cyprus Passion Cycle implies this when he has the captain stand in readiness and catch the blood and water".(51)

Finally, there is an element in The Cyprus Passion Cycle which does not appear in the canonical gospels nor the apochryphal gospels nor in the homilies of the church fathers, and which might

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almost be said to proceed from Cypriot folklore: the legend of the Gypsy blacksmith at the Crucifixion of Jesus.

Metalworking, mainly in iron and copper, apparently has always been a trade typical of Gypsies. This is the case even today, as I can testify thanks to my years in Andalusia.

In The Cyprus Passion Cycle, the smith who forged the nails used in the Crucifixion appears on two occasions, though, as we

said above, he is mentioned neither in the canonical gospels, nor the apochryphal gospel, nor in the homilies of the church fathers. Though, evidently, said nails were forged by someone. The first mention of said smith in The Cyprus Passion Cycle is a bit ambiguous, it not being clear whether he actually drove the nails into Jesus' wrists, or simply forged the nails used in the Crucifixion. The latter seems more plausible, since the Roman soldiers were certainly experienced in all aspects of crucifixion, including driving nails through a man's wrists, while the smith was not. The second mention of the smith is when he extracts the from Jesus' wrists. It must be emphasized that all written sources before the time of The Cyprus Passion Cycle assume that the nails were driven through Jesus' wrists by the Roman soldiers, and make no specific mention of extracting said nails later, though, of course, this must have been done by someone.

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke mention only St. Joseph of Arimathaea as being present when Jesus was taken from

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the Cross, but the Gospel of John and the apochryphal Gospel According to Nicodemus also mention Nicodemus as having been present. Note, however, that none of said sources say that only Joseph of Arimathaea or only Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus were present when Jesus was taken from the Cross. In fact, all or nearly all representations of the above show more than two people being present. Many Byzantine icons, including some used

to illustrate the Gospels, show St. Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus being present, depicted as tall men wearing halos, but also show a third man who is shorter in stature, which, according to the conventions of Byzantine iconography, indicates a lesser status and does not wear a halo. This third man is shown removing the nails from Jesus' wrists with a pair of blacksmith's tongs.(52)

The word for "blacksmith" in correct, literary Byzantine Greek is *chalkeus*, derived from *chalkos*, meaning "metal". Being obviously a learned and well-read man, Konstantinos Euteles Anagnostes must have been well aware of this. However, in The Cyprus Passion Cycle, the monk Konstantinos uses the Cypriot colloquial or dialect word for "blacksmith", which is *komodromos*, whose etymology is uncertain. *Komodromos* has two basic meanings:

- ❖ 1.) "vagabond" &
- ❖ 2.) "itinerant metal worker".

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Though many Gypsies are sedentary, in general they are known as nomads and vagabonds. As we said above, metal working has always been a trade typical of Gypsies, whether sedentary or itinerant. So, in the Cypriot dialect of spoken Greek, *komodromos* came to mean "Gypsy". Something similar occurred in Great Britain and Ireland, where "tinker" has come to be synonymous with "Gypsy". This has not occurred in American

English, in which "tinker" is purely a verb, the only exceptions being the exclamations "Not worth a tinker's damn" and "I don't care a tinker's damn", said to have been brought to the USA and Canada by Irish immigrants. We shall note here that in literary Byzantine Greek, Gypsies are called **Gyphtoi**, i.e., "Egyptians" or **Athinganoi-Adsincan**, though, of course, the Gypsies had nothing whatever to do with the 8th century Judaizing heretics known as Athinganoi, literally "Untouchables".(53) Interestingly, many scholars believe that the Gypsies derive from the Dom, a Hindu caste which is low but well above the Untouchables. From about 1300 onward, the Byzantines also called the Gypsies by a Slavic word, i.e., **Katsibeloi**, cognate with the Russian word for "nomad", which is **Kochevnik**.(54)

Except for the word Katsibeloi and the connection of the Gypsies with the Hindu Dom caste, the author of The Cyprus Passion Cycle must have been aware of all of the above. Also, there is a gross anachronism involved, since the first notices of

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Gypsies outside India was in 5th century Persia. Ergo, there were no Gypsies in 1st century Palestine.

Blacksmiths are equipped and experienced in the extraction of nails, which is one of the skills of their profession. Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus in all likelihood sought the aid of a blacksmith to extract the nails from Jesus' wrist,

perhaps said blacksmith being the same one who forged the nails. However, this blacksmith cannot possibly have been a Gypsy, because there were no Gypsies in Palestine at that time. Konstantinos Euteles Anagnostes may or may not have been aware of said anachronism.

The question for which there can now be no answer is: why did the author of The Cyprus Passion Cycle include the element of the Gypsy blacksmith at the Crucifixion of Jesus? Did he simply wish to include a popularizing, folkloric element in an otherwise learned work? Did he believe that the large majority of 13th century Cypriots considered the terms "blacksmith" and "Gypsy" to be synonymous? Did he prefer not to possibly confuse them with a learned, and to the majority of 13th century Cypriots incomprehensible word? We shall never know.

A variant of the legend of the Gypsy blacksmith or nail-smith at the Crucifixion of Jesus also occurs on the Greek island of Lesbos. Other variants are found in Orthodox Slavic countries.

In the variant from Lesbos, the Virgin Mary meets the Gypsy nail-smith, and asks him whether he has seen Jesus. The Gypsy

(4279)

answers that he was going to make five nails instead of four, for use at Jesus' impending Crucifixion. The Virgin Mary then curses the Gypsy to be homeless forever.(55)

In a Bessarabian legend, the Gypsy tells the Virgin Mary that he has persuaded the Jews to drive the fifth nail into Jesus' side. The Virgin Mary then curses the Gypsy to be ever swarthy, enslaved, to be a smith, and to be despised by all. In the Bulgarian version of this same legend, the Gypsy induces the Jews to drive the 5th nail into Jesus' heart, and the Virgin Mary curses the Gypsy, saying that he will have nothing to eat except that which he obtains by begging.(56)

In Ukraine there are a number of legends concerning the Gypsy blacksmith at the Crucifixion of Jesus. In one Ukrainian version, when Jesus was Crucified, the Gypsy blacksmith brought four nails and said that all would be useful. However, only three were used, but Jesus cursed the Gypsy, saying that he would ever be as useless as the 4th nail.(57)

In another Ukrainian folktale, the Jews dared not nail Jesus to the Cross, but rather hired a Gypsy to hammer in five nails. However, the Gypsy hammered in only four nails, and swore that this was the number of nails he had been hired to drive. Since that time, the Gypsies have been privileged by God to swear falsely at the fairs.(58)

(4280)

Finally, in yet another Ukrainian legend the carpenter, who is NOT a Gypsy, who made the Cross on which Jesus was Crucified is cursed never to become rich, but the blacksmith who forged

the nails, who is a Gypsy, is blessed because he stole one of the nails.(59)

It should be noted that in Russian, Ukrainian, Bulgarian and Serbian icons, including those used to illustrate the Gospel books, the same nail-extractor is shown as in Byzantine icons.(60)

As one might expect, in the *dramatis personae* and in the stage directions The Cyprus Passion Cycle shows the influence of the conventions of Byzantine iconography.

The Greek Orthodox Cypriot monk, Konstantinos Euteles Anagnostes, wrote rather copious and detailed "stage instructions" or "stage directions" for The Cyprus Passion Cycle, which I have included, written in italics, when they seem appropriate.

THE AWAKENING OF LAZARUS.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

JESUS

THE DISCIPLES

LAZARUS

Mary, SISTER OF LAZARUS

MARTHA, SISTER OF LAZARUS

(4281)

THOMAS THE DISCIPLE

A SERVANT

A FEW JEWS

THE PROPHET

Place Christ and His Disciples before the grave of Lazarus at a good distance from it, but Martha and Mary, the sisters of Lazarus, and a few Jews, place nearer to the grave; and he that plays the dead Lazarus, within the grave, bound with graveclothes, and his face bound with a napkin. Then, send someone to Jesus, saying:

Servant:

Lord, behold, he whom you love is sick.

JESUS:

This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might thus be glorified.

He shall say this and what follows with a loud voice within hearing of all. And then He shall be silent. Then, he shall say to His Disciples:

JESUS:

Let us go into Judaea again.

DISCIPLES:

Master, the Jews have lately sought to stone you; and you wish to go there again?

(4282)

JESUS:

Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if a man walks in the night, he stumbles, because there is no light in him. Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go, that I may awaken him out of sleep. Lord, if he sleeps, he shall be well.

JESUS:

Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe; nevertheless, let us go to him.

THOMAS:

Let us also go, that we may die with him.

Then Jesus and His Disciples shall go to the grave of Lazarus. Now send someone to Martha to inform her, saying:

SERVANT:

Behold, Jesus is here. Come and meet Him.

As Jesus comes near, she meets Him and says to Him:

MARTHA:

Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know, that, even now, whatever you ask of God, God will grant it.

JESUS:

Your brother shall rise again.

MARTHA:

I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

(4283)

JESUS:

I am the resurrection and the life: he who believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?

MARTHA:

Yes, Lord, I believe that you art the Christ, the Son of God, who should come into the world.

Then Martha shall go to Mary and say to her in secret:

MARTHA:

The Master has come and is calling for you.

Mary shall arise quickly and come to Jesus, and the Jews that are with her shall follow her, and upon seeing Jesus, Mary shall fall down at His feet, saying to Him:

MARY:

Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

JESUS:

Where have you laid him?

MARY & MARTHA:

Lord, come and see.

Jesus shall weep, and they shall go to the grave, Jesus saying:

JESUS:

Take away the stone.

MARTHA:

Lord, by this time he stinks, for he has been dead four days.

(4284)

JESUS:

Did I not tell you, that, if you would believe, you should see the glory of God?

Then the stone shall be taken away. And Jesus, lifting up his eyes, shall say:

JESUS:

Father, I thank you that you have heard me. And I know that You hear me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that you have sent me.

And then He shall cry with a loud voice:

Lazarus, come forth!

And he that was dead shall come forth, bound with graveclothes, and his face bound with a napkin. Jesus says:

JESUS:

Loose him, and let him go.

THE PROPHET:

Tell the daughter of Zion, Behold your king comes to you, humble, and sitting upon an ass and the foal of an ass.

* * *

1.) *BEGINNING THE PAGEANT OF THE PALMS*

DRAMATIS PERSONAE:

JESUS

THE DISCIPLES

(4285)

A FEW JEWS

THE MULTITUDE

CHILDREN

VENDORS OF SHEEP AND DOVES

THE CHIEF PRIESTS

THE SCRIBES

A FEW LAME AND BLIND

Jesus:

Go into the nearby village and there you shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them and bring them to me.

JEWS:

What are you doing, loosing the ass?

THE DISCIPLES:

The Lord has need of her.

As soon as the Disciples bring the ass, they shall put there clothes on her, and there Jesus shall sit. Two of them shall lead the ass, and the other Disciples shall follow, in astonishment and whispering to one another. And of the Jews, both preceding and following behind, some shall spread their garments in the way, and some cut down branches and strew them in the way. The children shall cry:

CHILDREN:

Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.

THE MULTITUDES:

This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

(4286)

THE LAME & BLIND:

Have mercy on us, o son of David.

And Jesus shall heal them. Others shall sit in the Temple, selling sheep and doves. And having dismounted from the ass and having entered the Temple, Jesus shall make a scourge out of small cords and cast them out of the Temple, saying:

JESUS:

It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer, they have made it a den of thieves.

And He shall overthrow their tables. But upon seeing the wonderful things that he did, and the children hailing Him in the Temple, the Chief Priests and Scribes shall be greatly displeased and say to Jesus:

CHIEF PRIESTS & SCRIBES:

Do you hear what they say?

JESUS:

Have you never read, out of the mouths of babes and sucklings you have perfected praise?

And Jesus shall leave them and go out.

** * **

3.) THE SUPPER

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

JESUS

THE DISCIPLES

JUDAS ISCARIOT

SIMON

THE HARLOT

(4287)

THE VENDOR OF OINTMENTS

CAIAPHAS

THE CHIEF PRIESTS

THE PHARISEES

Prepare the supper-table in the house of Simon,

and there the Master and His Disciples shall sit down, and Simon shall wait on them. Then the Harlot shall enter and she shall weep and cry out:

HARLOT:

Woe to me a sinner, woe to me who am lost, how long will I persist in not abandoning evil? Why do I not count upon the compassion of God since, for the sake of me who has gone astray like a sheep, the Lord is going all around on every path? For my sake, He has bent down the Heavens and has descended; for my sake He is supping with the sinful Pharisee, He who gives nourishment to all flesh. He goes near the sinner, He who is without sin; He partakes of the repast, He who nourishes all, and reclines on the ground, He who is borne on the wings of Cherubim, and forgives all sinners from the debts of their sins. What else are you waiting for? Take courage, my soul, and draw near Him: He has not come to save the just but the sinners.

This completed, she shall go to the Vendor of Ointments to buy the ointment, speaking to the Vendor of Ointments, both asking and answering, until at last, she takes the ointment, i.e., a vessel full of extract of roses.

HARLOT:

Since a lover, great above all sons of men, has come to me, if you have a select ointment, give it to me, so that I may offer it, a worthy gift, to Him who is loved by me because of His worth; to Him who has set on fire my herta and my soul. Do not trouble yourself about the price: even if need be for me to give the last of my body and bones I am ready to sell and give

(4288)

all, so that I may have something, be it ever so small, to offer to Him who will cleanse me.

VENDOR:

Tell me: who is he whom you love, that he has thus inspired your love? What do you hope to gain from him in return for this ointment?

HARLOT:

What are you saying? You are ignorant, you do not know of that which you are speaking. He has a gift for me in return for the ointment, but even if this be possible, no man can give Him the full value of the worth of His gift. Not even Heaven itself, nor the Earth, nor any man in the world compares to Him who will come to me. I whom you regard as worthless, He, as the Lover of mankind, has judged worthy, and freed of my sins. He is the son of David after the flesh; therefore He is also well-shapen; for about Him it has been said: You are fairer than the children of men. He is the Son of God, and I have never seen Him, but, having heard of Him, I was wounded with love. For the love of David did Michal, the daughter of Saul, leave the king's palace and follow him who was a beggar. But I will sell my riches, even if I have gained them by foul means, and I will buy ointment, and I will run to David's son who, because of me, has become a beggar.

And having received the ointment, she shall run and pour it over the feet of Jesus, saying nothing, but merely wiping the feet of Jesus with her hair. The Disciples are indignant, saying:

DISCIPLES:

To what purpose is this waste?

JUDAS ISCARIOT:

Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? [Obviously Judas Iscariot was a believer in the Social Gospel, M.Mc.)
(4289)

JESUS:

Why do you trouble the woman? Because she has done a good deed to me. For you have the poor always with you; but me you do not have always. For in that she has poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. Truly I say to you, wherever this Gospel (Euangelion) shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also be preached this, that what this woman has done, be told for a memorial of her.

Now the Chief Priests and the Pharisees gather a council and consult how they might take him, saying:

CHIEF PRIESTS & PHARISEES:

Who should we do? For this man works many miracles. If we let him alone, all men will believe in him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and our nation.

CAIAPHAS:

You know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, so that the whole nation may not perish.

JUDAS ISCARIOT:

What will you give me, if I were to deliver him to you?

And they strike a bargain with him for thirty pieces of silver. And Judas Iscariot shall return to his fellow Disciples.

* * *

4.) THE FEET WASHING

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

JESUS

THE DISCIPLES, including PETER

(4290)

Keep in readiness stools, a basin and a towel. The Disciples shall sit down in their right order. But Jesus, having poured water into the basin, shall wash the Disciples' feet, beginning with the last, and wipe them with the towel. When he comes to Peter, Peter shall say:

PETER:

Lord, do you wash my feet?

JESUS:

You do not now know what I do, but you shall know hereafter.

PETER:

You will never wash my feet.

JESUS:

If I do not wash your feet, you have nothing to do with me.

PETER:

Not only my feet, but also my hands and my head.

JESUS:

He who is washed need not save to wash his feet, but is clean everywhere: and you are clean, but not completely.

Now, having washed their feet, He shall lay aside the towel and put on his garments and, sitting down again, He shall say to them:

JESUS:

Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Master and Lord: and you speak well; for so I am. If I
(4291)

then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Truly, truly I say to you, the servant is not greater than his Lord; neither is he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If you know these things, happy are you if you do them. I do not speak of all of you: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled; He who eats bread with me has lifted up his heel against me. Now I tell you before it has come to pass, so that you may believe, when it comes to pass that I am he. Truly, truly I say to you, He that receives whoever I shall send receives me and he that receives me receives him that sent me.

* * *

5.) *THE BETRAYAL.*

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

JESUS

THE DISCIPLES, including

PETER

JUDAS ISCARIOT

THE TWO SONS OF ZEBEDEE, JOHN & JAMES

A MULTITUDE OF SERVANTS

A SERVANT

THE CHIEF PRIESTS

CAIAPHAS, THE HIGH PRIEST

THE FALSE WITNESSES

THE MULTITUDE

(4292)

Having gathered together His Disciples, Jesus shall say to them:

JESUS:

All of you shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.

PETER:

Though all men shall be offended because of you,
yet will I never be offended.

JESUS:

Truly I say to you, that this night, before the
cock crows, you shall deny me three times.

PETER:

Though I should die with you, yet I will not deny
you.

JESUS:

Sit here while I go to pray.

And taking with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, He
shall say to them:

JESUS:

My soul is very sorrowful, even to death, remain
here, and watch with me.

And going a little farther, He shall fall on His face and
pray, saying:

(4293)

JESUS:

O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass
from me: nevertheless, let Your will and not my will be
done.

And coming back to the Disciples, he shall say to Peter:

JESUS:

What, could you not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray,
that you do not enter into temptation: the spirit indeed is
willing, but the flesh is weak.

And coming back to the Disciples after the prayer, He shall say to them:

JESUS:

Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand who has betryed me.

This completed, He shall summon the Disciples and He shall go away into the garden, and then Judas Iscariot shall come upon him bringing with him a multitude with swords and staves. Jesus shall go and say to them:

JESUS:

Whom do you seek?

MULTITUDE OF SERVANTS:

Jesus of Nazareth.

JESUS:

I am he.

(4294)

On hearing this, they shall go backward and fall to the ground. And Jesus shall ask them again:

JESUS:

Whom do you seek?

Multitude of servants:

Jesus of Nazareth.

JESUS:

I have told you that I am he; if therefore you seek me, let these others go their way.

Then Judas Iscariot shall step forward and say:

Judas ISCARIOT:

Hail master.

And he shall kiss the Master. But the Master shall say:

JESUS:

Friend, where do you come from?

And Peter, having a sword shall strike one of the servants and cut off his right ear. Then the Master shall say to him:

JESUS:

Peter, return your sword to its place: for all those that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Do you think that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, as they must be?

And touching the ear of the servant, He shall heal it, and He shall say to the multitudes:

(4295)

JESUS:

Have you come with swords and staves to take me, as though I were a thief? I sat daily with you teaching in the Temple, and you did not lay hold on me.

And they that have laid hold on Him, shall lead him away to Annas first and then to Caiaphas and the Chief Priests. And the Disciples shall flee, but only Peter and John shall follow Him from a distance with fear and faint hearts. And go in, Peter shall sit with the servants. When Jesus stands before the Chief Priests, there shall appear the two false witnesses.

FALSE WITNESSES:

This fellow said, I am able to destroy the Temple of God, and to build it in three days.

Jesus remains silent, and the High Priest says to him:

CAIAPHAS:

I judge you by the living God, that you tell us whether you are the Christ, the Son of God.

JESUS:

It is you that says it: nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of Heaven.

Then the High Priest shall tear his clothes and say to Jesus:

CAIAPHAS:

He has spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now you have heard his blasphemy. What do you think?

THE MULTITUDES:

He deserves death.

(4296)

Then they shall spit in His face, and buffet Him and strike him with the palms of their hands, and they shall say to Him:

THE MULTITUDES:

Prophecy for us, you Christ. Who is he that struck you?

* * *

6a.) *PETER'S DENIAL*

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

JESUS

PETER

JUDAS ISCARIOT

FIRST MAID

SECOND MAID

A FEW BYSTANDERS

THE CHIEF PRIESTS

A FEW PRIESTS

JOSEPH OF ARIMATHAEA

A SERVANT

PILATE

A RUNNER

THE JEWS

NICODEMUS, A JEW

ANOTHER JEW

A PARALYTIC

(4297)

A BLIND MAN

A WOMAN

FIRST MAID:

You were also with Jesus of Galilee.

PETER:

I do not know what you are talking about.

SECOND MAID:

This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth.

PETER:

I do not know the man.

BYSTANDER:

Surely you are one of them: for your speech betrays.

Peter spoke with a Galilean accent when he spoke Aramaic.

PETER:

I do not know the man.

And immediately, the cock shall crow. And Peter shall go out and weep. Repenting what he has done, Judas Iscariot shall go to the Chief Priests and say to them:

JUDAS ISCARIOT:

I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood.

(4298)

CHIEF PRIESTS:

What is that to us?

And Judas Iscariot shall throw down the pieces of silver, and shall go and hang himself. but the Chief Priests take council and say:

CHIEF PRIESTS:

It is not lawful to put the pieces of silver into the treasury, because they are blood money.

Joseph of Arimathaea shall stand in the Temple, reading, and the Chief Priests shall send someone to call him.

CHIEF PRIESTS:

Go to Joseph of Arimathaea and call him here. Take notice; if you find him reading, know that he is ill-disposed towards us and will not come with you, and, having saluted him in peace, return to us.

The Servant shall go and on finding Joseph of Arimathaea reading, he shall return. And again, a second time, he shall go and finding him reading, he shall return.

* * *

6b.) THE QUESTIONING.

And the Chief Priests and the Multitudes go to Pilate and say to him:

JEWS:

We know this man Jesus to be the son of Joseph the carpenter, and his mother is Mary, and he calls himself the son of God and king. But this is not all, he also profanes the Sabbath and wishes to do away with the law of our fathers.

(4299)

PILATE:

How can you try your own king?

JEWS:

We do not say that he is king.

Pilate having called the Runner sends him to bring Jesus.

PILATE:

Let Jesus be brought here with respect.

But the Runner, goin out and recognizing Jesus, adores Him and, taking off his cloak, spreads it on the ground, saying to Jesus:

THE RUNNER:

My Lord, walk on this, because the governor calls you.

But the Jews, seeing this happening, cry out against Pilate, saying:

JEWS:

Why have you ordered him to come with such honor?

PILATE:

Why This?

THE RUNNER:

My Lord Governor, when you sent me to Jerusalem to Alexander, I saw Jesus sitting on an ass, and the Jews, holding branches in their hands, shouted, Hosannah to the son of david, blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.

(4300)

JEWS:

The Jews shouted in Syriac (Aramaic); how then, did you, a Greek, learn Syriac (Aramaic)?

The Chief Priests, and some other Jews would have Aramaic and in addition Greek Koine, as this, rather than Latin, was the lingua franca of the eastern part of the Roman Empire. Pilate almost certainly did not speak Aramaic, so the Jews, including Jesus, must have spoken to him in Greek Koine.

THE RUNNER:

I asked one of the Jews, and he interpreted it all for me.

PILATE:

If you bear witness to the words spoken by the children, what has the runner done wrong?

The Jews are silent. Pilate says to the runner:

PILATE:

Go and bring him in in whatever way you wish.

The runner does the same as before, spreading his cloak on the ground and saying to Jesus:

THE RUNNER:

My Lord, come in.

And He goes to Pilate, and, He being accused by the Jews, Nicodemus speaks up and says:

NICODEMUS:

Gracious governor, allow me to say a few words.

(4301)

PILATE:

Speak.

NICODEMUS:

I said to the elders, and the priests and the Levites, and to all the multitude of the Jews in the synagogue: What cause have you against this man? For this man does many wonders and miracles, such as no other man has ever done, nor ever will do. Let him go, therefore, and do not devise any evil against him. If the miracles which he does are of God, their effect will endure; but if they are of man, their effects will soon vanish away.

The Jews are enraged. Pilate says to them:

PILATE:

Why do you gnash your teeth against he who speaks
the truth?

THE JEWS:

Would you yourself accept the word of Nicodemus?

NICODEMUS:

Amen, may it happen as you have said.

A PARALYTIC:

Allow me, governor, to say a word.

PILATE:

Speak;

(4302)

A PARALYTIC:

Thirty-eight years I lay on my bed in great pain.
But when Jesus saw me and had compassion on me, he said
to me: Arise, and take up your bed and walk. And at his
word I immediately arose and took up my bed and went
home, whole and praising God.

A BLIND MAN:

I came blind from my mother's womb. I heard the
voice of a person but I did not see a face. And as Jesus
passed by, I cried out with a loud voice: Have mercy
upon me, o son of David. And immediately he pitied me
and, having spat on the ground, he made clay of the
spittle and laid it upon my eyes, and instantly I saw.

A WOMAN:

I was flowing with blood, and as soon as I once touched the fringe of his garment, immediately the flow of blood ceased.

The Chief Priests and the Multitudes after having bound Jesus, shall take Him away to the presence of Pilate, saying:

THE JEWS:

We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding the giving of tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ the King.

PILATE (to Jesus):

Are you the King?

JESUS:

It is you who says it.

(4303)

But the Chief Priests and Elders shall accuse Jesus, and He shall not answer them. But Pilate will say to the Jews:

PILATE:

I find no fault in this man.

THE JEWS:

He stirs up the people, teaching through all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.

PILATE:

Is this man a Galilean?

JEWS:

Yes.

Pilate will now send Jesus to Herod Antipas.

PILATE:

Take him away to Herod Antipas.

* * *

7.) THE MOCKERY OF HEROD ANTIPAS.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

JESUS

HEROD ANTIPAS

THE CHIEF PRIESTS

THE JEWS

PILATE

A SERVANT

(4304)

After Jesus had been brought to the presence of Herod Antipas, the Chief Priests, being there also, shall accuse Him, saying:

CHIEF PRIESTS:

We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding giving tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ the King.

HEROD ANTIPAS:

Who are you and where do you come from?

And again:

HEROD ANTIPAS:

How do you distort the law?

And again:

HEROD ANTIPAS:

Are you the King?

And again:

HEROD ANTIPAS:

We have heard of you, and we have hoped to have seen you work some miracle.

But Jesus shall not answer. Then Herod Antipas shall dress him in a white robe and send him back to Pilate\, saying:

HEROD ANTIPAS:

Take this man back to Pilate.

(4305)

And Herod Antipas shall go along to Pilate and pay his respects to him, exchange signs of affection with him, and then take his leave. After Jesus has returned to Pilate, Pilate's wife shall send a Servant.

SERVANT:

Your wife sends you a message: you must have nothing to do with that just man; for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

Pilate says to the people:

PILATE:

Whom do you wish me to release to you? Bar abbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?

THE PEOPLE:

Release to us according to the custom.

PILATE:

But you have a custom that I should release to you someone at the Passover. Which of the two do you want me to release to you?

THE JEWS:

Bar Abbas.

PILATE:

What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called Christ:

THE JEWS:

Crucify him!

(4306)

PILATE:

Why, what evil has he done?

THE JEWS:

Away with him, away with him, crucify him.

And having asked for water, Pilate shall wash his hands, saying:

PILATE:

I am innocent of the blood of this just man: take note of it.

THE JEWS:

His blood be on us, and on our children.

PILATE:

Bar Abbas shall be released.

And Pilate shall deliver Jesus to be crucified, saying to Him:

PILATE:

Your nation has charged you with being a king; on this account, I sentence you to be fastened to a cross; and let two evil doers be crucified with you.

* * *

8.) *THE CRUCIFIXION.*

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

JESUS

THE THIEF ON THE RIGHT

(4307)

THE THIEF ON THE LEFT

PILATE

SIMON OF CYRENE

MARY, MOTHER of JESUS

JOHN THE DISCIPLE

JOSEPH OF ARIMATHAEA

NICODEMUS

THE CAPTAIN

THE CENTURION

THE GYPSY SMITH

THE SOLDIERS

THE CHIEF PRIESTS

THE JEWS

THE WOMEN, among them

MARY OF MAGDALA or MARY MAGDALENE

The soldiers, taking Jesus, shall strip Him, and put on Him a scarlet robe and a crown of thorns on His head, and a reed in His right hand; and kneeling before Him, they shall say:

SOLDIERS:

Hail the King.

And taking the reed, they shall strike Him on the head, and, having laid the cross on His shoulders, they shall lead Him away to crucify Him. And forthwith they shall take the Two Thieves out of the prison, and having laid on each his cross, they shall walk with Jesus. And as they have come out a little, they shall press into service Simon of Cyrene and lay the cross on him. There shall also follow, together with the Mother of Jesus, women lamenting Him, and Jesus turning to them shall say:

(4308)

JESUS:

Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for us, but rather weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming in which it shall be said, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the paps that never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green year, what shall be done in a dry year?

And when they arrive at the place, the Gypsy Smith shall come and crucify Him and the two thieves, one on the right hand and the other on the left. And after Pilate has had an inscription written in Latin, Greek and Aramaic: JESUS OF NAZARETH KING OF THE JEWS, place it above His head. But the people and the Chief Priests shall say:

THE JEWS:

You who destroy the temple and builds it in three days, save yourself. If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.

CHIEF PRIEST:

He saved others; but he cannot save himself. If he is King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let God deliver him now, if God will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.

JESUS:

Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.

MARY:

For this I weep, my son, because the lawless Jews have delivered You to a bitter and shameful death, as they believed; but Your death, my son, will be deemed holy, and approved of God, and the salvation of the
(4309)

whole world. Without You, my son, what manner of life shall I lead? Where are Your disciples, who boasted that they would die with You? Where are those healed by You? How is it that no one has been found to help You? Incline yourself, o cross, that I may embrace my son and kiss tenderly my beloved heart, the apple of my eye; Him whom I suckled at these breasts after a strange manner, as not having known man. Incline yourself, o cross; I wish to throw my arms around my dearest son. Incline yourself, o cross, that I as a mother, may bid farewell to my most beloved son, and kiss Him tenderly. Where is Your beauty, my sweetest son? Where is Your shapeliness, my dearest son? Once blooming in beauty beyond all sons of men, You, now, have neither shape nor beauty, my sweetest son, because of the hands of the lawless. In the end I will die with You.

[NOTE THAT ABOVE THE VIRGIN MARY IS REPRESENTED AS THE **MATER DOLOROSA, THE SORROWFUL MOTHER**, COMPARE THIS TO FATIMA IN THE FOLLOWING TA'ZIEHS AND MARSIYAS.]

THIEF ON THE LEFT:

If you are the Christ, save yourself and us.

THIEF ON THE RIGHT:

Do you not fear God, seeing that you are also condemned? And we indeed justly, for we receive the just reward of our evil deeds: but this man has done no wrong.

And speaking to Jesus:

THIEF ON THE RIGHT:

Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

JESUS:

Truly I say to you, today you shall be with me in Paradise.

(4310)

Now place the Mother and the Disciple John on either side of the cross, and the Master shall say to his Mother:

JESUS:

Woman, behold your son.

And to the Disciple John:

JESUS:

Behold your mother.

Then Jesus shall say:

JESUS:

I am thirsty.

And immediately the sponge, filled and put on the end of a reed, shall be put to His mouth.

JESUS:

Father, into Your hands I commend my spirit.

Henceforth Jesus shall be silent. Then the Captain shall say:

THE CAPTAIN:

Truly, this man was the Son of God.

But the centurion shall pierce Jesus' side with a spear, and the Captain, ready beneath, shall catch the blood and the water. Then Mary, Mother of Jesus shall go to Joseph of Arimathaea, weeping and greatly disturbed and shall say to him, while John the Disciple is also present:

MARY:

I beg of you, lighten my grief, since I know of your true love for my sweetest son, and render me two favors. Go to Pilate and ask for the body of my beloved
(4311)

son that I may bury it, and bequeath to me the sepulcher which you have recently had hewn out of a rock in the garden.

And Joseph of Arimathaea, eyes filled with bitter tears, shall say:

JOSEPH OF ARIMATHAEA:

My lady, may your will be done, as you wish.

And going to Pilate, Joseph of Arimathaea shall beg for the body of the Master saying:

JOSEPH OF ARIMATHAEA:

A little request, and a sorrowful one I have come to ask of you.

PILATE:

What is that you ask of me?

JOSEPH OF ARIMATHAEA:

Jesus of Nazareth, the stranger and good man, which the Jews for envy have taken away to crucify: Give me the body of that stranger, so that I may bury him.

Pilate, calling the Centurion, shall ask him whether Jesus is dead, saying:

PILATE:

Has Jesus been dead for any time?

THE CENTURION:

Yes, my lord.

(4312)

And when Pilate knows that Jesus is dead, he shall command that the body be given to Joseph of Arimathaea, saying to him:

PILATE:

Go, I grant you this dead man, and do to him what you wish.

And instantly the Gypsy Smith shall come, and the Deposition from the cross shall take place. And Nicodemus shall come, carrying a linen shroud and some spices, and having enveloped the body they shall entomb it, singing in harmony the Trisagion [from the Byzantine Liturgy]:

Hagios o Theos,

O Holy God!

Hagios iskyrios,

O Holy and Strong!

Hagios athanatos,

O Holy and Immortal!

Eleison eimas.

Have mercy on us!

[Note: this is the only part of The Cyprus Passion Cycle which is sung] until they enter into the Sepulchre, Mary Mother of Jesus and John the Disciple, together with the ointment carrying women following after. And as they entomb Him, the ointment carrying women shall begin to bewail Him.

MARY MOTHER OF JESUS:

How am I not to lament You, my son? How should I not tear my face with my finger nails? This, my son, is what Simeon the old man foretold to me when I brought

You, and infant forty days old, into the Temple. This is the sword which now pierces through my soul. Who shall stop my tears, my sweetest son? No one ever but You alone, when, as You said, You shall rise again in three days. [Another example of the Virgin Mary as the **MATER DOLOROSA**, M.Mc.]

(4313)

MARY OF MAGDALA or MARY MAGDALENE:

Hear, ye peoples, tribes and tongues; and learn to what death the lawless Jews have delievered Him who did to them countless good works. Hear and be astonished. Who will make these things known to all the world? I will go alone to Rome, to Caesar. I will reveal to him the evil the Pilate has done, yielding to the lawless Jews.

An after the lament, the Chief Priests shall appear before Pilate and say to him:

CHIEF PRIESTS:

Sir, we remember that which the deceiver said, while he was still alive: "After three days I will rise again." Therefore command that the sepulcher be guarded until the third day, lest his disciples come by night and steal him away, and say to the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first.

PILATE:

You shall have a watch: go your way, make it as secure as you can.

And they shall go with the soldiers and make the sepulcher secure. And sitting down, the soldiers shall watch Jesus. But the women shall go away to buy sweet spices.

* * *

9.) *THE RESURRECTION.*

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

JESUS

ADAM

(4314)

THE ANGELS

THE WOMEN

THE SOLDIERS

THE DISCIPLES

THE CHIEF PRIESTS

And there shall come the Great Voice and the Tumult and the Resurrection, and the soldiers, hearing it, shall fall on their faces and become half-dead. And Christ shall come forth, holding Adam by the hand and saying to him:

JESUS:

Awake, you who are asleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ will enlighten you.

But the Angels shall stand on the sepulcher, and the ointment carrying women shall come forth, in silence and fear, carrying a cassolette and aromatics, and the Angel shall say to them:

ANGEL:

Fear not: for I know that you seek Jesus, Who was crucified. He is not here: for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where The Lord lay. And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead; and, behold, He goes before you into Galilee; there you shall see Him: Lo, I have told you.

And coming forth they shall go on their way to the disciples.
And, meeting, them, Jesus shall say to them:

JESUS:

All hail.

And going toward Him the women shall adore Him, and Jesus shall say to them:

(4315)

JESUS:

Be not afraid. Go tell my brethren that they should go to Galilee, and there they shall see me.

But the disciples shall be assembled in the house. And the soldiers shall depart, telling the Chief Priests of the Resurrection [Note: the soldiers in reality would have reported first to Pilate, as they were soldiers of Rome, **NOT** the High Priest, though certainly news of the Resurrection would soon have reached the Chief Priests. M.Mc.]

THE SOLDIERS:

Know that Jesus is risen.

THE JEWS:

In what manner?

THE SOLDIERS:

First there was an earthquake; then a lightning-bearing angel of the Lord came down from Heaven, and rolled away the stone from the sepulcher and sat on it. And from fear of him, we soldiers all became like dead men, and neither could we flee nor speak. But we heard the angel speak to the women who had come there to see the sepulcher, saying: Fear not, for I know that you seek Jesus. He is not here, but He is risen, as He had foretold to you. Bend down and see the sepulcher where His body lay. Go and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead; and they shall find Him. Because of this, I have told you first.

But the Chief Priests, taking counsel and giving the soldiers money, shall persuade them that they shall say:

(4316)

CHIEF PRIESTS:

Say that His disciples came by night, and stole Him away while we slept. And if this should come to Pilate's ears, we will persuade him so that you will not be punished.

[Note: in the Roman Army a soldier on guard who abandoned his post faced the death penalty. For this reason, there were cases in which Roman soldiers on guard froze to death rather than abandon their posts even for a short time. M.Mc.]

The soldiers take the the money and go on their way.

* * *

10.) *THE TOUCHING OF THE WOUNDS.*

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

JESUS

THE DISCIPLES, including

THOMAS

Jesus shall go and stand in the midst of the disciples where they are assembled, while Thomas is not with them, and He shall say to them:

JESUS:

Peace be with you.

And He shall show them His hands and His side. And again Jesus shall say to them:

JESUS:

Receive you the Holy Spirit: Whosoever's sins you remit, they are remitted, and whose sins you do not remit, they are not remitted.

(4317)

But after Jesus has gone, Thomas shall come in, and the disciples shall say to him:

DISCIPLES:

We have seen the Lord.

THOMAS:

Unless I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe.

And immediately Jesus shall return to them and, standing in their midst, shall say:

JESUS:

Peace be with you.

And to Thomas:

JESUS:

Put your finger here and behold my hands; and put here your hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

THOMAS:

My Lord and my God.

JESUS:

Because you have seen me, you have believed: Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed.

Then Jesus shall take the Disciples and go with them to Galilee, and after the Disciples have worshipped Him, He shall say to them:

(4318)

JESUS:

All power is given to me, in Heaven and in earth. Go therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things as I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always even unto to the end of the world. Amen.

And after having come to the end of this command Jesus shall bless His Disciples.

-FINIS- (61)

* * *

Passion plays are a natural and logical - but by no means inevitable - development from the liturgy and processions of Holy Week, much as the liturgy led to liturgical drama, then to mystery, morality and miracle plays and finally to Shakespeare, Lope de Vega and grand opera. In Holy Week in Spain the various stages leading to Passion Plays are all present. In the city of Murcia the marchers in Holy Week processions wear sandals patterned after those worn in Palestine in the time of Jesus. In Puente Genil in the province of Cordoba the Holy Week processions are accompanied by martial drum rolls, in order to evoke the Roman legionnaires who crucified Jesus (Spaniards have no love for the Romans; in fact, Spaniards loathe and detest the Romans). In

Lorca in the province of Murcia. Holy Week takes on a Biblical character, with costumes, resulting in what is very nearly a full-blown Passion Play. I do not personally know of any Passion Plays

(4319)

in Spain, but this does not mean that there are none, as in order to be certain of this one would have to check every parish in Spain. I have heard rumors of at least rudimentary Passion Plays in rural parishes of Spain, but was unable to confirm said rumors.

The practices of the Penitentes of New Mexico, mentioned in the previous chapter, appear to point to the existence of Passion Plays in Medieval and 16th century Spain.

Notes William O. Beeman:

"...Although virtually every commentator on the Taz'iyeh has identified it as theatre, there is good reason to consider it in other terms. Lassy points out that in (former) Soviet Azerbaijan a strict distinction is made between Ta'ziyeh and other dramatic forms:

'A point to be noticed is that the Tartars (i.e., Azerbaijanis; Lassy calls them Tartars because they speak a Turkic language) themselves expressly deny that the passion play is a drama proper. It is a Shabih, that is an 'imitation', or a ta'ziyeh-ye shabih, a 'consoling imitation', nothing more. To a (Azerbaijani) Tartar there exists no sort of tragedy in the form of a drama, comedy being considered by him to be the only form of dramatic art. Therefore when the speeches and songs of the passion play are written, no attempt is made to create impressive roles or situations, the sole purpose being to compose more-or-less lengthy monologues in the same fragmentary, crabbed, plaintive and sentimental style as that of the elegies.'

It is my contention that it is a great disservice to (the) Ta'ziyeh to consider it a variety of theatre in Western terms. The purpose of Ta'ziyeh performances,
(4320)

the dramatic conventions thus employed, and the unique configuration of techniques of symbolic representation in the Ta'ziyeh serves to identify it as a unique Iranian performance genre which, although it bears a superficial resemblance to Western theatre (especially when viewed through Western and Western-trained eyes), should not be robbed of its special status among the unique dramatic traditions of the world.

First, it cannot be emphasized enough (especially to the lay public) that Ta'ziyeh is not one drama (i.e., "the Persian Passion Play") or even a definite set of dramas, but is a performance tradition which has an organic existence of its own. It is changing, modifiable, and enormously flexible in its realization.

Secondarily, although Ta'ziyeh performances are scripted, to identify the written script with the Ta'ziyeh proper is to entertain only a limited view of the tradition as a whole. In point of fact, the tradition allows for extraordinary flexibility in the realization of script material. It is doubtful whether any of the scripts which have been collected were ever conceived as permanent by their authors. In present-day settings, scripts are continually modified, rewritten, amended, lengthened and combined with other scripts both before a given performance, and from the takiyeh itself during performance. The series of episodes presented as a cohesive unit can likewise be numerous (Pelly records fifty-two) or few. Furthermore, until recent times, the performance material was being rapidly expanded into a series or nearly secular themes which were not necessarily presented during the month of Muharram at all.

Thirdly, perhaps almost self-evidently, we see the Ta'ziyeh performance consisting almost entirely of verse - most often couplets. This is in sharp contrast to almost all Western theatrical tradition (except, as we have seen, for liturgical drama).

Finally, and most importantly, the relationship between audience and performer in Ta'ziyeh is unique among performance traditions of the world. It is this one feature that most completely accounts for the particular representational forms that are embodied

within Ta'ziyeh performance. It is therefore to this topic that I turn my attention next.

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Representation in Ta'ziyeh

The very special relationship of the Ta'ziyeh audience to the performance has been noted by virtually all commentators writing on the tradition. It stands out particularly against Western theatrical tradition because the spectators are clearly both inside and outside of the drama. They are both on the plains of Karbala, symbolically representing the forces surrounding Hussein and his followers and simultaneously in the present-day world mourning because of the event.

The actors in the drama express their sorrow and grief through the verbal text of the performance, but it is the people in the audience who provide the explicit, forceful, and sometimes violent expression of grief and mourning which is absent from the performance representation. Thus they complete a portion of the dramatic action which is otherwise lacking.

The actors in the drama express their sorrow and grief through the verbal text of the performance, but it is the people in the audience who provide the explicit, forceful, and sometimes violent expression of grief and mourning which is absent from the performance representation. Thus they complete a portion of the dramatic action which is sometimes lacking.

The explicit expressions of grief produced by the spectators, however, are prompted by their own life experiences, and only triggered by the presentation of the events they witness in the takiyeh. Indeed, the audience is exhorted to weep for their own sins, their own troubles, remembering how much greater was the suffering of Hussein and his followers.

As Chelkowski has suggested, this has great import for all who are concerned with the nature and purpose of dramatic expression in the West. The so-called 'audience' problem has been one that has been confronted continually in Western theatre. The last twenty years have seen a particularly active experimentation in trying to break down the audience-performer 'barrier' and actively engage spectators in the dramatic action. The Living Theatre, the Open Theatre, and Richard Schechner's Performance Group are only a few of the

groups who have tried to devise new performance methodologies to deal with this problem.

(4322)

For the structure of representation within Ta'ziyeh the centrality of the audience-performer tradition becomes crucial. The limited status of the audience as performer-spectator, existing both within the present and in the past as part of the dramatic action, and being situated both within its own community and on the plains of Karbala forms the central axis around which principles of representation are ordered.

In order to encompass the situation of the audience within the time frame of the drama at least three modes of temporal representation are necessary. The first is 'literal time', e.g., the actual time it takes for a dialogue to take place from beginning to end. 'Representational time' is truncated, elongated, or distorted time: most of the battles are represented in this way, taking less time than they might otherwise. Mourning sequences, or the famous 'lion' sequence, do not represent literal time. Finally, 'non-time' is a kind of dimension which allows the co-occurrence of all sorts of characters and events which could not possibly have existed together at one and the same time. Even the known dead, such as the body of Qasim after his martyrdom, are able to take part in the

stage dialogue. Further, it should be noted that these three time dimensions totally interpenetrate each other with no indication of shift through theatrical devices such as lighting, scene change, etc., as must occur in Western theatre for audiences to understand what is going on. The audience views literal time and representational time in performance; but it is the dimension of non-time which encompasses the audience along with the action and allows the spectators to be at once in the present and in the past.

A similar practice exists with the representation of space. 'Literal space' surrounds most encounters between characters, and events, such as the wedding of Qasim. 'Representational space' compresses or elongates actual space. In mobile action such as walking or riding the difference between representational and literal space is marked in that the former involves moving in an arc, and the latter moving in a straight line. Representational space involves also such areas as the battlefield. This area also contains the viewers in their representational roles as the forces surrounding

Hussein and his followers. Finally 'non-space' creates the co-occurrence of personages far
(4323)

removed from each other spatially as well as temporally, allowing figures such as Yezid, or Za'far, king of the Jinn, to address Hussein as the drama unfolds.

The spectators are placed in a liminal position not only in terms of time and space, but in their dramatic role within the performance as well. As participants in the drama they represent not only the mourners of Hussein but also his murderers. Thus the distinction between those who are on the side of Hussein and those who are his enemies becomes crucial in the dramatic representation. There are, to be sure, many ways that one can tell the sympathetic characters from the unsympathetic characters. In classical tradition the sympathetic characters were either green or white; the unsympathetic characters wear red. Chelkowski notes that the adherents of Yezid might wear sun glasses to mark them as bad characters. Most importantly, however, good characters chant their lines, and bad characters declaim, or shout them. When a bad character converts and becomes a good character, he changes his mode of line delivery.

There is very little else in the representation of the drama which needs be fixed. Costumes need adhere to no particular historic period. All sorts of historic characters may be brought into the course of the drama. The production can be upgraded through the use of more realistic props, costumes, or live animals, but these are not necessary components. ...

...The flexibility of representation in Ta'ziyeh through costumes, props, and language serves to reinforce the connection between the action and the everyday lives of the spectators. Nonetheless, the actors must costume themselves in a way that is different from the normal dress of the audience. In a performance I witnessed in Fars this was accomplished by draping the actors in simple red, green, or white tunics which covered their normal dress.

The Meaning of Representational Conventions in Ta'ziyeh

In order to understand something about the meaning of the representational conventions in Ta'ziyeh it will be useful to compare them with some of the conventions that obtain for other dramatic traditions throughout the world.

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Indonesian **wayang kulit** is one species of the tradition of leather shadow-puppet drama found throughout most of Asia. This dramatic tradition involves the presentation of stories which are both entertaining and of a sacred nature. The 'high' characters in the Balinese form of this drama - royal persons, major demons and gods - speak in the vernacular of the spectators, and interpret the action while making broad jokes and humorous remarks.

Indian dance-drama traditions, notably the Kathakali tradition of Kerala, involve a similar set of conventions. The actor-dancers in Kathakali do not speak their text, but indicate the plot of the drama through the use of gestures called mudras. The gesture language is somewhat esoteric, and singers in the background narrate the story for the spectators in song simultaneously with the dance presentation.

In Western 'naturalistic' theatre actors draw their stage movement and expression from the stuff of 'real life', and are encouraged to research their roles at great length through observing and attempting to create in themselves the feeling and emotions of the real-life prototypes of the characters they are to portray. In their training they are encouraged to draw heavily on their own feelings and self-knowledge for the expression of emotion and action. The audience in Western theatre is supposed to enter into the stage action and be moved by it on the basis of each one's own knowledge of human nature, conventional expression, and probable behavior patterns.

In the two Asian traditions, the story material portrayed in the dramatic situation is largely known to the audience before it is seen in performance. If anything, the performance is designed to reinforce for the members of the audience in a particularly effective manner the important aspects of their cultural, ideological, and religious tradition. In Western naturalistic theatre the spectators expect to witness story material which is novel, but which is expressed in a manner comprehensible to them on the basis of their own knowledge of life that they bring with them to the theatre. What is repeated in Western theatrical traditions then, is not particular literal stories, but particular human themes played and replayed in infinite variation.

Western drama is successful when it produces a catharsis: when it moves the audience in some way.

(4325)

Making the viewers laugh, cry, feel indignant, ennobled, or angry are all ways the Western theatre touches the emotions. Thus paradoxically, by using the commonplace as a basis for expression in performance, Western theatre aims at removing the spectators from the commonplace and transporting them to an emotional plane achieved only occasionally in everyday life. The Asian traditions mentioned above are not at all naturalistic in their form of expression. The shadow figures in wayang kulit are exaggerated representations of humans, they speak in exaggerated vocal contours in either an esoteric language which no one in the audience speaks or understands, or in broad humorous speech which no one in the audience really uses in everyday life. Similarly, in Kathakali the stage characters dress in surrealist costumes and make-up and perform elaborate dance movements which require for their execution special arduous training from childhood on, together with a gesture language which very few spectators can interpret. Asian drama is successful when it is able to create in the audience a sense that there is order in the world, that events are as they should be; that despite adversity and extremes in the vicissitudes of events, proper morality is reasserted.

Given these parameters, it should not be difficult to see that Ta'ziyeh as a performance tradition falls between the two Asian traditions mentioned and Western naturalistic theatre. Ta'ziyeh presents familiar materials to the audience in an unnaturalistic fashion. However, the mode of linguistic expression is not esoteric, and does not require interpretation. Although the mode of performance does not replicate real life, the settings, props and costumes are designed to be comprehensible to the audience without special previous knowledge. Most importantly, however, the Ta'ziyeh performance is designed to reassert moral and religious ideological order for the audience, and to accomplish this by producing cathartic reactions.

Those in the audience in Ta'ziyeh are placed in the position of being both the symbolic murderers of Hussein in Karbala, and being the mourners of Hussein after his death. At the conclusion of the performance they must end up being converted or renewed, through their profound expression of grief at Hussein's death, and through their demonstrations of loyalty to the ideological order that Hussein represents. There are numerous characters in the drama itself - nonpartisans

of Hussein - who undergo the same transformation. Hurr, general of Ibn Ziyad, the foreign ambassador, Za'far, King of the Jinn; and others. The implication presented here is that if even Hussein's enemies, foreigners, and Jinn weep for, and defend Hussein, how can the spectators refrain from demonstrating their emotions in this manner?

Thus Ta'ziyeh performance offers the opportunity for the spectators ritually to renew their commitment to a religious and ideological order of which they are already and integral part. This ideological order does not limit itself strictly in religious dimensions but includes a political and nationalistic dimension as well. The saga of the family of Ali is very much the saga of Great Iran - those areas from Karbala and Kufa to the Caucasus, Central Asia, Afghanistan, and Northern India - overrun again and again by conquering hordes, but possessing an inner spiritual unity which has sustained the thread of a unique cultural tradition down to the present. ...

... I have attempted to describe Ta'ziyeh in Iran not as a literary or historical product, but as a performance tradition. Ta'ziyeh embodied representational features which make it unique among the performance traditions of the world. The particular representational conventions of Ta'ziyeh arise from the special relationship that obtains between the audience and the performers. Further, these modes of representation allow the Ta'ziyeh performance to achieve a particular effect on its audience which is not only emotionally satisfying, but serves also as a reinforcement to the religious, ideological and cosmic order of the Shi'a world."(62)

The Ta'ziyeh literature is of enormous bulk, and whatever else may be said about the Ta'ziyehs, they are not stereotyped; in fact, it is very difficult to make a general statement concerning them, because there are always exceptions.

The plots of most Ta'ziyeh revolve around the martyrdom of Imam Hussein at Karbala. However, there are some Ta'ziyeh whose

plots do not center around said tragedy, though they do have some relation to it. An example is the Ta'ziyeh titled The Ta'ziyeh of Shar Banu, written by an unknown author. Here are some selections from said Ta'ziyeh. Here Zainab, sister of Imam Hussein, speaks:

"Tree of the garden of the Monarch of Persia, O Shahr Banu, companion of my life, you are my beautiful daughter and the light of my eyes. In you I sense the perfume of (Imam) Hussein."(63)

From the same Ta'ziyeh, below is a dialogue between Shar Banu and Fatima Zahra, daughter of the Prophet Muhammad, wife of Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib and mother of the Imams Hasan and Hussein:

"I will tell you of part of my adventure so that you may know that I must not be counted among the infidels. I descend from Yazdigerd of the pure birth, I am of the lineage of (Khusrau) Anushirvan. In the times when I knew the good fortune of living in Rey, one I went to the palace of my father. There I saw a vision of (Fatima) Zahra the Holy. She said to me in a solemn voice: "O Sharh Banu, I come to ask your hand (in marriage) for (Imam) Hussein." I replied: "I am of Mada'in (Ctesiphon, winter capital of the Sassanians), and Hussein lives in Medina, so your wish cannot come to pass." She (Fatima Zahra) said to me: "(Caliph) Omar will come to this very place at the head of an army; o peerless one, you shall be a captive. You will be taken from Mada'in to Medina, you and (Imam) Hussein will wed, and you will do me great honor with your children. Of you will be born the Imams, whose like the world has never seen."(64)

Sharh Banu continues:

"However, when we arrived at Medina, all the gloom of the world settled upon our hearts. Someone said: "That woman is a slave." Another replied: "in the city she will be beloved and respected." At noon I was led to the mosque in solemn audience and was led before the (Caliph) Omar. He pronounced a sentence upon me that chilled my heart. He said: "She is to be sold, separatedly from her family." Then Ali (ibn Abi Talib), your (referring to Ali Zain al-Abidin, son of Imam Hussein and Shahr Banu) grandfather, angry and roaring like a thunderstorm, said: O ignorant, ignoble and cowardly and unworthy king, shut your vile mouth. It is unjust to carry off the daughters of the great and expose them unclothed in the marketplace."(65)

Some - not many - Ta'ziyehs are pure fable.(66) Since Imam Hussein was a real person, and his martyrdom at Karbala was a real historical occurrence, I am uncertain as to how a play which deals with these topics could be pure fable, but apparently some Ta'ziyehs are. Other Ta'ziyehs, like good historical novels, follow history closely, adding nothing which could not have happened; the same is true of many of the plays of Shakespeare and Lope de Vega. Still other Ta'ziyehs - the majority, in fact - are a mixture of history and pure fiction or fable. However, one must bear in mind that said Ta'ziyehs are not intended to be dishonest nor to deceive, nor are they the result of "sloppy research"; they intend to convey symbolic rather than literal or pure historical truth. We have already given one example of the above. Fatima bint Muhammad, the mother of Imam Hussein, and Shahrbanu, his first wife and mother of Imam Zain al-Abidin, both

died before the martyrdom of Imam Hussein at Karbala. However, in many Ta'ziyehs Fatima bint Muhammad is portrayed as being present at Karbala and weeping for her martyred son, thus filling precisely the role of Mater Dolorosa (Sorrowful Mother), as does the Virgin Mary in many Christian Passion Plays, while Shahr Banu is shown as weeping for her martyred husband and eldest son and for the illness, captivity and apparently almost certain death of her younger son.

Much is often made of the popular character of the Ta'ziyehs, which are unquestionably a manifestation of popular piety.

However, some words of caution are necessary.

During the 1960's there was something of a "fad" or "fetish" for "folk music", which was imagined to be a "creation of the people". However, the truth is, as someone (I do not recall whom) has said: "The folk does not create, but only preserves."

Genuine creativity is always restricted to a minority of exceptional talents, and, probably, learning and training. Nearly all the so-called "folk songs" which have the merit to endure have music - and probably words - far too sophisticated to have sprung from "the people"; their music and probably words (melodic lines) have a most remarkable ability to survive unchanged for many centuries, while, for obvious reasons, this is much less true of

lyrics or words of songs) being the creation of a medieval trobador or Celtic bard whose name is long forgotten.

Many or most Ta'ziyehs are anonymous, the names of their authors being long forgotten. However, as we shall see, it is evident that all or most of the Ta'ziyehs were written by people learned not only in Shi'a Islam, but also in Classical Persian literature and music.

As we have seen before, the Ta'ziyeh literature is of enormous bulk, and different authorities give different and frankly contradictory facts and figures, no doubt because they have not read the same Ta'ziyehs, nor seen the same ones performed. Below is a synthesis, whose conclusions, general and unspecific though they may be, are tentative, necessarily involving a great deal of guesswork, and no doubt will need to be revised as more Ta'ziyeh literature becomes accessible.

Below is an account by Andrzej Wirth of some general aspects of the Ta'ziyeh:

"It becomes increasingly obvious that the application of the Aristotelian dramatic terminology to the confessional folk opera of Iran, Ta'ziyeh, is misleading on both cultural and structural grounds. And yet terms such as prologue, epilogue climax, action, and above all dialogue are uncritically used in discussion of the Ta'ziyeh. For Aristotle, dialogue was a device to convey the plot, and in some terms it was considered a timeless form of drama. In Ta'ziyeh, however, what appears at first glance to be colloquial form, does not really promote the plot, and resembles
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rather a soliloquy, an instance of uttering ones thought aloud, without addressing any person in particular.

In the Hasan and Hussein Ta'ziyeh (Sir Lewis Pelly version), only the manneristically inserted invocations indicate the colloquial structure ("O Han", O Muslim", O Messenger", etc.). In the Ta'ziyeh performance the "speech realm" (der Sprechraum) is not identical with the stage, as in the case of the dialogue-based plays of the Western tradition, but also includes the audience. Ta'ziyeh librettos which seem to be based on the colloquy, appear in the performance as discourse.

In a discourse a meta-communicative mutual understanding is uncritically reached about what should be considered proven and reasonable. All the Ta'ziyeh operas are based on discourse in a philosophical sense (Shi'a beliefs), in an aesthetic sense (naivete as an aesthetic category), and in the theatrical sense (presentational code). An ideal Ta'ziyeh performance has the structure of a discourse which can be analyzed in semeiological terms as a communicative system based on two codes, an audio visual and a perceptual code. The first code defines the modality of acting; the latter, the modality of viewing. In this system the spectator-believer becomes a co-narrator himself. Thus the interplay of the two codes is the most original aspect of the Ta'ziyeh.

The casting is based on the quality of voice; in the perceptual code it signifies, however, a moral value (the high pitched singing voices of the good characters; the low pitched voices of the bad ones). The interplay of acting and viewing has a modality of a discourse, and there is, by definition, no dramatic time in a discourse. Past, present, and future coexist simultaneously in the Ta'ziyeh performance. There is also no specific locality, but all localities are represented simultaneously on its arena stage, which is die Weltbuhne in a sense similar to the (medieval) Western morality play tradition. The soliloquial arias convey the plot very poorly as compared with the dialogue, but there is really no need to convey the plot, because it is already known. Any plot in the Ta/ziyeh discourse has only a paradigmatic value. It is communicated through semantic fields of speech, and not through analytical depiction of events. Pardigmatic relations are stress in an auditory (differentiation of
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voice qualities) and in a visual way (paradigmatic opposition of red and green).

Any Ta'ziyeh production starts with the establishment of a discourse through the audio-visual code. I do make a distinction here between a dialogue and a discourse. In a dialogue we observe a communicative action of the dialogue partners, while in a discourse as stated above, the mutual understanding has a meta-communicative character and concerns some naively accepted prerequisites about what is considered intelligible, substantiated, and reasonable. The naively accepted prerequisite of the Ta'ziyeh discourse is a meta-communicative conviction shared by the viewers and the performers about the holiness of the Imam. ...

...As a matter of fact the moments of this two-directional communication are the true "climaxes" of Ta'ziyeh in a non-Aristotelian sense. They reveal that the real aim of Tz'ziyeh is the reinforcement of the feeling of communitas between believers on the stage and in the audience. This takes the form of a mystical union, and is a ritualistic component in Ta'ziyeh. The true narrator of the story is the spectator-believer who knows the story beforehand; that is to say the complete story exists in the perceptual code only. Ta'ziyeh neither tells the story nor dramatizes it; its performance is therefore neither epic nor dramatic, but confessional. It uses an epic style of acting but is incapable, and also not interested, in presenting alternatives. ...

...The Ta'ziyeh art of acting makes the performer-believer a role carrier Rollentrager, not a character. Characters exist only in the perceptual code. Thus, paradoxically, the spectator-believer "plays the character", while the performer plays the role. Or better: the role-carrier is played as a character by the spectator. This again underscores the active role of the perceptual code in a confessional performance. ...

...Symbolic signs are used, such as:

a.) Green versus red used as symbolic representations of Good (Hussein's party) and Evil (Yezid's party).

b.) Throwing straw on one's head signifying sorrow.
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c.) A white kafan (shroud) symbolizing the approaching death of its wearer.
Stereotyped iconic signs include:

a.) Shimr's finger at his lip signifying amazement, and hitting his thighs signifying anger.

b.) Operatic gestures while singing.

c.) Rhetorical gestures of addressing the audience.

d.) The posture of singing and speaking while on horseback.

Stereotyped index signs may be:

a.) A handkerchief for stage crying.

b.) An empty bowl or leather sack for lack of water.

c.) Red spots of stage blood for wounds, etc.

The use of the stereotyped signs in the audio-visual code of the Ta'ziyeh theatre indicates a highly canonized production style. The Iranian popular painting of battle scenes referring to Karbala preserved the exact documentation of many symbolic signs still alive in today's performing habits. Symbol, index, icon, and other signs enter into complex affiliations of significance. For example, the stage lion (iconic sign), holding in his jaws Hussein's flag (emblem), or pulling out arrows (index sign for wounds) from the bodies of the dead martyrs (iconic sign). ...

...Semeiologically interesting is the operatic aspect of Ta'ziyeh. In the vocal coloratura of the principal performers, language functions on the second articulation level only - we are grasping an attitude but not the particular meaning. ... The music in Ta'ziyeh does not usually have any illustrative value and indicates transformations from one sequence to another. ...

(Note the parallel with Grand Opera, in which the male hero is always a tenor, the intermediate character a baritone or bass-baritone, and the villain a basso

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profundo; of course, the same is true of the female characters, the heroine being a lyric soprano, the intermediate character a mezzo soprano, and the villainess an alto or contralto.)

... Ta'ziyeh focuses not on producing signs, but on producing signs for believers. What is being presented is a horror of signs, not a horror of actions. The "climaxes" of the Ta'ziyeh are purely semeiological, not dramatic. The "climax" is not the physical death of the Imam from the (antidramatic) blows he receives on stage, but the moment when he dresses in a kafan. In this moment he becomes a sign carrier of his own martyrdom. The kafan is a shirt worn in place of a shroud, and as such, an iconic sign. But it functions also as a sign of death, that is to say as a symbol. This symbolic sign is then used in the fashion of an index, with the red paint spots signifying the wounds. Ta'ziyeh acting is more concerned with the transformation of signs (icon - symbol-index) than with the transformation of "characters".

Ta'ziyeh semeiological analysis can deal only with certain aspects of the Ta'ziyeh as a communicative system. It is definitely insufficient as a description of the theatre - Gestalt Ta'ziyeh, Ta'ziyeh focuses not on producing signs, but on producing signs for believers. What is being presented is a horror of signs. The "climax" of the Ta'ziyeh are purely semeiological, not dramatic. The "climax" is not the physical death of the Imam from the (anti-dramatic) blows he receives on stage, but the moment when he dresses in a kafan. In this moment he becomes a sign carrier of his own martyrdom. The kafan is a shirt worn in place of a shroud, and as such, an iconic sign. But it functions also as a sign of death., that is to say as a symbol. This symbolic sign is then used in the fashion of an index, with the red paint spots signifying the wounds. Ta'ziyeh acting is more concerned with the transformation of signs (icon - symbol - index) than with the transformation of "characters".

Ta'ziyeh acting developed its own dramaturgy of signs, distinct from other performing traditions of the world. Maybe the most striking example for the understanding of the Ta'ziyeh's unique performance structure is the symbolic sign of chest-beating. In most performances which I have observed, the "director"

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gives the performers the signal for chest-beating by hitting his own chest. The director's initial chest-beating is then taken over by the performers, and gradually becomes a stage gestic sign, and paces the movement and the vocal expression of the actors. After being transformed from a stage direction into a stage sign, the chest-beating gradually takes over the

audience until it becomes a symbolic act unifying all the spectators, and transforming them into participants. At this point, the rhythm of the chest-beating amplified through the audience takes over the stage, and as a powerful feedback paces the stage movement, and the "lamentation" of the performers. Now the audience is "the director", and on its behalf and under its command the symbolic stage action is performed.

There is a constant attitude of showing, *Gestus des Zeigens* directed toward the audience and only occasional interaction with other performers. One can speak about "soliloquies as operatic arias" in *Ta'ziyeh*. The dialogue in terms of two-directional communication occurs between the performer and the spectators and not on stage. They act "to the House", even when they are supposed to address themselves.

There is a powerful performing tradition at work here which takes over all imperfections of craftsmanship. An actor with his eyes fixed on the written text, and his arm gesture addressed to the audience; an actor who virtually plays without eye contact; the stereotyped gestures of singing; the stereotyped gestured speaking; the symbolic gestures for grief; the iconic stereotyped gestures for anger - all are an expression of very defined performing habits.

Acting on horseback, when the rider and the horse become one *Gestalt*; singing a *coloratura* which expresses grief; being slow in a "dramatic" situation, and quick in a "non-dramatic" one; the power to sustain the *gestus* of lamentation for an extended period, and to vary it artistically; the chanting; the stage singing; the stage speech of the negative characters as a sign of their negativity; and the high-pitched angelic voices of the good ones as a sign of their nobility; children's choruses, and children's group-acting; the interaction between spectators and actors as members of the *communitas*; "the climax" as a mystical union of believers and a therapeutic relief; the pacing of

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performers by the gestural signals from the audience (the chest-beating) - all are features of the presentational acting style.

Ta'ziyeh actors are believers carrying their roles on behalf of the other believers gathered in the House. The central notion of the *Ta'ziyeh* canon - the martyrdom - is visualized symbolically through the *kafan* and its transformations, and not through the transformations of the performer. The performer's ability to carry on a trilling *coloratura* while

receiving deadly wounds is not diminished. There is a whole stage ritual of making the performer a "sign carrier". Long non-dramatic arias by (Imam) Hussein precede the imposition of the death stigma on his defender, Ali Akbar. The kafan is not a costume, but a sign imposed on the costume. Ta'ziyeh convention is not concerned with the anti-suspense effect of symbolic signs, as it is unlikely that the carrier of the death sign can be miraculously saved. Ta'ziyeh convention is obsessed with the stigma of symbolic signs. ...

...In Ta'ziyeh the signification comes before the action, and in these terms, it is a non-dramatic theatre event. The signification also precedes narration and after the signs are theatrically established. Ta'ziyeh is no longer interested in a precise rendering of the story. It takes advantage of the fact that the story is known to the audience, and relies on this knowledge. However, this does not make the Ta'ziyeh an epic convention.

The paradox of the Ta'ziyeh is that being basically a non-epic and non-dramatic event, it produces an epic demonstrative style of acting. ...

...The acting is frontal, expository (to the House which in the takiyeh situation is all around), based on stereotyped gestures and masks.

Among Iranologists the story is circulated about a village gendarme playing the role of the Lion in Ta'ziyeh. The fellow suddenly notices his captain in one of the boxes and, while on all fours, salutes him with his lion's paw. This delightful story is amazing only for the Western observer who assumes uncritically that all acting is representational. This, however, is not the case with a Ta'ziyeh which, being part of the great Asian tradition of presentational acting, does not use either identification or empathetic trance as a necessary condition for performing. Thus the gesture of the Lion-gendarme does not disrupt the integrity of the

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performance but it is a legitimate aspect of the convention.

A Ta'ziyeh actor cannot "fall out of the role" because he does not identify with it, but carries it in the way the village gendarme carried the skin of the Lion. Therefore the "role carrier" keeps his own identity in tact and can react at any time in his capacity as a non-performer. In a Ta'ziyeh performance it is not unusual to see actors on stage drinking tea while waiting their turn.

Ta'ziyeh has to fascinate any theatre critic sensitive to the manifestation of the genuine theatre, and yet being a confessional and therapeutic event, or better, an art form originating from acts of piety (**like the medieval liturgical dramas and passion plays**) it resists an aesthetic detached analysis from "outside". I suspect that this difficulty exists in the same degree for the Western and the Iranian critic.

A Gothic cathedral or a mosque also originates from acts of piety but it is an object, while theatre is an act of interaction between spectators and performers. In the case of Ta'ziyeh this is a religious and artistic act which comes into being between believers on the basis of an unwritten contract which is their shared belief. A critic analyzing and appreciating aesthetically a Gothic cathedral or a mosque as a non-believer, does not feel like an intruder. Analyzing Ta'ziyeh as a performance, he has to feel like an intruder. Only participation would give him a status of belonging but it would also prevent him from watching it aesthetically. Obviously this is a vicious circle, a no-exit situation.

For the secular theatre there is a great opportunity to utilize the conventions of the Ta'ziyeh performing style. Having such a defined tradition of presentational acting is an advantage over the Western theatre. The naturalistic acting style, with its simplistic concept of performer-character-spectator empathy, promoted all over the world through film and television, and still strong in bourgeois theatre, can be countered in Iran in alliance with its own performing tradition. This could mean not only the secularization of the convention, but paradoxically, also a protection of the religious theatre in its own realm from the invasion of a bastardized naturalism.

I have been describing here the Ta'ziyeh performance as an interaction model of symbolic

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signification. It is obvious that in such a model the terms "director", "performer", "audience" become relative, and we are in need of new terminology. But this is exactly what makes Tz'iyeh unprecedented among ancient performing conventions still alive. Iran is a unique place where this convention can be studied, learned, and perhaps applied in a secularized version to the reform of the theatre which is in the hearts and minds of the contemporary innovators."(67)

No one is certain when the Ta'ziyeh originated. I am inclined to believe that it originated during the Safavi period, but am unable to prove this (nor has anyone been able to prove the contrary). In any case, the Ta'ziyeh has, of course, had a considerable development even during the period in which we have certain knowledge of it. This is chronicled by Anayatullah Shahidi:

Theatrical and Artistic Changes in the Ta'ziyeh

"The Ta'ziyeh was originally a simple Passion play about the events which occurred at Karbala and the other tragedies which befell the House of the Prophet. It was an exercise in mourning, a religious custom severely limited in scope. The Ta'ziyeh reciters were coffee-house storytellers limited to straight narration of long-winded, repetitious monologues. Their poetry was simple, loose, and full of colloquial expressions. It was generally written in light verse called masnavi (poetry consisting of distiches rhyming between themselves) and sometimes no rhyme at all. To capture the attention of the spectators and to fire their emotions, the Ta'ziyeh narrator would often mix groans and sighs with vulgar bazaar vocabulary. Colloquial expressions such as "Woe is me" (**remember the splendid, lovely trouvère ["trobador", a Provencal word, would not be appropriate when referring to a song composed in northern France and in the style of the French-speaking "trouveres"] style song or aria "Heu, heu, heu" [Woe, woe, woe] from the liturgical drama The Play of**

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Daniel, of which we have already spoken) , "I'm your servant", "Brother-less", etc., were commonplace. The music consisted of a single monotonous beat and was sung in the pitch normally used by mourners. All action centered around the protagonists. The Ta'ziyeh writers were so violently opposed to the Imam's enemies that they de-emphasized the roles of the antagonists. With this simple standard as their guide, subjectively they made every effort to avoid the catastrophic events. "Audience", "reality", and "scene" were not yet issues.

The antagonists were made to appear ridiculous by the frivolous and buffoon-like behavior of the actors

playing the parts. For example, an actor playing Shimr might attempt to elicit tears from the audience not by word or gesture but by imitating extremely savage, cruel behavior (such as pretending to behead a corpse and then dragging it across the stage).

There was no room for creativity or initiative. As for musical instruments, only the drum and trumpet were utilized. But in this evolutionary period, the Ta'ziyeh writers gradually grew more sophisticated and more discerning. They developed a greater awareness of the importance of theatrical and artistic detail even though they were unable or perhaps simply did not wish to observe the logical relationships between the various Ta'ziyeh tales - perhaps because of their own prejudices and the particular place they occupied in the society of the time. Nonetheless, their view of the Ta'ziyeh differed greatly from that of earlier writers. For example, they increased the number of scenes involving the antagonists. But, while they recognized Shimr and Ibn Sa'd as military leaders, they invariably portrayed them eating, drinking and reveling in the midst of their strategy sessions. The Ta'ziyeh writers were, in effect, killing two birds with one stone. While playing greater emphasis on the dramatic and epic aspects of the Ta'ziyeh, they were also hanging the sin of drinking wine during the mourning period of the Imam around the necks of Shimr and Ibn Sa'd! They realized that the more forcefully they portrayed the roles of the antagonists the more heroic the protagonists would appear. At the time of Naser al-Din Shah, the Ta'ziyeh writer was a strict Shi'ite, a true believer who hated Shimr with such passion that he would overemphasize Shimr's wickedness and lack of mercy. But, contrary to the earlier Ta'ziyeh writer, he

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did not, perhaps for historical reasons, consider Shimr to be an infidel or polytheist.

Whether intentional or not, phrases like enshallah (If God wills it, which survives in the very common Spanish expression as Si Dios quiere [If God wills it]) crept into the lines spoken by the actor playing Shimr. For example, in a free verse version attributed to the city of Kashan, Shimr, while mounting his horse to journey to Karbala, says:

It is time I make haste, Enshallah,
Stirrup the foot of high purpose, Enshallah,
Visit in Damascus the Great Sultan of the Faithful,

Bearing wine, I am on my way, Enshallah.

But even though the titles of the antagonists were elevated to their actual historical positions, in practice, the actors performing these roles continued to belittle and ridicule the characters. The ability of the best Ta'ziyeh writers to elevate the position of the antagonists while at the same time maintaining a sense of derision toward them was a real artistic accomplishment of the period. Changes were also made in methods of enacting battle scenes. Some performers developed extraordinary dexterity in swordsmanship and various other combat techniques. Gradually, props and equipment also grew more elaborate. Items such as flagstaves, butcher's hooks, and even a throne and a court for Yazid were introduced. In order to portray animals, lions for example, actual skins were utilized.

In Takiyeh Dowlat (the Government arena-like theatre especially constructed in Tehran for Ta'ziyeh performances) in the Ta'ziyeh *The Lion of Fasseh*, instead of a man dressed up in a lion skin, an actual lion was used.

The musical instruments also became more varied. Kettle-drums, cymbals, horns, clarinets, and various trumpets were introduced. Special songs were written which corresponded to the respective positions and titles of the protagonists. For example, Hurr and Abbass were given tunes with rising epic-like melodies. Ali Akbar and Qasim were given *chahar gah*, *she gah* and *Isfahan* modes while the Imam was given dignified serious tunes which, while somber, communicated a sense of peace and hope (such as *nava mode*) (**Once again, note**

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the parallel with The Play of Daniel in the dramatic use of different musical modes). During this period, even happy songs with up-beat tempos were written for the protagonists' feasting scenes and for the noncombatant roles of Europeans, Zoroastrians, Jews, etc. An interesting point in this regard is the unique quality of the music. For example, when Gabriel or another angel sang, bells chimed in an attempt to recreate a proper sense of heavenly revelation. The actors playing these parts spoke clearly and rapidly and in time with the music. They became specialists at drawing out the last word of a sentence. Even the voices of the dead were created with a view toward the particular status of the corpse. For example, the dead man whom Imam Reza helps during his first night in the grave recites poetry with a tune similar to the song of angels (*Nakir and Munker*)

and that of the Imam. But the other dead, if they had been relatively good people, were made to groan and wail. They were portrayed in a mixed mode, between that of the villains and the saints. Another unique feature of this period is the use of symmetrical dialogue. For example, in a dialogue between Imam Hussein and Ali Akbar, if the Imam recites in one key, Ali Akbar had to use the same one. The writers utilized similar but different pitches in order to introduce variety and beauty to the verse while at the same time maintaining the principle that each character should recite in a metre suitable to his station in life. They were thus able ever so slightly to vary the quality and mode of the music.

For example, at the beginning of the Ta'ziyeh of Muslem (Tehran version, Takiyeh Dowlat and other bits of copy), the Imam recites in nava and Muslem in mahoor. As we know, the musical figures used in rak and erag mahoor are common or similar to those used in nava. Obviously this type of artistry is impossible without talented and creative performing artists who have complete mastery of their subjects. Two points should be mentioned in this regard:

1.) In the Ta'ziyeh, the term "combination" singing which is frequently heard should not be confused with "irregular" singing or "mixed" singing commonly found in early Ta'ziyeh. Nor should it be mistaken for the same expression frequently used by musicians performing traditional Iranian music.

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According to one musical expert, "combination" singing may be defined as follows: "While singing in one key a very quick hint of another key is made. This hint must be made quickly, so delicately and so gently that the ear of the listener is not even slightly jarred and the listener is barely aware that a change in key has even occurred.

2.) Except in a few cases, a Ta'ziyeh performer did not recite to a scale or to a connected musical score. Rather, the actors used whatever notes and melodies they needed for a particular scene.

Master Ta'ziyeh performers occasionally changed mode and tone as the action demanded. They even introduced unique rhymes and rhythms to the traditional

dirges. The music, the voice, the face, the physique, and especially the particular role assigned to the performer were of prime importance to the spectators. Some veteran actors developed their own personal styles. These performers made unique contributions to the development of Ta'ziyeh music. For example, some invented special methods of poetry recital. They developed excellent timing, an ability to lay stress on certain words and phrases, and an ability to raise or lower their voices along with many other theatrical gimmicks. Not every Ta'ziyeh performer with a good voice could master the art well enough to be successful. Generally speaking, Ta'ziyeh poetry and its poetic format was selected with a view toward its compatibility with the music or particular theatrical setting. The task of the talented Ta'ziyeh writers (unfortunately not all were talented) was not simply to write poetry or poetic phrases but to concentrate on the dramatic and musical aspects as well. Thus, an analysis of the relationships between the poetry, the music and the histrionics is essential.

Literary Changes in the Ta'ziyeh

Because of its simple and commonplace nature, the Ta'ziyeh from the standpoint of literature never attracted the attention of men of letters. Those critics who have come to appreciate the Ta'ziyeh as an

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art form consider its value to lie in its theatrical and cultural aspects. The poetry is viewed as slack, commonplace, and artless - doggerel which some feel has not progressed over the entire course of its history. Critics have not even found fit to praise its simple language.

The descriptive terms "simple" and "popular" are, like everything else, only relative: why then, should we compare Ta'ziyeh poetry with other versified pieces? With which, from what standpoints, and by whose standards? For example, during the reign of Naser al-Din Shah many varieties of mourning poetry were composed. Some were rather lengthy and eloquent, others were simple and geared to the masses **I hate that word; to me it reeks of Marxism**). Farhan Khuda Parasti by Mirza Muharram might be considered one of the former variety and Tuhfatulzakareen by Bidel Mazandarani one of the latter. If we compare the poetry of these two works with Ta'ziyeh poetry, we discover just how rich the latter

actually is; and, from the standpoint of literature, we realize that not every vacuous and tasteless poem can be considered popular literature and not every grandiloquent verse a literary work (**Amen to that!**) Those who think this way undoubtedly are looking at the issue from a fixed, general viewpoint without taking into consideration the evolutionary (**How I hate that Word!**) changes in the Ta'ziyeh over the course of nearly two centuries. Generally speaking, from the standpoint of poetic beauty, Ta'ziyeh poetry is loose and written in the vernacular. It is simple but beautiful, flowing, eloquent, and charming.

The Ta'ziyeh as indigenous popular theatre naturally utilizes the ordinary speech of the bazaar and the street - and the everyday conversational language of common people is not uniform. But ugly, indecent and vulgar slang must not be substituted for simple speech. The contribution which the artistic and creative Ta'ziyeh writer made (not all of them, unfortunately) was to mix the plain language of the people with eloquent, literary expressions and subtle theatrical techniques. They created valuable pieces of literature which should not be simply passed over. Ta'ziyeh scripts have never been carefully analyzed from a textual standpoint. The changes which took place were not simply stylistic: rather, they constituted an all-encompassing evolutionary process which affected all aspects of the Ta'ziyeh.

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As has already been pointed out, early Ta'ziyeh poetry was generally loose, simple, and often unversified. Early Ta'ziyeh writers, because of their literary and intellectual limitations, resorted to bazaar slang to express their emotions. Examples of this may be found in an old manuscript of the Martyrdom of Abbas. The dispute between Shimr and Ibn Sa'd appears more like an argument between two fools rather than a dispute between military commanders.

You dog, fear not Abbas the General,
There stands a man, Abbas, the brave,
If I should meet the son of Sa'd tonight
I'll tell him, "Wait, you dog, 'till light".

This was the quality of the poetry. Now, if we compare this script with later ones, we shall see a tremendous difference.

Let us turn to another example from the same scene. Shimr enters the stage from behind the backdrop. He is returning to Kufa. He says:

From Kufa I come with legions numerous,
To join Ibn Sa'd, the commander luminous.
This perfumed land, . Ah, 'tis a sight to embrace
A barren desert turned into a market place
As if the antelope's musk spilled onto this plain
Or King Solomon laid down goods from his train.

And in another text:

The King of Damascus and the King of Zanzibar,
[blasphemy]

Raising high their standard, throw cruelty into
(the) heart of the cruel legions.

While the moon's radiance shines on the firmament's
portico. ...

Also in a similar fashion note Shimr's debate with Ibn Sa'd:

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What ails thee, black-hearted friend of mine.
Why such haste to murder the House of Ali.
Lay back and sip your wine.

Shimr:

Come, cup bearer, fill my cup
By sipping it then my stature grows. ...

Early Ta'ziyeh poetry was generally written in a light verse style called masnavi. One can say the use of the masnavi style is one of the distinctive characteristics of early scripts. The chakamah (elegy), the mosammat (multiple poem) and the **tarj(-i-band)** (strophied poem) are among the various types of quatrains which inventive modern Ta'ziyeh writers contributed to the poetic arts. The addition of a radif format was another major contribution. Examples of this may be seen below in three different texts from the Ta'ziyeh of the Elder Fatima. Fatima is speaking and the texts read as follows:

Old Text:

O Moslems, may hope spring from your loneliness,
I am alone and my friends mourn their loneliness.
Where is a comrade to inquire after me.
O woe is me, woe betide me. ... (Once again, note
the parallel with the *trouvere* style song or aria
"Heu, heu, heu" [Woe, woe, woe] from the liturgical
drama The Play of Daniel.)

A Later Text:

Lord, with father's departure my courage has fled,
Both quiet days and sleepless nights I dread,
Happy days, there are no more for me,
Since father has gone away from me.

A Modern Takiyeh Dowlat Text:

I am not well a stranger in my homeland, O father,
Other than Jeddeh, I have no nurse, O father.
When you went to Karbala, you failed to remember
That you left behind a sick daughter, O father.
(4346)

Obviously, the use of *radif* makes the task of the poet more difficult and proper word selection all the more onerous. But there are several benefits. First of all, the poetry reads more easily and sounds better. Secondly, *radif* greatly affects the music because, in recital, the last sounds can be drawn out and made more musical. Thirdly, it adds freshness and variety because the limitations of the format force the poet to invent new rhetorical phrases to fit the metre. With free verse the average poet tends simply to regurgitate the thoughts and ideas of his predecessors. And finally, the use of *radif* increases the number of metaphors and allusions.

In early *Ta'ziyeh*, dialogue, whether in the form of question and answer or narrative, was generally arranged in a multi-couplet framework. The number of distiches in each section sometimes ran as high as twenty to twenty-seven. But, in recent years, conversation between two characters (question and answer) generally has taken the form of either two couplets or one couplet and a hemistich. The sections were thus reduced and allocated to a special form of chanting, an oratorical form, or to

straight descriptive narrative. This change greatly affected the movement and theatrics of the Ta'ziyeh.

Repetitive phrases in the early Ta'ziyeh were frequent. They assumed several forms:

1.)The repetition of certain words or expressions, such as: "Your slave", "I am a sacrifice", etc. Such phrases are so frequent in early Ta'ziyeh that many critics consider them characteristic of the unique style and literary tradition of the early scripts. Excess verbiage such as the colloquial use of the word Ke (that) at the beginning of a sentence is another trait. "That oh Orphan, Hasan should be your sacrifice. ... "That at your doorway an army of angels stands in need and are but two examples.

2.)Repetition of metre and verse. This flaw, in addition to making the poetry monotonous, makes the music tedious and boring. For example, in one of the early versions of the Ta'ziyeh of Qasim (ascribed to the latter part of the 12th century, lunar hegirc calendar) only one metre is used from the time Qasim first seeks permission from the Imam to join the Jihad

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(holy war) through his wedding and leave-taking scenes (mujtas metre), "That oh Orphan, Hasan should be your sacrifice. ..." In more modern versions, however, a variety of verse is utilized.

3.)Repetitive content: Repetition was not limited to versification alone. The actual content, too, was repetitive. For example, in the Ta'ziyeh of Qasim ascribed to Chodzko, when Qasim begs the Imam's permission to participate in the Jihad, the dialogue between the two is composed of five or six versified segments, all of which share more or less the same meaning. But in modern Takiyeh Dowlat and Qazvin nersions, each segment, even each couplet, carries a different meaning. If the content sometimes requires repetition, the style shifts. We can cite many examples where innovative Ta'ziyeh writers breathed new life into the sterile corpus of earlier Ta'ziyeh poetry by creating new mataphors and allusion to replace the long discourses and literary prolixity of the early versions. For example, in the Ta'ziyeh of the Martyrdom of the Imam, there is a conversation between the Imam and Ibn Sa'd which occupies several segments. A relatively early version reads as follows:

The Imam:

*O Ibn Sa'd, black oppression is your code,
O woe unto you, cruel, worthless rogue,
Of the Almighty Lord, have you no fear?
For the Creator Himself to us shall appear.*

Ibn Sa'd:

*I know of your rank and stature, O Hussein
Of your power, your purity and of your fame. ...*

*But in a modern Takiyeh Dowlat version, after the Imam
delivers his ultimatum to Ibn Sa'd the latter replies:*

(4348)

*Is the leader commanding us with suras and logical
thought?
Your ignorance of the Qur'an affects us not.
You yourself comprehend the gist of my meaning.
For one must not seek wisdom in every Loghman's
keening.
Listen to me and obey the Lord's servant's bid.
Yazid rules today from Arabia to Transoxiana.
And how can the teeth be pained by a knot which
the Hands undid?*

The Imam:

*How can I, O Lord, answer the words of this
heathen.
He invites me to infamous Sham (Syria) to give up
my faith and my reason.
To Khalilullah he says,, come, share our leaven.
If the Word for this nation is the Prophet's
Qur'an, the Caliphate deems me worthy to open it
and learn from its wisdom.
Then, after a moment of silence,
Seeing me without troops he supposes me powerless,
If I want blood to cover this field like a sea. ...*

The use of various literary words and expressions combined with military, civil, and court expressions (such as Royal Farman, etc.) broadened the range of dialogue and contributed greatly to the general quality of the poetry.

Borrowing phrases from the classical poets and embellishing Ta'ziyeh poetry with figures of speech merely to allow the poet to demonstrate his own craftsmanship or to amuse himself does not constitute good poetry. As mentioned earlier, borrowing was done primarily for theatrical reasons. Some wonderful poetry was created in the process. The following quotation which is attribute to an unknown poet from Saveh, called Savjeh, is a good example. It is taken from his version of the Martyrdom of Abbas.

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*I am Shimr who has eulogized you,
All mortal men I will host for you,
Now among my legions, now among our tents,
All this I have planned, all this is my desire for
you. ...*

We should also note Shimr'a challenge (mubarezeh Khani) to Ibn Sa'd in a modern Takiyeh Dowlat version of the Martyrdom of the Imam.

*Leader, would you among Kings be a servant?
Ignite sparks in your heart, come out from your
tent.
Like a giant dragon, mouth gaping in anger
Trotting and neighing, rolling thunder in
springtime
Brave men surround you, rough rugged riders
With daggers drawn, curved like the arch of a
woman's brow.*

This is an imitation of the famous elegy by Qaani.

In the excerpt quoted below, which is a conversation between Shimr and Ibn Sa'd, notice how the art of parallel construction is employed. The technique improves the poetry and greatly increases the overall dramatic impact.

Ibn Sa'd:

*You spread rancor, I will show cruelty.
You execute orders, I will give commands.*

Shimr:

*You give commands, you general the field.
I will sever Hussein's head from his pure body.*

Ibn Sa'd:

*You will sever Hussein's head from his pure body.
I will impale it on a pike.*

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Shimr:

*You will impale it on a pike.
I will grind his body into bits with horses'
hooves.*

Ibn Sa'd:

*You will grind his body into bits with horses'
hooves.
I will cast terror into the hearts of those on the
battlefield.*

Shimr:

*You will cast terror into the hearts of those on
the battlefield.
I will rope the necks of his weeping children,
like gazelles.*

Some Ta'ziyeh writers, however, were ignorant of the techniques and subtleties of composing poetry for the theatre. They overindulged themselves in imitating the classical poets and in their use of literary

rhetoric. For example, in this same conversation between Shimr and Ibn Sa'd, some writers borrowed heavily from classical Persian literature. An example of this overindulgence is cited below. In the example quoted, one of Hafez's lyric poems is stuck into the framework of a mossammat poem with unfortunate results.

Abbas:

O Shameless infidel, how long will you ignore your religion.
And sail a rudderless ship with no port in store.
Like me, you should willingly pass through our
Master's door, Even though you be given a kingdom,
this I implore, Your wealth amounts to nothing.

Almost all the distiches of this famous hafez ghazal have been borrowed in the form of mukhammas (a poem in which each stanza consists of five hemistiches), with Abbas reciting the first strophe and Shimr the
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following. This poetry, while aesthetically pleasing, was little utilized in Ta'ziyeh performances, because the poet wanders far afield from the main subject of the play.

Another Ta'ziyeh writer who allegedly lived during the reign of Muzzafar al-Din Shah, composed a similar elegy for Shimr's mubarezeh khani to call to combat, decorating and embellishing his verse with a particular form of rhetoric.

O Sultan astride the palace carpet and the Khan
Who ruled the world.
The great Sulaiman and the fair Loghman, wiseman
and astronomer,
All were created through your combat, your will-
power and your generosity.
The world was fresh and loving then.
Without sorrow or hatred or shame.
Thanks to the reality of you, the existence of
you,
The presence of you.

The writer seemed unaware that this type of artificial poetry is completely inappropriate for Ta'ziyeh. Moreover, the main reason for having Shimr and

Ibn Sa'd praise the Imam's virtues is to highlight more effectively the meanness of his enemies. The above quotation conveys no such meaning.

Generally speaking, the literary expressions which entered Ta'ziyeh poetry can be placed in two categories, the grandiose and the delicate. Words in the first category are to be found mainly in elegies, mosammat verse, and in combat descriptions and epic-like sections, while those in the second are used to express or describe grief. The categorization demonstrates well the artistic sensitivities of the Ta'ziyeh writers of this particular period. In the passage below, attributed to Mirza Muhammad Taqi al-Buka, the poet masterfully mixes colloquial words and expressions with literary rhetoric, thus creating a powerful work of art, which represents the very best of Ta'ziyeh poetry. The dialogue takes place when Imam Hussein, astride his horse, Zuljaneh, and about to depart for the battlefield is confronted by his little daughter, Rughiyeh. She is standing on a raised area and cries out to her father. With no musical

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accompaniment and in heart-rending childish tones, she pleads with her father in broken, blank verse.

Rughiyeh:

Father, you're going away, leaving me an orphan.

The Imam:

O Heaven above, what trials have you wrought?

Rughiyeh:

Father, after you're gone, Shimr will bind me up.

The Imam:

He will bind you and your sisters with one chain.

Rughiyeh:

Daddy, my throat is so parched I'm burning.

The Imam:

I too am burning with thirst.

Rughiyeh:

Father dear, let me tell you something.

The Imam:

Tell me, don't cry. Rughiyeh, my little daughter.

Rughiyeh:

Get down from your horse. I am so sad.

The Imam:

(dismounting and walking toward Rughiteh)

May the Lord have mercy on the Shi'ites, my little darling.

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Rughiyeh:

Draw an emblem on your battledress to serve as my light.

The Imam:

(caressing Rughiyeh)

My eyes, O light of my eyes, my little one, my little prisoner.

Rughiyeh:

Let me go father. I'll kiss you under your throat.

(She kisses him under his throat).

The Imam:

Kiss me, O my soul. I am a sacrifice to all your hopes and dreams.

The ability to write with specific detail and vividly portray various events and states of mind requires creativity, sensitivity, and a powerful imagination; qualities which the unsophisticated, early Ta'ziyeh writers lacked. They tended to summarize and generalize every event. As a result, they found it

necessary to fill up the time allocated for the presentation of the Ta'ziyeh, which was almost three hours, with long-winded dialogues. We have already seen examples of this in the Martyrdom of Abbas when Shimr meets Ibn Sa'd after returning from Kufa, when he goes in back of the Imam's and Abbas' camp, and when he sends a letter to Abbas pledging safety in return for surrender. The early Ta'ziyeh writers greatly oversimplified these events, describing them in only the most general terms. The modern writers, on the other hand, paid attention to detail. They carefully observed time frames and proper sequence of events. Shimr's monologue conveys a mixture of false bravado and a fear of Abbas. The audience can perceive Abbas as an undefeatable warrior while realizing, at the same time, that his martyrdom is imminent. Ibn Sa'd's quarrel with Shimr, their initial cautious policies, and man's violent yet sometimes frivolous nature are masterfully portrayed. Shimr's letter to Abbas is made

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to appear to be a deceitful ploy, which in fact it was. Shimr convenes a strategy session with the other division commanders. While drinking wine and carrying on, he screams out his orders, and after a few moments, gets up to head for Abbas' camp. Shimr awakens Abbas from his sleep. The argument which ensues is one of the finest debates in all Ta'ziyeh literature.

It has already been mentioned that early Ta'ziyeh performers excited the emotions of their audiences by imitating vulgar, despicable acts. The modern performers, however, achieved the same results through good theatre - excellent poetry, excellent direction, and excellent acting. The relationship between dialogue and acting is of particular interest. For example, compare versions of the same Ta'ziyeh of Abbas in the scene where Shimr and Ibn Sa'd attack Abbas' tents. The early script reads as follows:

Shimr:

O daughter of the Lord's messenger
Come out from the women's quarters
The time for your enslavement has come
And in misery and misfortune be carried off to
Sham (Damascus).

The Imam:

How shameless is this misguided horde

By the Family of the Prophet, Allah Akbar! (God is great)
Zainab, fetch Ali's two-edged sword
And bring me my weapons of war.

In a later version, the excitement of this dramatic confrontation is brought to a fever pitch, proper poetic symmetry is observed, a longer time-span elapses, and additional events take place simultaneously. The following is an example:

Shimr, exuding false courage and bravado, encircles Abbas' camp with Ibn Sa'd and his soldiers.
O Zainab, sister of the evil doer's offspring.
Admit now who is the better King.
Yazid's brutal and bloodthirsty army is here
To lay the foundations of his empire.
(4355)

Awaken Hussein, tell him who makes this commotion
That it is Shimr out there yelling at him.

Zainab, startled and anxious, dashes from one side of the stage to the other, saying: What tumult threatens the King of Ray, Woe betide us, They're killing Zurrah's son. O woe, O injustice.

Ta'ziyeh writers paid special attention to developing to the greatest extent possible a sense of integrity and unity between the music and the action by carefully selecting the verse, the metre, and by alternating the timing between parts. Rajaz-Khani and epic poetry are generally in the *mutaqarib* metre. The *monkat*, a verse-form which is average in terms of length, was utilized when there was a need to convey urgency and anxiety. The poetry was written in light verse. *Musammât* and *mustezad* were, as a rule, utilized for descriptive narrative, and *taraneh* for mournful dirges and hymns. Foreexample, when Qasim falls from his horse and Shimr and Ibn Sa'd converse with him, a question-and-answer format is used in which one hemistich is written in a specific metre, appropriate for recital to the accompaniment of the quick rhythm of the music. Why? Because the denouement is approaching and the Ta'ziyeh writer wants to communicate to the audience a sense of impending crisis. Occasionally, a verse written in a somber metre was changed by the actor in the performance because in his judgement the original metre was not suitable for the character being portrayed. In such instances, the rhythm of the

sentences and the syllables is very important. For example, in the Martyrdom of Abbas, when Rughiyeh goes to her uncle and confides in him, telling him her private thoughts, she recites a poem with no rhythm and in childish tones:

O General without troops
My gallant uncle
Standard bearer of Hussein's army
Shah of the world
Do you remember, Uncle, in our homeland how you
engaged my cousin
To marry Ali Khan?
Such a party, such festivities you arranged!
All of Medina was lit up then,
How my heart is filled with rue.
(4356)

Because the Ta'ziyeh performers' principal goal is changing the poetry of the script was to improve the performance and not simply to show off their own poetic talents, sometimes, instead of composing a totally new poem, they borrowed or adapted old texts. They did this in the following ways:

1.) When they found a poem in another poet's works which seemed suitable, they borrowed it verbatim, or changed a few hemistiches, or added or subtracted some couplets. For example, in the Ta'ziyeh of the Elder Fatima, a section of the opening poem is taken word for word from Tufan al-Buka. Also, in the Ta'ziyeh of Muslem (Tehran and Yakiyeh Dowlat versions), the conversation in the opening section between the Imam and Muslem is adapted from the same book, the only difference being the rearranging of a few couplets and hemistiches.

2.) Some poems in the old Ta'ziyeh collections were ruined by attempts at improvement and adaptation. At first, we might theorize that the Ta'ziyeh writers had no well thought out purpose in selecting what they appropriated or in making their adaptations - that they only did it to make their own work easier and hence to avoid the agony of original composition: or else they happened by chance to find a suitable piece which they felt could be slipped into their own Ta'ziyeh. But a close examination of many plays proves this theory false. Not only is it more difficult for a poet to fit

pieces from other poets into his own work than it is to write a simple original, but also there are other factors which prove that the Ta'ziyeh writers were completely aware of what they were doing. For example:

a.)The opening couplet which Za'far Jena recites in the Ta'ziyeh of the Imam (Tehran, Qazvin and perhaps other versions) is as follows:

I am your most insignificant servant, Za'far Jena
Your service has arrived. The army of Jena. ...

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This is taken from Tufan al-Buka, cited earlier. But the response which the Imam gives to Za'far is taken from a poem by Bidel.

On this transitory earth in this fleeting world
No man is ever immortal. ...

If the writer had simply wanted to find a piece of poetry which contained an answer for the Imam, it would have been much simpler to have lifted a complete section from either Tufan al-Buka or Matemkedeh because the Imam's response is in both. We note, however, that the writer went to the trouble of selecting one from each. Why? Because he realized the the metre and the quality of the two poems differ and each is suitable for its particular place in the text.

b.)In the Martyrdom of Imam Hussein, there is a poem which Hussein addressed to Ibn Sa'd and his legions from Kufa:

I belong to the honores family of the Lord's
worshippers
Recipient of Gabriel's tidings. ...

This particular piece is taken from a book written by Mahmud Ibn Kazem Mazandari. Only three or four couplets are borrowed. Others are taken from Bidle's book. An example is:

Although I am part Arab,
Today in my own land, I am a stranger.

The borrowed sections again consist of only a few couplets. If the writers had not recognized and understood the unique qualities of each they could not have made such a wide selection.

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The Evolution of the Ta'ziyeh Performance

Different types of Ta'ziyeh performances evolved gradually. The texts of early versions were simple and overly generalized. Only later on were they embellished. These embellishments, meaning the Gusheh format and other amendments which were appended to the original versions, were part of the evolutionary process which changed passion plays into drama. Happy incidents, epic tales, and fables were inserted into the text; for example, Abbas' interception by Hurr, or Abbas by Ali Akbar, the ceremony in the Martyrdom of Abbas involving the four generals, and Qasim's fight with the sons of Arzagh do not appear in early versions. It should be recognized, however, that many of these new sections such as the incident depicting the coming of the Lord to help the Imam bring fire, water and earth to aid him during his martyrdom, etc., were not often performed for various reasons.

Embellishments did not occur only in the old scripts. Another form called Gusheh was invented which was built around old stories and tales, some historical, some pure fable. These new Ta'ziyeh were amusing and humorous. While the Gusheh began even before the reign of Naser al-Din Shah, only a handful remain in existence today. Gusheh content is generally simple and popular such as 'Aghe Valadain, Selling the Shi'a's Son, etc. These Ta'ziyeh offshoots were performed as introductory pieces prior to the commencement of the actual Ta'ziyeh and developed their own independent style. They were performed throughout the country all year round and not just during the mourning month of Muharram. It is said that a play exists for every day of the year. (This writer,

unfortunately, has witnessed only about two hundred.) Contrary to what is claimed, the Gusheh style is not limited to humorous tales. Love stories and tales of various historical figures and champions (as religious and social conditions permitted) also appeared. For example, the Binding of the Devil and the Wedding of Fatima Zahra are of the first kind. The Battle of the gate of Kheybar, the Battle of Siffin, Abraham, etc., are of the second variety. There are other stories which are partially love stories and partially religious and historical, such as Yusuf and Zulaika. Innumerable stories of this sort were written.

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As should be clear from the excerpts from early and recent Ta'ziyeh cited earlier, "similar" poetry, from the standpoint of metre, verse, and rhyme, became fashionable for use in dialogue between two characters and for the question-and-answer format. This was not true in the early plays.

I spoke earlier about the art of improvisation (badiyeh khani) in Ta'ziyeh music. Ta'ziyeh performers would occasionally change the lines which they were supposed to recite to more suitable ones or extemporaneously recite their own poetry. These improvisations gradually infiltrated the original texts. In the early days, performers were not allowed to do this. A large number of jokes, witticisms, and social customs which are reflected in the poetry today originated from this spur-of-the-moment improvisation by the performing artist. For example, in the Martyrdom of Qasim, the congratulations which Shimr and Ibn Sa'd extend to Qasim on the occasion of his wedding, and the gifts of sweets and cone sugar which Imam Hussein sends them in return are actions quite contrary to what the audience expects and are good examples of improvisation. The quarrel in the family of Hares in the Ta'ziyeh of Muslem's Children is similar. The limitations placed on the actors to restrict their improvisations were, of course, the audience itself and the particular character being portrayed. Some overdid it and reduced the dialogue to absurdity. While sometimes improvisation resulted in beautiful poetry, at other times it was mere banality.

Ta'ziyeh in which the Imam of the Prophet are present in the opening scene, begin with their munajat or prayer (protestations of their innermost secrets and wishes to God, the universe, or the heavens). In the

early years, only the Imam of the Prophet (the person playing the leadership role) performed this kind of prologue. Dialogue for the other protagonists was either straight narrative or the question-and-answer format. In later years, however, a kind of munajat was written for the kinsmen of the Imam, which, from the standpoint of verse, metre, rhyme, and rhythm was similar to the poetry written for the Imam. But this manajat differed in content from the manajat written for the Imam and for the prologues of early Ta'ziyeh. The pish khani or prologue took the form of a song or a song-like wail which was presented in choral fashion. The child performers (or one of them) sang a special

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kind of tune. All the others, antagonists and protagonists together, repeated the first couplet. This took place before the actual performance commenced in order to add a touch of resplendence and lustre and to make the in-coming audience aware that the drama was about to begin. It served another function as well. It demonstrated that the men playing the antagonist roles were merely performers doing their job and that they, too, shared in the sorrow and mourning of the people. One of the fundamental conditions of performing the pish khani was the participation of all the actors in the cast in the sarayeh or choral singing.

In Ta'ziyeh such as the Martyrdom of the Imam, Abbas, Ali Akbar, and Qasim, prior to the munajat by the Imam and his family, Shimr and Ibn Sa'd rush to the battlefield and, in the expression of Ta'ziyeh actors, "issue challenge to combat". These sections are full of violence and threats yet, at the same time, contain high praise for the Imam. Shimr and Ibn Sa'd admit to the greatness of the Imam and confess to their own pettiness and meanness. Sometime, a description of the battlefield is given, adding greatly to the audience's sense of impending excitement. Because the "challenge to combat" is not an important part of the Ta'ziyeh, performer sometimes added lines of the antagonists' parts. Early Ta'ziyeh did not have such a good standard of mubarezeh khani. Early writers expended their efforts attempting to make everything correspond to the visible action. Mubarezeh khani thus usually was only a simple conversation placed after the Imam's munajat.

Frequently, the new style of mubarezeh khani is mixed with old-style sermonizing. This mingling of styles has unfortunate results, giving the Ta'ziyeh a disjointed, uncoordinated appearance.

Different Viewpoints of Ta'ziyeh Writers

At the beginning of this essay, I pointed out how the Ta'ziyeh encountered a variety of new ideas and viewpoints during the course of its development and how each made a contribution to the evolutionary process. Recent developments, however, have destroyed some of the traditional concepts and practices. We previously saw an example in which the Ta'ziyeh writer of one of the Martyrdom of Hurr Ta'ziyeh always refers to Yazid in vulgar, insulting tones:

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'tis a letter from Yazid, the fraud
Beside the Kufa's governor, Ibn Ziyad.

But in a Takiyeh Dowlat version, Yazid's and Ibn Sa'd's high rank is not repusiated and appropriate descriptive vocabulary is assigned to them even though no real respect is given them.

An auspicious command from Saturn's great heights,
By Ibn Sa'd, grandest of leaders and noblest of
knights.

The modern Ta'ziyeh writers' love and devotion for the family of Hussein and their hatred for his oppressors is no different from that of the early writers. The difference lies in the handling. Many researchers claim that the martyrdom of the Nation of Believers for their sins is the indisputable, philosophical basis for Ta'ziyeh. Some even think that this concept was influenced by Christianity. The act of "intercession" has a long tradition in Shi'a islam. In this case, "intercession" and "sin" are mingled with issues concerning fate, predestination, fatalism, and free will, and while each requires a separate treatment of its own, we can conclude here that the Ta'ziyeh writers gleaned different ideas from all of these concepts. In the Martyrdom of Imam Hussein, for example, Zainab asks the Imam: "Why did you leave Mecca and Medina and come to Karbala to place yourself in this danger?" The Imam answers, "Because of the sins of the Nation of Believers". In another version he says, "Fate and the will of God dictated thus." But in another Ta'ziyeh, the Martyrdom of Ali Akbar, a wiser and more logical justification for the martyrdom is given, which, to some extent, shows the enlightened thinking of the

writer. The example comes from the scene in which the Imam is conversing with Zainab:

Zainab:

Brother, you were never like this,
Never so alarmed and concerned at this. ...

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The Imam:

Yes, to revolt is beter than to endure.
Hatred of this infidel must not destroy our faith.
Even Solomon's Kingdom was transitory,
Although the Fiend works hand in hand with the
Devil,
If Allah had not wanted Islam to spread
You and I would have no life.
Those who have not been struck by the Devil
Never ascend to Solomon's throne.
Summon young Ali Akbar, without him I have no
life.

This section, aside from its delightful and pleasant-sounding poetry, contains many social and philosophical points which are not completely compatible with pure logic or noemal Ta'ziyeh poetry. The gist of the Imam's speech is, "We have arisen to right society's wrongs and we follow this path of our own free will. Our actions are logical and consonant with the Will of God." (**I am reminded of a conversation which supposedly took place between Prince Charles Edward Stuart [Bonnie Prince Charlie] and Donald of Lochiel, chief of Clan Cameron, after the disaster of Culloden, when they were on board a French ship fleeing to France: "Why did you follow me, Donald?" said the Prince. "You admit that you knew that our cause was doomed." Donald replied: "I had no choice, it was RIGHT. But you must have known even better even than I, Prince. Why did you do it?" The Prince replied: "Because it was RIGHT. Neither of us had a choice."**)

Unfortunately, when the new, dramatic form of Ta'ziyeh was gaining acceptance, Iran encountered Western culture and the Iranian Constitutional Movement developed. The Constitutional Movement was blind to Ta'ziyeh quality and it did away with the good as well as the bad. An anti-Ta'ziyeh bloc evolved among the

foreign-influenced (**pseudo**)-intellectuals who joined the ranks of critics in objecting to every national or religious custom. People no longer asked, "What is a Ta'ziyeh?" Ta'ziyeh offshoots were rarely performed, save by a performing troupe in some remote region of the country. Expanded research into this art form should be initiated before all documentation completely disappears." (68)

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As we have seen, the Ta'ziyehs are extremely varied. The language of some Ta'ziyeh is almost purely popular, though never vulgar or slangy, while the language of others is almost pure Classical or Literary Persian, making only minimal concessions to popular or colloquial speech and, of course, some fall between the two extremes. Some Ta'ziyehs contain no more references to Classical Persian Poetry than may be encountered in everyday speech, while others are nearly a long series of quotes from Classical Persian verse somewhat loosely strung together, with others, once again, falling between the two extremes.

All or nearly all Ta'ziyehs are written using the metres of Classical Persian verse rather than those of typical popular poetry. Generally, the same metre will not be followed throughout the Ta'ziyeh, the metre changing with the character, dramatic circumstances, et cetera. Some Ta'ziyehs, though metrical, are unrhymed, but most are rhymed, using the schemes of Classical Persian verse. By far the commonest rhyme scheme used in the Ta'ziyehs is the masnavi or rhymed couplets, though strophic schemes are also used, as is the qasida, ghazal or monorhyme scheme. Once again, the same rhyme scheme is rarely or never used

throughout a Ta'ziyeh, in some cases the rhyme scheme being changed within the same speech or aria.

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Below is an essay dealing with the Ta'iyah and Persian poetry in a monographic manner:

I wish to advise the reader to consult Chapter 3, in which I discuss the Persian metres at some length.

The Literary Sources of the Ta'ziyeh

"One of the problems much discussed by students of the Ta'ziyeh is the source of these plays, not so much the origins of the practice as the authors and antiquity of the traditional scripts themselves. I do not propose to offer an answer to this question, which requires far wider and deeper research than has been possible in the present instance. My intention is rather to initiate a study of the texts themselves, and to suggest the general lines it should take. If carried out on a sufficiently broad scale, it might be that we would find pointers to the way in which these texts were compiled and the poetic sources upon which their doubtless numerous authors drew.

The immediate problem that faces any enquirer into the structure, language, prosody, and so on, of the Ta'ziyeh texts is the lack of published source material and the scarcity and even inaccessibility of manuscript material. This deficiency has led to confident statements that are found to be at variance with the facts as these become better known. For instance, one respected scholar has stated that "Mujtas is the basic metre of the Persian plays.", whereas the truth, as evident from even a limited study of the prosody of the Ta'ziyeh texts, is considerable more complex than that. It is most important therefore that oral and manuscript text should not only be recorded, collected and preserved, but should also be printed and made available to scholars as rapidly as possible. The survey that follows covers no more than seventeen plays, ten printed in popular "chapbook" form in Iran, five by Iranian

scholars, and two by European researchers. On such a limited foundation it is impossible to make any dogmatic statements; nevertheless certain trends can be observed. It should be understood that any general statements which follow

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must be taken as qualified by the foregoing considerations.

Metre

The immediate point that strikes any student of the Ta'ziyeh metres is the fact that almost without exception they are the standard 'aruzi metres. The prosody, in other words, is in literary form, and has no relationship with the metrical system of popular poetry. The second feature is that, contrary to the normal practice of literary poems, short or long, in which the same metre is maintained from beginning to end, the Ta'ziyeh changes its metre frequently and employs a number of different ones throughout its length. The following statistics will serve to illustrate these points.

In the collection of seventeen Ta'ziyeh studied here, totaling some 6300 baits or disiches (in a few cases there is more than one text with minor variations) thirty-eight different metres are to be found. In classifying these I have taken the liberty of abandoning the traditional nomenclature in favor of the classification promulgated in my recently published work, *The Persian Metres*. By reference to that work the metres here identified can easily be converted to the 'aruzi terminology. I believe my new classification to be more relevant to the metres of Persian poetry than the system devised centuries ago by Khalil b. Ahmad for the categorization of Arabic metres. **(Once again consult the relevant parts of Chapter 3.)**

The commonest metre, as indicated earlier, is 4.1.15 (mujtatt mutamman maxbun mahduf, etc.), which accounts for 2062 baits, 32.6 per cent of the whole. The next ten metres are 2.1.11 (16.8 per cent), 2.4.11 (8.9 per cent), 2.1.16 (5.33 per cent), 4.5.11 (5.1 per cent), 4.7.14 (4.8 per cent), 2.4.15 (4.7 per cent), 3.1.11 (4.5 per cent), 5.1.10 (3.5 per cent), 1.1.11 (3.5 per cent), and 3.1.15 (2.8 per cent). It is worth noting that nine of these eleven, accounting for 92.4 per cent of the total, are also to be found among the first eleven metres according to their placement in Persian poetry as a whole, though the order and percentages are somewhat different. For example, 4.1.15 is twice as

frequent in the Ta'ziyeh, though it still accounts for only one-third of the baits in the texts studied, this being partially explained by heavy use in one or two of them. As noted below, it has the highest

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frequency in only nine out of seventeen plays. Nine of the Ta'ziyeh metres are not listed in the Persian Metres survey, though only six of these are not attested elsewhere in classical literature. These rare ones are all in the standard patterns: only thirteen baits, or 0.2 per cent of the total, are found in irregular non-classifiable metres.

Another deviation from classical practice is rather greater preference for the "short" metres (under thirteen basic syllables). Whereas the classical poets use them in 37.3 per cent of their output., the Ta'ziyeh show a figure of 44.5 per cent. Nevertheless, allowing for statistical margin of error, it is possible to say that the popularity of individual metres is much the same for the Ta'ziyeh as for Persian poetry in general.

Of course all thirty-eight metres are not to be found in any one Ta'ziyeh. The largest number is twenty (in a Ta'ziyeh of 480 baits), and the smallest number, twelve (in one of 224 baits) apart from an incomplete text of 209 baits, which has only nine different metres. Two plays are in fact longer - one of 627 baits (with thirteen metres), and one of 501 baits (with sixteen metres). Three metres only are used in all seventeen texts - 4.1.15, which comes first in nine of them, 2.1.11, which comes first first in two, and 2.4.15. the other six "winners" are 1.1.11 (used in ten texts), 2.1.16 (used in fifteen texts and first in two), 2.4.11 (used in fifteen), 3.1.11 (used in seven), and 5.1.10 (used in fourteen texts).

The practice of frequent changes in the metre used is so marked that it is evidently felt to be a desirable and necessary feature. The longest continuous passage in one metre (in the texts studied) consists of 68 baits in metre 3.1.11, but this is an isolated example, and though there are other individual instances as we work down the scale (57 in 4.1.15, 49 in 2/4/11, 48 in 4.1.15, and so on), it is only when we come to passages of 17 baits or less that the number of examples begins to exceed two figures. These are, of course, not necessarily delivered by the same speaker, though the shorter the continuous passage the more likely this is. More than a quarter of such passages number only two baits; one-seventh, three baits; and one-tenth, four

baits. The average for individual texts ranges from ten to four, the overall average being six.

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Although there is some reason for thinking that certain metres are regarded as more appropriate for certain types of subject - for instance, short metres for lamentation, 1.1.11 for rajaz xandan - yet the figures above make it clear that change of subject alone is not enough to account for the high frequency of alternation. It is worth bearing in mind that the texts of these plays normally exist in the shape of separate scripts for each actor. This is not necessarily to imply that parts for each actor were composed separately, and certainly there is no evidence of distinctive metres being used by particular characters, whether beneficent or malign; in fact the larger a role the more metres it is likely to use, The longest single part of the collection studied consists of 273 baits and uses nine different metres. The largest number of different metres, fourteen, is used in a role totaling 92 baits. The longest part using only one metre amounts to 21 baits; using two metres, 30 baits; using three, 59 baits; using four, 72 baits; and using five, 107 baits. Seven roles of only one bait each naturally use only one metre each, but there are also cases of two-, three- and four bait roles in two metres, five- and six-bait roles in three metres, and so on. Between these extremes there is considerable variety, but the overall average of baits in the same metre spoken by the same character is 6.4. By way of example, the following table has been compiled by adding together the roles of the characters named from all of the plays in which they occur.

Character	No. of Plays	No. of baits	No. of Metres
Imam Hussein	11	864	22
Zainab	11	469	22
Shahrbanu	7	235	17
Fatima Zahra	9	189	17
Shimr	9	182	13
Ibn Sa'd	8	164	10

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Of the above, six metres (2.1.11, 2.1.16, 2.4.11, 3.1.15, 4.1.15, and 4.7.14) are found in all six roles, four in five out of six, three in four, six in three, five in two, and seven in one out of six. Only eight metres, out of the total thirty-eight in the texts studied, are not used by any of these major characters. Similar results would doubtless be obtained for other characters.

Short speeches - in whatever metre - are the norm. The longest speech noted consists of thirty baits, seven baits in 2.1.16 and thweenty-three in 2.4.11. Of all the speeches, 92.5 per cent are of 5 baits or less, and well over half, of not more than two baits. Included in this calculation, though not sufficiently numerous to affect the perecntages, are a number of speeches divided by alternate hemstiches between two speakers. Such speeches, generally of the su'al u jawab (question-and-answer) form, are a noteworthy feature of the Ta'ziyeh.

...

...They can vary quite considerably in length, from two to twenty-three baits in the sample studied, but the largest number are between six and twelve with the average figure working out at nine.

No. of baits	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
No. of examples	3	5	2	4	13	8	9	4	6	6
No. of baits	12	13	14	15	16	17	21	22	23	
No. of examples	5	1	1	1	4	1	1	1	1	

Total: 76

There is one case of an eleven-bait speech divided between three speakers.

The metres used for these alternating speeches are fairly widespread., with a preference for the shorter ones. Out of the seventy-six examples noted, thirty-one are in 2.1.11 (including the three longest), fifteen in 2.4.11, ten in 4.1.15, and the rest fairly evenly divided between nine other metres - 1.1.11, 2.1.16, 2.4.15, 3.1.15, 3.4.11, 4.5.11, 4.7.14 and 4.7.07(2). Fifty-four are in short metres and twenty-two in long.

Rhyme

Another feature that adds to the appearance of piecemeal composition is the variety of rhyme-schemes. There are, of course, only two widely used rhyme schemes in classical Persian verse, the masnavi (rhymes couplets), and the monorhyme, the latter being further distinguished by the rhyming of both hemstiches (misra') of the first bait of the passage. The bulk of the texts studied are in the masnavi form (82.7 per cent), leaving only 17.3 per cent for the monorhyme form. A negligible number of verses do not lend themselves to classification by rhyme. As regards choice of metre, both forms use virtually the entire range found in the sample; the masnavi uses thirty-two metres and the monorhyme thirty. Certain metres, however, show a marked leaning in one direction or the other; as against the overall ratio of approximately 4:1 in favor of the masnavi, 2.1.11 shows a 34:1 preference for it; 1.1.11, 19:1; and 2.4.11 as much as 42:1. On the other hand, 2.1.16, 2.4.15, 3.1.15, and 4.7.14 show a modest majority in favor of the monrhyme, equivalent to a 5:1 swing from the norm. It will be observed that in two respects these figures show a departure from classical practice; in the latter the use of the masnavi is much more limited in respect to both numerical use and choice of metre. It is perhaps worth noting that no masnavi were found in seven metres - 2.1.15, 2.4.05(2), 3.1.16, 4.8.08(2), 5.1.08 (2), 5.2.08 (2) and 5.5.07 (2).

It is quite common for two or more speeches in the same metre to maintain the monorhyme system. In such cases the opening verse of each speech is generally muqaffa (both hemistiches rhyming, though this is not invariably the case. ...

...Sometimes the rhyme may change in the middle of the speech, and the rhyme be continued by the following speaker. ...

...In other cases all the lines in the speech are muqaffa. ...

...Sometimes a separate rhyme-scheme is maintained by each speaker. ...

...The internal rhyme is a common feature of the "doubled" metres. ...

...An unusual example occurs in which the rhyme is lost owing to the substitution of an onomatopoeic phrase at the end of each bait. ...

Occasionally a complete **murabba'** is found...

...An even more interesting point is raised by the use of the ruba'I metre (3.3.13/5.1.13). In classical literature this is scarcely ever used except for the two-bait ruba'I itself; the exceptions are so rare as to underline the rule. In the Ta'ziyeh, use in other forms is not uncommon. Out of 40 baits in this metre in the texts studied, 18 form nine normal ruba'is, and six form two sadasis (three-bait verses). ...

...On the other hand, seven are in the form of single rhymed couplets, and there is one case of two forming a pair of rhymed couplets with different rhymes, and one case of as many as four baits with different rhymes. ...

...There is also what appears to be a hybrid (though a few words are missing from the text in Virolleaud's edition), where a rhymed couplet in the same metre but a different rhyme appears to have been inserted into the middle of a normal ruba'i. ...

...A strange mixture of metres and rhymes occurs in the following passage, where the first speaker begins in 4.1.15, and then switches to 4.7.14, and ends with a rhymed verse in 3.3.13 (the ruba'I metre). The metre is picked up by the next speaker, who utters a normal ruba'I and is answered by the first speaker in a single rhymed bait in 5.1.13 (the other ruba'I metre). ...

...Complex rhyme schemes involving three or more rhymes include the following: Rhyme scheme - ab cb ab cb. ...

...Rhyme scheme - ba cb cad b, the rhyme having been established in the preceding monorhyme speech. ...

...A form of mustazad is sometimes found. ...

...A further possible indication of a literary origin for or at least literary influence on, the

Ta'ziyeh texts is the comparative rarity of incorrect rhymes. ...

Language

On the strength of metre and rhyme alone we must conclude either that the compilers of the Ta'ziyeh were skilled practitioners of the art of writing 'aruzi verse, or that they drew their material directly from existing literary sources. In fact the evidence for the latter belief is by no means as scanty as might be thought, even in the small sample studied. First, there is the question of language. It is commonly supposed that the language of the Ta'ziyeh is strictly popular and even colloquial. Gobineau wrote in 1865:

"The dramas, in effect, whose prime example is the Ta'ziyeh, are written in the popular dialect. Nor do we find any Arabic words if we search through said compositions, because the bazaari, the soldier, and the women do not understand them, and, on the contrary, we find the most familiar manner of speech, the abbreviations, the most common words, all that which constitutes, in a word, the most common and everyday manner of speaking"

More recently, Dr. Mehdi Forough wrote:

"The language of the Persian passion plays, in contrast to the highly stylized Persian poetry in general, is very simple and direct. No attempt is made to include the artificial rhetorical devices and literary graces so abundant in most Persian poetry.

This statement is contradicted by his own observation elsewhere in the same work:

"It must be pointed out that a general knowledge of the Persian language and of the literary convention of Persian literature would be necessary to understand all the allusions and fully appreciate the poetry of these plays. A considerable amount of technical knowledge would be required as well - not only of prosody and grammar, but also of the various branches of rhetoric and euphemism - to recognize all the tropes, similes, metaphors, innuendoes, hyperboles, antitheses, quotations, aetiologies, amphibologies, homonymies, anagrams and the like which abound in Persian literature."

In fact the truth is much nearer to this last statement than it is to either his first remark or to Gobineau's belief (and this is not to deny the possibility that a greater or lesser degree of colloquialization may take place in the course of actual performance). ...

...Such language is not so very different from that used by the classical poets like Sa'di, Hafiz, Mawlavi, and so on. All the same, it may be noted that, quite apart from any colloquialism that may be introduced in performance, a certain number of popular words and expressions do appear in the written texts, for instance: **BAB** = "father". ...

...Geographical neologisms are found. ...

...A Turkish character uses a mixture of Turkish and Persian - though his language becomes more purely Persian as his commitment to the cause of Imam Hussein becomes more firm. ...

...Nor is there sound reason for claiming that the Ta'ziyeh verse is free from the figures of speech so prevalent in literary Persian poetry. On the contrary, as Forough says, one can find examples of many of them.

...Even on the question of the use of Arabic vocabulary Gobineau is far from accurate. A rough sample check shows an average of three Arabic words to per bait, or roughly 30 per cent - exactly the same as the average for literary poetry of the classical period. While many of these words are in common use, there is also a fair sprinkling of more obscure "literary" terms.

...Further light may be thrown on this problem of sources by comparing the language and style of the various Ta'ziyeh texts from different origins, as well as comparing them with verses from other literary compositions. One is immediately struck by the fact that, while plays on the same subject may differ widely in construction and even plot from one source or area to another, nevertheless the same kind of phraseology is to be found in all of them. ...

...Particular characters are given stock epithets.

...He (Imam Hussein) receives such titles even when he is addressed or spoken of by his arch-enemy, the villainous Shimr. ...

...Appropriate stock epithets are similarly applied to other principal characters. The rendering of the name "Karbala" as "Karb va bala" certainly goes back as far as the Rowzatu'l Shuhada. There is other evidence that the Rowzatu'l Shuhada is, as might be expected, a source for the Ta'ziyeh material. For instance, one of the texts collected by Chodzko during the nineteenth century contains the following farewell lament. ...

...The same verses with only minor variants appear in the Rowzatu'l Shuhada, though in a different context.

...

...Research would certainly reveal similar parallels in such works as the Riyazulhuseini, the Chavushnameh, Makhzan al-Ash'ar, and so on. It is also worth noting that several versions of the same play, though in most respects differing widely, often contain identical or closely similar passages. For instance, two versions of the Shahdat-e Hazrat-e Imam Hussein, one in the Chodzko collection of the mid-nineteenth century and one in the Tehran "chapbook" printing of nearly a century later, provide such parallels. ...

...The original text of the Ta'ziyeh-e Qasim, as translated and printed by Gobineau in his Religions et Philosophies dans l'Asia Centrale, is unfortunately lost; nevertheless it is possible to discern, from a comparison of the French translation with the much later Tehran "chapbook" edition, some fifty or sixty baits (about one-sixth of the total) that must have been virtually identical in the otherwise different texts.

A final curiosity: a number of speeches are introduced by the conjunction ke, suggesting that they originally formed part of a longer poem in which the preceding bait, here omitted, identified the speaker.

...

...On the basis of the analysis here presented, we must conclude that the material from which the Ta'ziyeh are composed is largely literary in origin. The compilers, most of whom are anonymous though a few are named, must have drawn on this stock, strung it together in various combinations, composed standard linking matter, added other non-literary embellishments, but in general contributed nothing original to the material on which they worked. What they can be credited with as original is the molding of the material into dramatic form, but the discussion of that falls outside the scope of this chapter. The most that can be suggested from the material studied here is

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that the literary sources of the Ta'ziyeh could be at least as old as the Safavi period, and in some instances

a good deal older. (**Amen to that!**) A more thorough examination and comparison of the Ta'ziyeh texts with their possible sources might enable us to reach more definite conclusions as to their age. ...

PERSIAN METRES USED IN THE TA'ZIYEH

1.1.16	<i>mutaqarib mutabba' salim</i>
1.1.10	<i>mutaqrib mutamman abtar</i>
1.1.11	<i>mutaqarib mutamman mahduf</i>
1.1.12	<i>mutaqarib mutamman salim</i>
1.2.05(2)	<i>mutaqarib mutamman atlam</i>
1.3.10	<i>mutaqarik mutamman ahadd</i>
2.1.11	<i>hazaj musaddas mahder</i>
2.1.15	<i>hajaz mutamman mahdaf</i>
2.1.16, 2.1.08 (2)	<i>hazaj mutamman salim</i>
2.3.08(2)	<i>rajaz mutamman salim</i>
2.4.05(2)	
2.4.05(3), with 4.8.05(3)	
2.4.11	<i>ramal musaddas maxbun mahduf</i>
2.4.15	<i>ramal musaddas maxbun</i>
3.1.15	<i>ramal mutamman maxbun mahduf</i>
3.1.16	<i>ramal mutamman maxbun</i>
3.3.13 with 5.1.13	<i>rajaz mutamman axrab maqbud mahduf majbub</i>
3.3.14	<i>hajaz mutamman axrab makfuf mahduf</i>
3.3.11	<i>sari' musaddas matwi maksuf</i>
4.1.05(2)	<i>mutaqarib mutamman maqbud atlam</i>
4.1.15	<i>mujtatt mutamman maxbun mahduf</i>
4.1.16	<i>mujtatt mutamman maxbun</i>
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4.4.9	<i>munsarih musaddas matwi maxbun</i>

4.4.13	<i>munsarih mutamman matwi maxbun</i>
4.5.11	<i>xafif musaddas maxbun mahduf</i>
4.7.14	<i>mudari mutamman axrab makfuf maahduf</i>
4.7.07(2)	<i>mudari mutamman axrab al-sadrayn</i>
4,7.15	
4,8.05(2)	
4.8.05(3)	
5.1.10	<i>hajaz musaddas axrab maqbud mahduf</i>
5.1.13	<i>hajaz mutamman axrab maqbud mahduf</i>
5.1.08(2)	
5.2.08(2)	<i>rajaz musaddas matwi maxbun</i>
5.3.08(3)	
5.5.07(2)	<i>hajaz mutamman ashtar al-sadr(69)</i>

All or nearly all Ta'ziyehs are sung. In fact, Ghassem Talebzadeh gives the Ta'ziyeh much credit for helping to preserve Persian traditional and fine art music.(70)

In this case one should not think of grand opera, but of something much older but which still has great merit and appeal, which many people who have heard it prefer to grand opera or the Viennese operetta.

About 40 years ago a 12th century liturgical drama called The Play of Daniel, based on the story of the prophet Daniel in the Old Testament, was revived, and was popular both as live performance and on LP discs.

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The Play of Daniel was written by the students of the Cathedral of Beauvais, France. Said "Play" is entirely sung.

Below is what Rembert Weakland, O.S.B. says concerning the music of the Play of Daniel:

"Until the present time the study of drama in the Middle Ages has been focused almost exclusively on the literary aspects of the texts, even though these plays were written to be sung and acted in a semi-liturgical setting. A study of the text alone - interesting as it may be - is but a partial understanding of the totality; the two other constituents, music and setting, must be brought to life as well. Could we imagine ourselves satisfied with an examination of only the librettos of the Mozart and Verdi operas? It is the totality which must be seen and heard, if we wish to appreciate adequately the peculiar aesthetics of the medieval drama.

From a musical point of view, (The Play of) Daniel provides an excellent beginning. Although the sole manuscript in which it can be found dates from the 13th century (now in the British Museum, Egerton 2615), it seems certain that it was written almost a hundred years earlier and that the version which came to be written down was the result of many changes and corrections. The prologue tells us clearly that it was the work of the students of the Cathedral of Beauvais, and references in the text, as well as the final prophecy of Daniel, place it unequivocally during the Christmas Season. Since the final rubric calls upon the cantors to intone the Te Deum, we can see that it, like so many liturgical dramas, was performed after the clergy of the cathedral had finished the chanting of the Office of Matins. If this rubric were not so explicit the internal structure of the play, as well as its expansiveness, could easily have deceived us into thinking that the work had already been severed from its liturgical roots. Our interest in Daniel is heightened by the fact that it was written at the precise period when the connection between the liturgy and the drama had become more and more tenuous and the drama was soon to assert its independence.

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Plays on Old Testament subjects are less common in medieval times, because the first rudimentary dialogues that grew out of the tropes and gave birth to the drama were but amplifications of the liturgical texts commemorating various events in the life of (Jesus)

Christ. Daniel, it would seem, grew out of the Procession of the Prophets, in turn an amplification of a 6th century sermon used in the night Office of Christmas. Because of his prophecy of the coming of the Son of Man, Daniel was esteemed as the great announcer of the birth of the Messiah. What would be more natural than to make a complete and separate drama of the Daniel story as it was known to the students of Beauvais from the Vulgate?

Although it follows the basic outlines of a play by Hilary, one of those nebulous wandering scholars and an erstwhile pupil of (Pierre) Abelard, it shows great advancement in metrical subtlety, in definition of character and in expressivity.

The Beauvais manuscript which records the play is neatly written and the pitch intervals can be read with fair accuracy. However, the notation is not rhythmic. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why the music of the play has remained latent so long. In the last decades, however, musical scholarship has advanced sufficiently so that a solution to the problem that is both historically and musically satisfactory can be obtained. The problem is the same as that of the trobador and trouvere music, in which the metre of the text can be worked out musically within the framework of various rhythmic formulae or modes, described for us by the Latin theorists of the period. Since the problem of keeping voices together did not enter, as in polyphonic music, more liberty was expected in monophonic song (such as the **cansos** of the Provencal trobadors and the **chansons** of the French trouveres) and less stringent rules were needed.

There is much about the music which reminds one of the (cansos) of the trobador and (chansons) of the trouvere art, (for example, they are partly syllabic and partly melismatic, with the proportions being extremely variable; i.e., if one syllable corresponds to one note, it is called 'syllabic': if one syllable corresponds to more than one note, this is called a 'melisma', and therefore said song is melismatic) especially those pieces which are neither properly

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narrative nor processional. For example, one might cite the prologue, **Ad honorem tui, Christe**, the song of the Queen as she informs the King of Daniel's powers, **Ut scribentis noscas ingenium**, the songs of the princes as they invite Daniel to come to Belshazzar's court, **Vir propheta Dei, Daniel**, and later in the play when they

inform Darius of Daniel's presence, **Adsit, principes regalis curiae**, or again when they invite him to appear before Darius, **Ex regali venit imperio**, the two laments of Daniel, **Heu, heu, heu, quo casu sortis**, and **Hujus rei non sum reus**, should be counted among these composed songs (cansos or chansons). They are among the finest and most expressive examples of monophonic song in the medieval repertoire. The intricacies and freedom of their metres and rhyme and the intensity of their feeling show that this type of Latin song was far from dead, even after the rise of polyphony. It is in these songs that one can note the great advancement over the Hilary Daniel Play where the lines are metrically monotonous, angular and perfunctory.

Contrasted with these songs (cansos in Old Provençal [Langue d'Oc] or chansons in Old French [Langue d'Oil] are the great processions: the entrance of the entourage of King Belshazzar, **Astra tenenti**, and later that of King Darius, **Ecce Rex Darius**, the two entrances of Daniel, **Hic verus Dei famulus** and **Congaudentes celebremus**, and the entrance and exit of the Queen, **Cum doctorum et magorum** and **Solvitur in libro Salomonis**. To this class one might add the dance-like pieces sung while the sacred vessels are being carried before Belshazzar, **Jubilemus regi nostro**, and the similar display before Daniel, *Regis vasa deferentes*. These pieces are called 'conductus' or processions by the manuscript and indicate a peculiar genre of the period. Like the Sequence, they are usually set to music so that one syllable corresponds to one note (in other words, they are syllabic and not melismatic; troubador cansos and trouvere chansons are partly syllabic and partly melismatic, with the proportions varying greatly from one canso or chanson to another), and the rhythm of word and music remains clear. The procession of the Queen is the only one which presents a more complicated structure. No other conductus of the medieval repertoire can boast of the power of the *Ecce rex Darius*. Each strophe becomes more forceful and intense, a great achievement in rhythmic and melodic drive. The conductus presented the

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occasion for ample display of costumery, of banners, of instruments, of everything that was in the cathedral treasury. How catchy the tunes are with their piquant rhythms and simplicity! We may never know what the folksong of The Middle Ages was like, but it could not have been much different from these conductus melodies.

Interspersed between the pieces are acclamations to the King. The trumpet parts which introduce them have been inserted into the play by carefully examining 14th century examples of hunting calls. They are played here on the Siena trumpet from 1406 that is kept in the Lawrence Art Museum of Williams College. One other addition to the play is the Ductia played by the instrumentalists at the opening of the performance. It was selected from the 13th century repertory and serves the traditional function of giving the instrumentalists a solo entrance before the actual play commences.

In addition to the composed songs, the processionals and the acclamations, one finds a skillful use of short melodies that follow clearly the accents of the text and resemble the spoken word. It is in this simple style that Belshazzar calls for his vessels, **Vos qui paretis**, that the wisemen announce their incompetency, **Nescimus persolvere**, and that Daniel reveals the meaning of the writing. They add variety of pace to the music. Two pieces have been left in their original chant rhythm since they are unmistakably parodies. The first is the short phrase **Ecce sunt ante faciem tuam** with the vocalizes characteristic of chant; the second is the repentant cry of the conspirators, **Merito haec patimur**, a parody on one of the old processional antiphons. Surrounded as they are by the rhythmic processionals and the composed songs, these pieces point out vividly that a large gap separates traditional chant from the new genres.

One is struck by the frequent use of the major mode. Like the Provencal trobador cansos and French trouvere chansons, most of the melodies follow the ecclesiastical **Gregorian: I Dorian (Byzantine: I Echos Kyrios Alpha; Slavonic: Glas I; Hindustani: Shuddha Shadja Murchhana)** and **Gregorian: VII Mixolydian (Byzantine: IV Echos Kyrios Delta; Slavonic: Glas IV; Hindustani: Matsarikrita Murchhana)** modes, but it is easily visible that the major mode, later to be called the **Ionian**, has well advanced in popularity. In the Play of Daniel the use of the **Gregorian III Phrygian (Byzantine: II Echos Kyrios Beta; Slavonic: Glas II;**

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Hindustani: Bhairavi) mode indicates that it was carefully chose for its plaintive effect. We find it for example in the lament of Daniel, **Hujus rei non sum reus**, with its poignant cry **eleison** (have mercy), and in the mournful regret on the part of Darius, **Te ne putas Daniel.**

With its richness of melody, variety of rhythm and mode, color and pageantry, (The Play of Daniel) was necessarily a favorite. It has just the right degree of popular and profane elements, seriousness and lightness, to assure a ready response. This is not mere 'fun making' but an artistic solution to all the basic problems of religious music drama. The story is told with perfect balance of deep religious significance and realistic joy. Modern piety might tend to moralize, modern paganism to extenuate. The medieval mind merely presents."(71)

Rhyme schemes and metre of the Latin lyrics of Play of Daniel also vary according to the effect desired or to conform to the mood and music.(72)

As was noted in Chapter 4, unless it is disfigured and deformed by temperament, the Major mode is a genuine, authentic mode, a close approximation of the Classic Hindustani mode **Bilaval** (see Chapter 4). The major mode (often called the **Ionian Mode** in the Middle Ages), used in the Play of Daniel is not tempered or, to put it another way, it is untempered, i.e., not disfigured nor deformed by temperament, so it is a genuine, authentic mode.

In the two aspects mentioned above, the medieval liturgical dramas are very like the Iranian Ta'zīyehs; we have already spoken of how rhyme schemes and metres used in the Ta'zīyehs vary

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according to the effect desired or to conform to the mood and music. In the Ta'zīyehs, the actors sing their lines using tunes based on the same traditional dastgahs or modes used in Persian

art music, or *musiqi-ye-asil*, literally "noble music". Each of the Ta'ziyeh's characters sings tunes using one *dastgah*, certain *dastgahs* being traditionally used for heroes and others for villains.(73) As is true in the case of medieval liturgical dramas, many Ta'ziyehs contain instrumental interludes.(74)

Comparing the Ta'ziyeh with the two Christian forms of religious drama, i.e., the Passion Play and the Liturgical drama, we can say, in general terms, that the Ta'ziyeh is like the passion play in content and general style, but more like the liturgical drama in that it is usually in verse form and sung; we have noted special affinities between the Ta'ziyeh and medieval liturgical drama. Passion plays are rarely, if ever, entirely in verse, and I have never heard of a passion play that was sung. As we have seen in The Cyprus Passion Cycle only four rather short lines are sung.

Antiphonal singing is used in many ta'ziyehs. Antiphonal singing is quite ancient. Says Egon Wellesz:

"In the 4th century, the Byzantine Church adopted the practice of inserting between the psalm verses short phrases which were called *hypopsalma*. The Antiphon (Antiphonon) consists of verses taken from a

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psalm (or hymn), each of them answered by a recurring phrase (antiphonon) or refrain). This can be shown from the Antiphon from the First Psalm, sung by the lectors or *anagnostai* during the Vigil of the Nativity (of Jesus):

*Stichera Alpha: Makarios anar, os ouk eporentha en boule asebon:
Antilabou mon, Kyrie:*

*Stichera Beta: Oti ginoskei Kyrios odon dikaton:
Antilabou mon, Kyrie:*

*Stichera Gamma: Kai odos asebon apoleitai:
Antilabou mon, Kyrie.*

In cathedrals or large churches, the line from the psalm or hymn would be sung by one choir, while the hypopsalma, the recurring line or refrain, would be sung by another choir. In smaller churches, the priest, chanter or choir would sing the line of the of the psalm (or hymn), while the congregation would sing the hypopsalma or refrain".(75)

Below is O. Strunk's definition of the Antiphon:

"Antiphon (antiphonon), a selection from the Psalter followed by a Doxology, to be sung in the liturgy by two choirs in alternation. The singing of antiphona or antipsallein is known from the 4th century onward (St. Basil the Great). An antiphon may consist of several psalms (or hymns), not necessarily consecutive; of one psalm (or hymn) only; or even single verses. A refrain is not essential, but when found it is called hypopsalma, ephmnion, hypakoe or tropaion - the name antiphon never being applied to the refrain itself. An archaic musical feature survives in the cadence of the antiphon, in which the last four syllables of a line are applied mechanically, without regard for word accent, to four fixed, stylized melodic elements."(76)

Egon Wellesz believed that antiphonal singing passed from the Jewish Temple and synagogue to the Christian Church.(77)

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Dr. S. Abbas Banisadr does not agree with Egon Wellesz as to the origin of antiphonal singing:

"Antiphonal singing, in which the singers are divided into two groups singing alternately the verses of the psalms (or hymns), come from the Orient and probably from the city of Edosze, situated in ancient

Persia. From there, in the 4th century Ad it passed to Byzantium by way of Syria. This form of singing, which may have been practiced in Persia in the ceremonies of Zoroastrianism, is practiced even today in certain parts of Persia in religious ceremonies. It (antiphonal singing) is practiced in the Sine-zani (ceremonies in which people beat their chests as a sign of mourning) and in the Ta'ziyehs, to which we now turn."(78)

Though this question will never have a final answer, I am inclined to agree with Dr. S. Abbas Banisadr that the Byzantines borrowed antiphonal singing from Zoroastrian Persia rather than from the Jewish Temple and synagogue. As we noted in the chapter on music, every one of the eight Byzantine modes (Greek: Oktoechos, Syriac: Ikhadias) has an exact equivalent among the modes of Classical Hindu music:

BYZANTINE MODES

CLASSICAL HINDU MODES

<i>Echos Kyrios Alpha (First Authentic)</i>	=	<i>Shuddha Sadja Murchhana</i>
<i>Echos Kyrios Beta (Second Authentic)</i>	=	<i>Bhairavi</i>
<i>Echos Kyrios Gamma (Third Authentic)</i>	=	<i>Gaur-Sarang</i>
<i>Echos Kyrios Delta (Fourth Authentic)</i>	=	<i>Matsarikrita Murchhana</i>

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<i>Echos Plagios Alpha (First Plagal)</i>	=	<i>Yavanapuri Todi</i>
<i>Echos Plagios Beta (Second Plagal)</i>	=	<i>Ashvakranta Murchhana</i>
<i>Echos Plagios Barys (Third Plagal)</i>	=	<i>Khammaj</i>
<i>Echos Plagios Delta (Fourth Plagal)</i>	=	<i>Kafi (79)</i>

The above would certainly indicate a Persian rather than a Jewish origin. Antioch, where in eight Byzantine modes were first in use, is in northern Syria, near to both Armenia (as we said before, Zoroastrianism was at one time quite strong in Armenia) and the strongly Persian-influenced areas of eastern Anatolia. The fact that antiphonal singing is practiced in Iran today in the Sine-Zani and in the Ta'ziyeh would also seem to indicate Persian roots. The fact that the musical elements of the Ta'ziyeh have such an ancient pedigree would also seem to indicate that the Ta'ziyeh is far older than the early 19th century.

Music is indeed a vital part of the Ta'ziyeh. As Dr. S. Abbas Banisadr says:

"Song being recognized as the best means to provoke the emotions of the people, the young people chosen to play the various roles of the Ta'ziyeh are selected because they have the most beautiful and flexible voices. There are formed academies for the actors of the Ta'ziyeh, with instructors who are masters in theatrical production and who are also well versed in the art of music, being familiar with the various modes and with various styles of singing. On learning to sing correctly, the students practice singing in the tones appropriate to their roles. Thus, the singers of the Ta'ziyeh attain an elevated rank in their artistic achievements.

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The Shimr-khanan, who play the role of Shimr and other antipathetic characters sing in brutal tones in a manner which is a mixture of song and declamation, devoid of sweetness and grace. On the contrary, those who play the role of sympathetic characters, or Imam-khanan, sing in musical modes appropriate to their roles. For example, the actor who plays the role of Abbas sings melodies based on the musical mode Chahargah, while the actor who plays Hurr sings using

the mode Aragh, Abdullah uses a variant of the mode Rak (for this reason said variant is called Rak Abdullah, and Zainab uses the mode Gabri. When two actors dialogue in song, they both sing in the same mode. For example, if one actor poses a question singing in the mode Shur, the other must respond using the same mode.

The actors who are called Shabih-khan or Ta'ziyeh-khan are divided into two categories. Those who play the roles of the Imams, the Prophet (Muhammad) and their adherents, in other words, good and virtuous people, the chiefs and those who are loved, they are called by the name Mazloun-khan. Those who play the roles of evil people who symbolize cruelty, injustice and the tyrannical government of the Arbas who destroyed the Persian State are called Mokhalef-khan."(80)

The present popularity of medieval liturgical dramas - and, also, in a sense, Celtic music, which is modal, as we have said - leads one to believe that were Iranian Ta'ziyehs to be presented and competently performed in a musical sense that they would have considerable success in America and Europe, both as live performances and as recordings, both audio or CD and video or DVD.

Some years later another 12th century musical-liturgical drama was performed and recorded; we refer to The Play of St. Nicholas, based on the life of St. Nicholas of Myra. Unlike The Play of Daniel, we are uncertain as to the exact procedence of The Play of St. Nicholas, though the only manuscript of it has survived in

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Orleans. Unfortunately, the cassette tapes on which The Play of St. Nicholas is recorded contain no text of the original Latin lyrics, nor an English translation, nor any notes concerning the music.

Obviously, a considerable variety of metres and rhyme schemes are used in the Latin text of The Play of St. Nicholas, as one may note by listening carefully. It is also evident that a variety of musical modes are used in said "Play", though I am unable to identify them.

Musically speaking, The Play of St. Nicholas is overwhelmingly derived from trobador canso and trouvere chanson.

Lovely indeed are many of the trobador and trouvere melodies, both vocal and instrumental, used in The Play of St. Nicholas, while the elements derived from liturgical chants are quite rare. The Play of St. Nicholas is a marvelous and memorable anthology of trobador canso and trouvere chanson and instrumental music, but one misses the lively and catchy folkloric elements found in The Play of Daniel.(81)

It is medieval works such as The Play of Daniel and The Play of St. Nicholas, not the Viennese operetta nor the Spanish zarzuela and most certainly not grand opera which one must think of when trying to imagine a Ta'ziyeh which is sung.

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Some Ta'ziyehs are not exactly sung, but rather "chanted" or "intoned". Try to imagine the "chanting" or "intoning" of the Greek Chorus in many productions of Class Greek plays, and some types of poetic recitation.

Whether actually sung or "chanted", or "intoned", all Ta'ziyehs use modes and melodies derived from the **radif** or "repertory" of Persian art music, or **musiqi-ye-asil**, as we have said above, the rhythm and tempo being largely determined by the metre of the text, while, of course, the music also influences the metre.(82) Of course, this last feature are also found in medieval liturgical dramas.

The above treatment is brief, as to go into more detail would require knowledge of Classical Persian prosody and musicology on the part of the reader.

We have spoken of the music of the Ta'ziyeh, but only in connection with other topics; we now proceed to discuss it in a monographic manner. I wish to refer the reader to Chapter 4, in which I go into great detail concerning modal music in general and Persian music in particular.

Sadegh Homayouni gives an overview of the music of the ta'ziyeh:

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"In ta'ziyeh, both vocal and instyrumental music are used. In instrumental music, mostly reeds/flutes known as ney, kettle drums/timbrels known as naqareh, or wind insruments known as sheypur (bugles/trumpets) and karna (horns) are employed. It is easy to find these instruemts in every part of Iran and it is not so difficult for those who have musical talent to master them. Another reason for the use of these specific instruments is that they do not fall into the category

of musical instruments forbidden for religious reasons. In certain regions, for example, Boushehr, local instruments such as the bagpipes are utilized.

Vocal music, with a wide range of Persian modes and melodies, occupies a very important place in the Ta'ziyeh and is used in a specific manner for each dramatic situation. All the verses of the protagonists must be sung and vary enormously, employing all the Persian (musical) modes, including both sad and joyful melodies. Ta'ziyeh performers begin their training as children and adolescents, with experienced adults and ta'ziyeh directors. They learn how to choose a melody for the lyrics of each separate dramatic event. Sometimes they utilize different **maqams** or modes. Only the antagonists recite their lyrics without music. In the scenes of battle and epic moments, the melodies are uplifting, usually in the modes of **Mahour** or **Chahargah**. The protracted lyrics accompanying farewells, preparations of the heroes for the battlefield or the transportation of the corpses are very sad and are sung in the **Abuata**, **Bayat-e Turk**, **Afshari** or **Dashti** modes. When the subject of the scene is love and affection, the performer sings in the **Bayat-e Esfehan** mode. At the moments of the climax of the tragedy and martyrdom, the performer sings the lyrics in the mode of **Husseini**.

Carla Serena wrote in her book, Hommes et choses en Perse (Men and Things in Persia, Paris, 1883), that:

The song that is sung at the time of separation was so full of sorrow and sounded like the prayer for death. Words sounded like a trumpet and a clear voice was heard in the remotest corners of the Takiyeh and in response the sound of weeping of thousands of people could be heard. The voice was like thunder that had not reached the earth. The singing began softly and gradually became louder, resembling the sound of the south

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wind. It was as if a ship had been caught in a terrible storm in the Atlantic Ocean, in the middle of a dark night [...].

She added in the same section that:

[...] at first the voice was low and gradually increased. The song became so powerful that one's soul would tremble. The most beautiful scene for the musical

performance is when Imam Hussien, in a ta'ziyeh, is informed of the martyrdom of his son or brother and goes to the scene. Near the body [of the martyr] and full of sorrow he puts his head on his knee and hand on his forehead and becomes absorbed in himself. He then takes the head of the martyr in his lap. At this moment the music is solely the sound of a wind instrument, or a ney, and single strikes of a stick on a drum. A terrifying silence overwhelms the space."

I have seen the music of an Iranian Ta'ziyeh transcribed into modern Western musical notation. While my musical knowledge has its limits, I was able to make the following observations:

➤ 1.) The music of this particular Ta'ziyeh is based on the **radif** of classical Persian art music, though I was unable to decipher the specific mode or modes used. Thus, at least in this particular case, the music was derived from art music, though influences from popular or folkloric music cannot be ruled out, and, I suspect, are present.

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➤ 2.) From what has been said above, it is obvious that the music of this particular Ta'ziyeh is modal, **NOT** temperate-harmonic, as even a quick glance at the transcribed music score demonstrates.

➤ 3.) It is also obvious that the music of this particular Ta'ziyeh is highly melismatic and not syllabic; some of the melismas are quite long indeed, though most are of moderate length.(83)

Of course, I have no way of knowing to what extent the above-mentioned Ta'ziyeh is typical of the Iranian Ta'ziyeh in general.

Below is a commentary by Jamshid Malekpour concerning the music of the Ta'ziyeh:

"A Ta'ziyeh play is written entirely in verse, and most parts are sung and/or recited by the actors. Consequently **the place of music in the Ta'ziyeh is as important as it is in the art of (Grand) Opera.** Instrumental music, however, has no significant role in the Ta'ziyeh, and vocal music dominates a performance. The (instrumental) music is played only between the scenes or during the fighting as a sound effect. Of the role of music in the Ta'ziyeh, M. R. Darvishi writes:

'The main part that music plays in the Ta'ziyeh is in the form of vocal music. This music is based on Persian traditional songs and divisions (and sometimes music from the country areas) ... When the musical instruments were banned by high Shi'a clergies, it was the Ta'ziyeh and other religious ritual that served to protect and give voice to our vocal music.' (Note that instrumental music was never [and is not] common in the Catholic Eucharistic

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celebrations, and continues to be banned in most Eastern Orthodox Churches.)

Three forms of singing are used in the Ta'ziyeh. The first type is performed by those actors who play the roles of **Olya** or good characters. These actors are known as **olya-khan**. These actors, who usually have soft, sad

voices. Sing their parts in traditional Iranian musical forms. Traditional Persian music has between 300 and 400 pieces of different moods. These pieces, which are known as **radif**, have been divided into 12 divisions or **dastgah**. These divisions are known as **shur**, **abuata**, **dashti**, **bayat-Turk**, **afshari**, **segah**, **chahargah**, **homayun**, **bayat-e Esfahan**, **nava**, **mahut**, and **rast**. Every division has a different mood suitable for a specific character. For example, an **olya-khan** sings his parts in a particular division. Sometimes a prayer moves from one division to another according to the mood of the scene.

The second form of singing is associated with those actors who play the roles of **Ashgyua** or villains. These actors are known as **ashghya-khan**. In fact, these actors do not sing their parts. For the most part they recite in ringing tones, in a manner that is similar to the way in which story-tellers narrate a combat scene from the Persian epic *Shah-nameh*.

The third and last type involves the recitation or singing religious songs, in both solo and choral form. These songs are performed at the end of a *Ta'ziyeh* performance when all the performers and the spectators join together and, beating their chests, sing the song in harmonious unison.

In the *Ta'ziyeh*, singing is usually unaccompanied. Music is played at various times during the performances, but singing and instrumental music are usually used separately. There are two reasons for this. First, it is done in observance of the ban placed on the use of musical instruments by the senior clergy. The ban is seen as a mark of respect for characters who are regarded as holy. The second reason for this separation of vocal and instrumental music is that it allows for more focus to be placed on the voices. The power and quality of the unaccompanied voice used in the *Ta'ziyeh* is perfectly suited for performance in a huge space, whether indoors or out. Persian instrumental music, on the other hand, is essentially

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chamber music. It was created to be played in small, enclosed spaces and its instruments are not able to adequately accompany the loud singing voices of the *Ta'ziyeh*, which need to fill huge spaces packed with thousands of spectators.

In the early years of the *Ta'ziyeh*, three traditional folk instruments were widely used. These were the drum, the trumpet and the cymbals. During the Qajar dynasty, when the royal court and aristocrats

supported the Ta'ziyeh, more instruments were used, and, in the Takiyeh Dowlat, even the royal music orchestra participated in many productions. Even during the Qajar dynasty, however, the only types of musical instruments used were percussion and wind instruments. String instruments were banned by the religious authorities and consequently have never been used in the Ta'ziyeh.

Since the Islamic Revolution of 1979, in addition to the traditional instruments of drum, trumpet and cymbal, a new instrument has been introduced to the Ta'ziyeh. It is the electronic keyboard. I believe that the introduction of the electronic keyboard has been harmful because it destroys the original ritualistic quality of the music in Ta'ziyeh performances. The use of the microphone by actors in recent years has also been harmful, not only to the music and song, but also to the whole spiritual atmosphere of the performances. Ahmad Jasbi clearly describes the proper music and song in the Ta'ziyeh:

'I believe that 'voice' and 'music' are the most important elements of the Ta'ziyeh. The Ta'ziyeh plays are either in the form of poetry, which must be sung according to the musical divisions, or they are in prose, which, again, must be recited in their special tones. Olya-Khan must know the music well. ... For example, in my opinion, in the Ta'ziyeh of Muslim, Muslim must begin with the division of mahur, then moves on to shur, zabol, and finally, ends up in bakhtiari, which is best for the expression of Muslim's solitude. ... Olya must sing in the divisions

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of panj-gah, rahavi and nava, which are soft and noble. Ashghya must not sing in such divisions at all. They should not be soft and noble in any way. Their voices, like their actions, should be rough and aggressive.'

Some Iranian music scholars, such as M.R. Darvishi, have argued that, unlike the other performance elements of the Ta'ziyeh, the music of the Ta'ziyeh did not

develop sufficiently. However, it is generally accepted that the music of the Ta'ziyeh has been successful in two main areas. First, the drum, trumpet and cymbal create a warlike atmosphere for battle scenes. Second, the music played on the flute creates a passionate atmosphere for farewell scenes."(84)

Here are the comments of Stephen Blum:

"Ta'ziyeh is a performance genre in which the dramatic action motivates people to use their voices in highly expressive ways. What performers do with their voices tells us whether the characters they portray are human or less-than-human. The Imams, their family members and their supporters engage one another in dialogue that combines sung poetry with vocalizing free of linguistic constraints. Through their singing, the continually affirm their humanity. By contrast, the Imams' antagonists are incapable of rising above their basest instincts and hence cannot produce the kinds of sounds that forge bonds of empathy among human beings. At no point does the rhythmic declamation of the antagonists approach the musicality of song. If an unbeliever sings in his first scenes, as do Hor and the Western ambassador who enters pursued by a lion, one knows with certainty that he will be converted before the play ends.

It is a fundamental assumption of Ta'ziyeh and of Iranian performing arts more generally that humans who have been properly socialized are able to communicate through singing, wailing, groaning, sighing and the like, not just through speaking. Singing is often understood as motivated by the pain of separation from a beloved, and in Ta'ziyeh this pain is, above all

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anguish at the prospect of impending separation from family members.

Characters in Iranian stories and dramas perform actions that motivate others to respond with their voices, and, upon hearing such a response, these characters are apt to ask what has prompted a particular vocal outburst. 'Why did you wake up heaving a sigh [ah] and a groan [**feh'an**]?' asks Zainab of her brother, Imam Hussein, on the morning of his martyrdom. He answers that, in a dream, their father and mother have told him that he will soon be joining them in paradise. Later in

the same conversation he urges her to 'refrain from painful wailing [naleh] and groaning [afg'an]!' When asked by his younger brother, Hussein, what support the women and children of his household will have after his martyrdom, Hussein replies 'no support but a sigh [ah] and a groan [feg'an].

Certain of the musical and other vocal responses elicited from characters in the drama are also elicited from members of the audience, who never sit passively all through a performance. Spectators stand and join the performers in singing the refrain of the prayers that conclude some plays. When a protagonist announces that the time has arrived, or will soon arrive, for matam - beating one's breast while singing appropriate verses of mourning - he may invite spectators to join in this ritual. As the protagonists weep and urge one another to weep or to cease their weeping, many spectators are quite visibly and audibly weeping.

The emotional power on which everything depends becomes accessible to performers only through emulation of older practitioners. It is not uncommon for a villager to learn a role from his father and teach it to his son. Members of professional troupes are also likely to have learned from older family members, developing the vocal and gestural mannerisms appropriate to one of the three main types of characters: men of the Imam's party, their women and their opponents.

The expressive power of Ta'ziyeh singing depends on a performer's ability to handle contrasts between precomposed verses in quantitative poetic metres and the vocables that are interjected at the beginning, in the middle or at the end of certain lines. The vocables are symptomatic of the protagonists' overwhelming need to address and respond to one another, which could not

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be fully satisfied by the relative formality of the verses. One important character produces vocables and nothing else: in the final scene of the drama of Hussein, a lion removes spears and arrows from the corpses lying around the performance space and covers them with dirt, all the while uttering the groans and moans that articulate the grief of the assembled spectators.

Beyond this fundamental contrast between verses and interjections, several options for the musical presentation of quantitative verses are available to singers. Each quantitative metre is a distinctive ordering of long and short syllables that should remain

recognizable as the lines are sung or recited. One option, rarely adopted in Ta'ziyeh singing but sometimes heard in the declamation of the opponents, is to assign precisely the same musical duration to every short syllable and to sustain every long syllable for twice that duration. That procedure has the advantage of forcefully impressing the poetic metre on the listeners' ears, but it has the disadvantage of giving exactly the same musical rhythm to each line in a particular metre. Characters who sang in such a predictable manner would not be seen to respond appropriately to their circumstances and desires, which were changing from moment to moment.

Singers of Ta'ziyeh must learn or invent melodies that can accommodate verses in specific metres, such as the hajaz metre that is so common in Persian folk poetry, the mutaqarib metre of Persian epics, and the ramal and mujtass metres that are prominent in classical poetry. Most singers probably acquire a sense of how to coordinate tunes and poetic metres without engaging in sustained discussion of this topic; relatively few are likely to have learned names for tunes or metres. The exceptions are singers trained in the dastgah system of Persian classical music, and they will know the names of certain units within that system and will have internalized some melodic and rhythmic constraints associated with each named entity. In some circumstances, well-informed listeners have appreciated the artistry with which singers employed the resources of classical music, but a Ta'ziyeh performance has been effective at many social levels and far more often villagers have been deeply moved by the untrained voices of their neighbors and family members.

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The sequence of quantitative metres in a particular play may or may not result from careful artistic planning, as it did in Greek tragedy. Some authors of Ta'ziyeh verses are likely to have used whichever metre they felt most comfortable with at a given point in the drama. Yet the genre offers rich opportunities for musical organization on both a large and a small scale. Those who prepare and take part in a performance can arrange verses into sequences that are compelling by virtue of their contrasting metres and topics; these contrasts emerge all the more powerfully as the verses are sung with appropriately contrasting melodies. A singer of Persian classical music must likewise choose a sequence of poems in contrasting metres and present them

with appropriately contrasting melodic units drawn from the repertoire of dastgahs. Iranian and non-Iranian scholars have devoted far more attention to the performance practice of classical music than to that of the Ta'ziyeh.

On a small scale, a character's response to the immediately preceding verses may retain the same poetic metre and melody, or it may strike out in a new direction, changing the metre or the tune or both. A technique of intensification well suited to climactic moments is for one protagonist to sing the first half of the line, to be joined on its final syllable by the first singer who continues with the next line, and so on. Although both singers use the same melody, each phrase is distinguished from its predecessor by subtle melodic and rhythmic changes and by the vocables that are interpolated at certain points in the line.

Interaction among the characters is dramatized through fundamental musical decisions as well as through gesture and movement. Listener-spectators can interpret musical choices as answers to such questions as the following: Should two participants in a dialogue establish a regular rhythm of exchange, in which each in alternation sings the same number of syllables without changing the poetic metre? Should each participant interpolate vocables in the same positions? Does each adhere to the same melodic pattern in a more elaborate manner than his partner does? When a character introduces a new melody, does it retain the same poetic metre and/or the same melodic range and selection of pitches as the preceding melody?

Ta'ziyeh singing cannot rely exclusively on stable pitches, because doing so would conceal its fundamental
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affinity with mourning and lamenting, in which many sounds are anything but stable. The protagonists' responses to their circumstances and to one another are conveyed through their choices of how to ornament and how to connect each sung syllable in a succession, as well as through their choices with respect to the musical treatment of lines in a given poetic metre.

Instruments, while not indispensable to Ta'ziyeh performance, are useful in several respects. Drums and trumpets remind participants that warfare is imminent or in progress. Drumming that interrupts or follows a speech may insist upon the harsh realities of battle while at the same time providing a smooth transition to the next speech or dialogue. One or more trumpets, sometimes supplemented or replaced by saxophone or

clarinet, can announce or echo the singers' melodic lines. The ney, an end-blown flute (or, more exactly, oboe), associated with shepherds, is appropriately used in plays such as *The Children of Muslim*, in which a shepherd gives shelter to the children. While the shepherd in that play often appears with real sheep, the most important animals for Ta'ziyeh performance, like the most important instruments, are those associated with battle: horses and camels. Similarly, the most essential props are swords and shields; others are emblems of particular character types, such as shepherd's ney or the begging bowl of a dervish.

The genius of Ta'ziyeh lies in its flexibility in allowing for, without requiring, elaboration of many kinds, enhancing but never obscuring its basis in vocal lament. The text remains central and must be enunciated in a convincing manner, which for the good characters requires melody. The personalities that are projected through singing and vocalizing must be powerful enough to attract the angels and ancestors who in some plays take part in the action."(85)

The Viennese operetta and the Spanish zarzuela and medieval liturgical dramas, such as the Play of Daniel and the Play of St. Nicholas are not to be judged by the standards of grand opera, nor the reverse. All of the above have their own merits. Only the most closed-minded snob of a grand opera aficionado would deny the

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sublime beauty of the aria "**Wolgalied**" (Song of the Volga) from the Viennese operetta "**Der Zarewitsch**" (The Son of the Tsar) by Franz Lehar, the aria "**Vilja-Lied**" (Song of Vilya, the Witch of the Forest), the Bosnian folk dance **Kolo** and the "Merry Widow Waltz", all three from the Viennese operetta '**Die Lustige Witwe**' or "*The Merry Widow*", also by Franz Lehar. Below we give the first three lines of '**Vilja-Lied**' or "Song of Vilya":

Vilja, O Vilja! Du Waldmagdelein,

**Fass', mich und lass' mich
Dein Trautliebster sein.**

Vilya, O Vilya, you forest maiden,
Take me and let me
Be your truest love.

In the English version of *Die Lustige Witwe* or "The Merry

Widow", the above lines are paraphrased thusly:

Vilya, O Vilya, witch of the wood
I would die for you
Dear, if I could.

The **Vilya** is a creature of Baltic (or Lithuanian) and Slavic (one is almost inclined to say "Indo-European") folklore. **Die Lustige Witwe** or "The Merry Widow" deals with a fictitious kingdom in the Balkans which is usually thought to be based on Montenegro. However, the name which Franz Lehar gave to said fictitious kingdom is **Pontevedro**, which means "the old bridge", forcibly reminding one of one of the most best known landmarks of Bosnia, the famous "bridge over the Drina" in Mostar, in Bosnia,

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made famous by the novel The Bridge on the Drina by Ivo Andric. Also, the folk dance called the **Kolo**, is from Bosnia, not Montenegro. Franz Lehar said that the tune of the **Vilja-Lied** is based on "an old Pontevedran folk tune"; there is no such place in the Balkans as "Pontevedro": said tune is Bosnian, not Montenegrin. Lehar was far more familiar with Bosnia than he was with Montenegro, because Bosnia belonged to the Habsburg or Austro-Hungarian Empire, which Montenegro did not. Indeed, the

Bosnian Muslims or **Bosniaks** (Catholic Bosnians were considered to be Croats, while Eastern Orthodox Bosnians were considered to be Serbs) were among the most loyal subjects of the Habsburg Empire, and perhaps its finest soldiers.

The above is also true of certain passages from The Play of Daniel and the Play of St. Nicholas; only the most closed minded snob of an aficionado of grand opera would deny their merits. Just so, any aficionado of the Viennese operetta, the Spanish **Zarzuela** and the medieval liturgical drama (whoever enjoys one of the above will enjoy all) will also appreciate the "Polovetsian Dances" and other passages from the opera "Prince Igor" by Alexander Borodin, the "Song of India" and other passages from the opera "Sadko" and all of the opera "May Night" both by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, many arias and choruses from the opera "Ruslan and Lyudmila" by Mikhail Glinka, for example, "Finn's ballad", the "Persian choruses" and "Oriental dances", many

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passages from Pietro Mascagni's opera "Cavalleria Rusticana", many passages from the opera "Rusalka" by Antonin Dvorak and many passages from "The Bartered Bride" by Bedrich Smetana, many passages from the opera "The Pearl Fishers" by Georges Bizet, particularly those passages in which one hears the hauntingly beautiful theme which runs through said opera. The above are only a few examples.

Obviously, the Ta'ziyeh is not to be judged by the standards of modern European theatre, as The Play of Daniel, the Play of St. Nicholas, the Viennes operatta and the Spanish Zarzuela are not to be judged by the standards of grand opera. There is no condescension, no snobbery and most certainly no relativism here: The Play of Daniel and The Play of St. Nicholas have their own merit and appeal; so does the Ta'ziyeh, at least at its best. As has been said of the poetry of the Ta'ziyeh:

"It is simple but beautiful, flowing, eloquent and charming." (86)

Once again, when judging the Ta'ziyeh, one must not think in the contemporary European sense, but rather one must think of Passion Plays in Spanish, Italian, Bavarian, Austrian or Greek villages, and of medieval mystery, morality and miracle plays: one must not think of grand opera nor the Viennese operetta nor the

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Spanish zarzuela, but of The Play of Daniel and The Play of St. Nicholas which have their own very great merits and which many people prefer to grand opera or the Viennese operetta.

From what has been said above, once again I am convinced that were a Ta'ziyeh to be competently performed by trained vocalists and musicians, that it would be successful in the West. This, in turn, would inspire interest in and appreciation for Iranian

culture and in Shi'ism, among people who would otherwise ignore these things. The current popularity of the medieval liturgical dramas, which, musically at least so closely resemble the Ta'ziyeh, is proof of this. The music of the medieval liturgical dramas, like that of the Ta'ziyeh, is modal, using a great variety of modes, though in this case they are liturgical modes and Celtic modes rather than Persian modes; as is true of the medieval liturgical dramas, the tunes of the Ta'ziyeh are often, or usually, highly melismatic rather than syllabic.

A fine tribute to the Ta'ziyeh at its best and a concise record of its merits is given by Peter J. Chelkowski:

"The actor-spectator confrontation in Ta'ziyeh and its archetypal themes induce self-analysis in all who participate and create in them an inner harmony. Ta'ziyeh is such a personal and serious drama that it captures the very essence of thought and emotions embracing life, death, the Supreme Being and fellow men. To students of the history of theatre and to those who are engaged in experimental theatre, the Ta'ziyeh holds the promise of stimulating new theatrical ideas and experiences.(87)

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The Ta'ziyehs, though always or almost always written by learned men, are nonetheless a manifestation of popular piety. It is common among half-educated, sophomoric snobs and those infected with Calvinism or Wahhabism to despise popular piety. However, my years in Spain and India taught me a healthy respect for popular piety, something which Pope John Paul II and all or nearly all Iranian ayatollahs, 'alims and mullahs know very well. I remember

one Anglo-Saxon tourist who looked down his nose at popular Spanish Catholic piety, saying:

"Anyone knows that Jesus spoke English and not Spanish".

In the "Ta'ziyeh of the Bird", Imam Ali Zain al-Abidin, son of Imam Hussein and Shahr Banu, says:

"I know that we shall not be reunited until the Day of Resurrection, O father! It is said that Abbas, my faithful uncle, has forgotten me. God is not pleased, for Zainab is plunged into torment for seeing me completely abandoned, O father! I am ill and desperate, and my sick heart is weak. Much compassion I have for you, O father."(88)

Before leaving the Iranian Ta'ziyeh, we shall give three complete examples.

The Ta'ziyeh of the Passion of Imam Hussein is anonymous, and its date is unknown, though it is certainly much earlier than 1878, when Alexandre Chodzko published a French translation of it in Paris. The text gives no clue as to its date. A perusal of the Persian text shows that the rhyme scheme which overwhelmingly

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predominates in the ta'ziyeh mentioned above is the **masnavi**, though the **ghazal** also appears at times. The length of the lines and therefore the metre varies a great deal. I cannot find any indication as to the musical modes (**dastgah**) used, nor any indications concerning the **mise en scene**.

TA'ZIYEH OF THE PASSION OF IMAM HUSSEIN

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Imam Hussein.

Zainab - his sister.

Umm Kulthum - his sister.

Shahr Banu - Persian Princess, his wife.

Sakina - his daughter.

Ali Zain al-Abidin - his son.

Abdullah - his nephew.

Fatima - his mother.

Zaafar- King of the Djinns.

The Angel Gabriel.

The Angel Fotros (Petrus, St. Peter).

Ibn Saad - Chief of the Army of Yezid, Caliph of Damascus.

Shimr - Officer of the Army of Yezid.

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Nasrani and Senan - Soldiers.

Shimr:

Listen to me, dear Ibn Saad! Of all the Family of the Blanket (Muhammad, Fatima, Ali ibn Abi Talib, Hasan and Hussein), there only remains Hussein, son of Ali. All the others have confessed their faith and are dead, slain by the sword or by the dagger. The line is maintained only by him who is called the "Light of the Eyes of the Two Worlds". He will succumb to the slashes of our sabers and the thrusts of our lances; that all those of his house and his children be made captives; may all the doves of his harem (his wife and female relatives) be seized! Later, filled with joy, we will present them to Obeid (brother of the governor of Iraq)

and he will rejoice on learning of the death of the son of Fatima.

Ibn Saad:

What is it that you said, accursed and good-for-nothing wretch? How could I consent to the murder of Hussein? Have we not done enough? And will I not be left with a great burden of sin for which I must ask pardon on the Day of Judgement? Do we dare to commit abominations such as this? Was it not sufficient that Ali was martyred, that Ali Akbar is fallen and that the hands of Qasim are severed from his arms and stained red with his blood? Because of the crimes which you have committed, the edifice of religion is in peril of falling into ruins. And you think of slaying Hussein, son of Ali? What has led you to commit such evil, that all his family is left abandoned in such dire affliction?

Shimr:

You speak well, my brave Ibn Saad. Should you decide not to slay Hussein, then you will renounce your command, return to Kufa, and I see that Obeid will replace you with another as head of the troops.

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Ibn Saad:

May your tongue be cut out, o mangy cur dog! O tyrant, do you dare to pronounce such words! Recite to me the verse of the Qur'an which authorizes you to slay Hussein. Did God order us to make war on Hussein? On the contrary, is not Hussein the light of the House of the Prophet? Is not Hussein the rose bush of the garden of Muhammad? Was not Fatima, the best of women, his mother? Did not the Angel Gabriel himself groom and curry comb his horses? If we obey the orders of Obeid ibn Ziad, we renounce our part of Paradise. Truly, if you do this, you sacrifice religion for the sake of your hatred. No! Much better to make peace with Hussein, o impudent and impious man. Cease this abominable war, let Hussein return to Medina, without being hindered.

Shimr:

Should Hussein not fall, pierced by lance and sword, should Zainab and Kulthum not lie at my feet as captives; should I not make the blood of Hussein to flow in the dust, my eyes and my heart will not be sated with death and slaughter.

Ibn Saad:

Recall also that the Prophet loved to embrace Hussein. Would you have us transgress the laws of our religion and by lacerating the head of Hussein? Would you have us make captives of the sisters of Hussein? Would you renounce any intercession which the mother of Hussein might grant us on the Day of Judgement?

Shimr:

Well! It was I who killed the son of the Prince of Men and Djinns. I, who never had the slightest feeling of respect for the mother of Hussein, nor to the women of the harem of Hussein? I go to kill Hussein, for only the death of Hussein may calm the agitation of my heart.

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Zainab:

My brother Hussein sleeps, o perverse infidel! I fear that you will wake him, more softly, more softly! He sleeps, o perverse infidel. For the Prophet of the East and the West, more softly, more softly!

Shimr:

I respect you, o daughter of the Prophet of God. And say to Hussein the son of Ali: "O my master, may you dream of death." Tell him that this is not the moment for sleep. As for you, I will take you to Damascus, and you shall be so maltreated that those who pass by will lament because of your ill fortune.

Zainab:

He sleeps, o impudent one! The son of Ali al-Mortezi sleeps. Do not shout so loudly, for love of God, more softly, more softly. I leave it to you to tell, o accursed one, your message. Let me wake him. more softly, more softly. (To Imam Hussein) O brother, Shimr has come. I beg you to awaken! Now my vision is darkened by the idea of death. Awake! You sleep with great calm, but the time is coming when I shall be a captive, O brother, see how I am maltreated. Awake! The enemy army is here, o king without knights and without soldiers! I am surrounded by the enemy. O brother, awake!

Imam Hussein:

I had a dream. I was in a verdant prairie, but you interrupted the dream. There were houris and a park and a castle, but you did not allow the dream to finish. On one side was my grandfather, the best of men, and on the other side was my father, Ali-Mortezi, but you interrupted the dream. My mother, dressed in black, was there weeping; she sang a funeral dirge for the death of a beloved person, but you did not allow the dream to finish. My grandfather said: "Behold that Hussein will go to his death and that zainab will be led away in captivity, but you interrupted the dream.

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Zainab:

You sleep, o my brother, and, in a little while Shimr will come to find me and to say: "I will take Zainab to Damascus, in spite of her cries and weeping." O! I am one of destiny's unfortunates. How I dread, dear brother, to be led away and suffer the wordt.

Imam Hussein (to himself):

O fortune! The palm trees of Religion are fallen under the blows of the impious! Aew you not satisfied? Wherever I turn, I see no friend to come to my aid. I understand the laments of the unfortunates tormented by thirst. And how hard is it for me to think of my sister led away in captivity? This is something which requires all my strength and courage. And my poor Sakina, will I

part from her in such a way? O! On a river of drops of blood will I enter the groves of Paradise.

Zainab:

If I could die for you, o you who is the light of my eyes now filled with tears! Thus you understand my lamentations, my soul is torn in two. Your words exude the bitter perfume of separation. My heart weeps drops of blood to hear you speak thus. May the shadow of your benevolence fall upon my head, o Ali, the Friend of God, my illustrious father.

Imam Hussein:

The moment fixed by destiny has arrived. It is time for us to part, o sister. You must give my regards to our mother. I will die confessing my faith, when I fall under the blows of traitors. Do not cease for one moment to watch over my Sakina. And if, should it please God, a tyrant extends his hand over my poor child, I hope that you lose all patience and address bitter complaints to my father and my grandfather, whom you shall see in Paradise.

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Zainab:

Do not speak thus, you for whom I would give my life, may God not permit it! Heaven would not permit such an injustice to be inflicted on the family of the Prophet. But if you should lose your life, you will not wait long for the death of Zainab, because your mother did not bring me into this world to suffer and weep.

Sakina:

Dear father, find me a drop of water! My heart lies on my chest. Go to find me a drop of water, dear father, because my soul, the poor bird, tormented by thirst, is on my lips, ready to fly away. Put yourself in the place in which your daughter, your child, finds

herself, at the end of her strength. I will do anything that you ask. But I do not possess the remedy for my pain.

Imam Hussein:

Little daughter, my vexation is very great, as you lament the decrees of destiny. What would I not do for love of yur tear-filled eyes? Arise and do not continue yur complaints which live within the wounds of my heart. If yu desire anything, say so. Why do not ask anything of your father?

Sakina:

What I desire is a little water. Father dear, find it for me, find it for me! Father, my throat is burning with thirst. Father, give me water. That is a good work, for which God will reward you.

Imam Hussein (to Zainab):

My poor sister, go and bring me my weapons. It is time that I prepare to combat the miscreants. It will be little time until I am high above at Heaven's gate, because I must put a little water on the fire which devours my little children.

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Zainab:

O my dear and unfortunate brother! How can I, without you, find the strength to endure living? When you return to yur sisters, tell me. Without you, it is not possible to live in this world. O king, do not depart for the battle field. I fear that you will be martyred by our enemies.

Imam Hussein:

O my poor sister, in times such as these, with your love for me, how can you give such counsel? That army of traitors will not let me escape. This I know. You will be taken captive and you will mourn for me. The moment is near when you will see me fallen under a dagger. From a distance, you will cry: "Hussein,

Hussein", but cannot take your regrets to the fallen. In the future, watch over Sakina, defend her from adversity. Do not let her tear her hair in Despair! Let no one harm my little children.

Zainab:

O God! May my hands be severed from my arms! May my soul be taken from my body! All of you, people of the House of the Prophet, form a circle around the torch of Ali. And I repeat, return, o brother who is more precious to me than my own heart's blood, return my hands to my arms.

Imam Hussein:

O Ali! Protect us, o Ali! You are faithful to your promise, o Ali. Your family, o Ali, is abandoned defenseless to the enemy, free us from this terrible anguish.

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Zainab:

O father, invincible lion (haidar), come! Heir of the miraculous breath of the Prophet, come! Our situation is desperate. If you would have pity upon us, now is the time to intervene.

Imam Hussein (to the people of his harem):

O wretched people, I am not moved by your cries! I go to mount a horse and go in search of traitors. Of you I ask, my sister, a drink of water for little Sakina, who suffers so. (to the people of Ibn Saad) "O miserable people with no shame! Call for me Ibn Saad, tell him to come alone!

A soldier of the army of Ibn Saad:

Come, o Ibn Saad, for Hussein wishes a parley. He is there, all alone, on the battle field.

Ibn Saad:

Greetings, light of the eyes of Fatima! May I serve as your ransom, o ornament of the Throne of God. What do you wish? Tell me, and I will accomplish without delay that which is your will.

Imam Hussein:

Behold, accursed traitor! All the family of Fatima is there, devoured by thirst, and I, Hussein, whom the Prophet loved to carry on his shoulders, I am reduced to drinking, in place of water, the blood which flows from my eyes. In this country of misery, there is abundant water for the wild beasts and for the birds; but my women die of thirst. All the water of the world was given as dowry to our mother. Why do you deny us the heritage of Fatima? Give a little water to the family of the Prophet, because their hearts are seared and their lips are parched.

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Ibn Saad:

You are right. Yezid sent me an order that I must not give to drink nor to eat to the children of Mustapha (Muhammad). It is impossible for me to give you a drop of water. Thus, I am forced to abandon Your Holiness.

Imam Hussein:

O sky, watch well your movement! Do you not weep as I do when you hear the lamentations of the poor exiles and their children? You must be ashamed for the streams of water which you released for Fatima. Have pity on the luckless orphans of Fatima. You neither help nor give support, and in regards to me, you have strayed and led me to a place full of snares. I am all alone in the face of an army of enemies. I cannot find, in this

world of men and djinns, a being who believes in God who will give me aid. Surely, my grandfather will give you a good recompense on the Day of Judgement.

Zaafar:

Stranger, tormented by thirst in these plains of Karbala, greetings! Prisoner of the army of perdition, greetings! In such a state I find you! What, your eyes are filled with tears? Why are the friends of God martyred by tyrants? Why was our army defeated? Why do the bodies of your men writhe in their own blood?

Imam Hussein:

Who are you, you who greet us, we who are abandoned by all others, you who honor the family of Muhammad? You are not part of that band, that is evident. The perfume of fidelity emanates from your hair.

(4413)

Zaafar:

I will serve as your ransom, o prince of the kingdom of misfortune. I am your servant. I belong to the people of the djinns. When your noble father was taken from our country at the hands of his enemies, he put me at the head of a troop of djinns, and afterwards we became completely submissive to his will. When the djinns told me of your misfortune, I wished to come to your aid. May my head serve as your ransom! The entire army of the djinns is totally under your command, o king. Your orders are my orders here in the plain of Karbala. I come to help. I have decided to sacrifice myself for your cause. Please, let me go to the holy war and let my head be your ransom! Let me accomplish my heart's desire.

Imam Hussein:

Your are welcome, well-favored Zaafar! You are truly a friend of the family of the Prophet, but you cannot, o well-wisher, take part in our struggle, because all of you, the djinns, you are invisible to the eyes of men. The traitors cannot see you when you fight against them. This would be an unfair combat, and those who die for the Friend must not resort to such tactics.

Zaafar:

O king of men and djinns, when you struggle against evil doers such as they, why must you be so scrupulous? You are a stranger in this land, there is no one to aid you, and these worthless people intend for you to die. Ah well! To please you, we will take on human form, and thus sacrifice ourselves for you, o prince, and we will fight to the death, so that on the Day of Judgement your grandfather will pardon our sins.

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Imam Hussein:

The God of the two worlds is content with you; since you have come at my call, He will aid you in turn. May God give you the reward which you have earned: on the Day of Resurrection the fires of Hell will not touch you. For my part, my heart is wounded by the turmoil of this world; my life is nearing its end. Return to your country and let me follow the path which leads to my Friend.

Zaafar:

O God, you know that I have come to take part in the Holy War, but the Imam of the Century did not give me the permission that I asked. (To Hussein): O King, may I see you again some day. Since you have so ordered, I will leave. May God watch over you! (To the djinns): O djinns, weep for Hussein the persecuted, distant as he is from his grandfather and his father, wandering in

this plain filled with hate. We come with the desire to help. Our help was rejected. We depart, without having completed our mission.

Imam Hussein (in prayer):

O God, mighty and merciful, master of Divine Grace, see the state to which I am reduced, with the enemy on all sides. Consider, God unique and merciful, that I honor my commitments in Karbala with complete fidelity. Of Divine Grace, o Supreme Judge, you will be faithful to your promise on the Day of judgement. O Creator, benevolent master, for the price of my blood, pardon the people of my grandfather on the Day of Judgement.

Shimr:

O Hussein what have you come to accomplish in this plain? You have chosen to die, o you, the beloved child of the two worlds. Heed me, renounce the struggle, and you may tranquilly retire to any province you choose. But if you refuse to submit, o master, I have the duty to order the attack.

(4415)

Imam Hussein:

Tell me, Shimr, tell the grandson of Muhammad why you have sworn obedience to an accursed infidel? No, do not demand that I recognize the authority of Yezid. Only give me a little time, o villain, that I may bid farewell to the people of the House of Purity. Then I shall return to the battle field, and I will give you my head and my soul, for love of my Friend.

Shimr:

So be it. Go, light of the eyes of men and djinns, bid farewell to your family and weep well together! Because, after that, they will see you no more until the Day of Judgement.

Imam Hussein:

Farewell, farewell, farewell, farewell, farewell, o Family of the Prophet, farewell! Dear women suffering a

burning thirst, faces like the moon, stars which shine in the zodiac of mourning! The time has come, eyes are filled with tears, I cannot free your hearts from pain and anguish. O unfortunate ones, don't veil the veils of mourning, for you shall soon be weeping! But my greatest wish, o Zainab, is that you look after Sakina.

Zainab:

Dear brother, as Zainab wishes to serve as your ransom, serve as balm for the eyes filled with tears! What do you intend to do? O, that I might suffer in your place! What project do you propose, o spirit of my soul?

(4416)

Imam Hussein:

O you who is the living image of my mother, come, come see that my orphans are nurtured. The day of reunion is passed, the evening of separation has come. The sky imposes the pain that causes all loving souls to part from their friends. It is my turn to give my life, o my sister; put your chaste mourning veils over your heads, prepare to depart in captivity; all must put the scarf of mourning upon your shoulders, because today I will be slain on the battle field and my name shall be inscribed in the book of martyrs.

Zainab:

I wish to serve as balm for your eyes that weep precious stones, o you who drowns in affliction. If, should God will, you disappear, what will Zainab do? When you are no more, who will share our pain? When we are in mourning for you, who will care for us? My feeble body cannot support all the sadness. What will become of us in this plain, poor women, when all of the men of the family are dead?

Imam Hussein:

O my sister, exiled in the desert of Karbala, you are the living image of my mother to we who are abandoned by all. All those of our House are soon to leave in haste for Paradise; the moment is coming when I must confess my faith. Hear my last request, o you who have suffered so much, hear with all your soul, my sister beyond reproach. That all the women put on their heads the veil that is the guardian of chastity; that a man who is a stranger to the family may not see their faces. God grant that after my death, no one will beat upon the heads of my orphans, above all that of His Excellence Zain al-Abidin who is ill; let me weep in misfortune and burn with thirst. Do not cease to look after Sakina. Let no one cause harm to her who filled my heart with such joy!

(4417)

Zainab:

I am your ransom, my brother. Come. For God's sake, do not go to confront the shameless Kufans. Qasim, Abbas and Ali Akbar, are they not fallen on the plain of Karbala with their heads broken and slashed? What do you hope to achieve in that field of carnage? Have you not borne on your shoulders the corpses of many martyrs? I do not have the strength, I cry to God as my witness, to support the spectacle of your corpse lying on the plain.

Imam Hussein:

Did I not promise to the One and Only Creator, that, for love of my Friend, I would give my life without regret? Did I not make a vow to the Creator, master of Divine Grace, and my grandfather, did he not swear, at the same time as myself that I would sacrifice my life on the plain of Karbala, and thus achieve the redemption of all sinners on the Day of Judgement?

Zainab:

Dear brother, tell me, why must I be resigned to this? God grant that I never see your corpse writhing in the sun, covered all over with blood. How could I support such a spectacle? Who could grant a sister the courage to see the corpse of her brother bathed in blood?

Imam Hussein:

Was not your father murdered before your eyes? You are well resigned to the death of your mother! Do not despair! Were you not consoled to the death of Hasan? Do not whimper at the idea that I go to my death, and, when I am no more, see the care of the orphans.

(4418)

Zainab:

O dear brother, when my father departed this life, Hasan took his place as head of the family. When Hasan was poisoned, you took his place. But after you, dear brother, who will be our protector? What will I do? Tell me! To whom will I turn when you are no more?

Imam Hussein:

O my sister, how unfortunate you are! When I am dead, divine mercy will extend over your head its divine protective shadow. It is to His Excellence Zain al-Abidin that you must serve as mother, o you, the living image of Fatima, let me go, and remember that on your life depends the life of Sakina, my daughter.

Zainab:

O king without an army, abandoned by all, your sighs are like a fire which sears my soul, and your laments make me lose my reason. On the one hand, the pure bodies of Qasim and Akbar are cut into a thousand pieces; on the other hand, the lamentations of the children soar from the earth and rise to the blue sky. O

God, my soul is on my lips, ready to begin its flight.
Hark to the appeal which I address to you from the pit
of my misery!

Imam Hussein:

My poor sister! Ease your mind! Because, seeing you
in such a state makes my eyes run with streams of blood.
Ease your mind! Alas, this is but the beginning of your
trials and tribulations. This is the first suffering and
the first pain. Are you not destined to be led away in
captivity? The army of hatred, will it not lay hands
upon you? Will you not be borne to Damascus . Or will
you go, head covered, to mingle with the crowds?

(4419)

Zainab:

Dear child of Fatima! Hussein, my beloved brother!
If only your sister could be sacrificed in your place!
Do not think, o prince, that I could live in such a
manner! I will not cease to beat my head and chest over
your coffin. With God as my witness, such will be my
weeping that the spectacle of my mourning will move the
very stars and planets from their courses!

Imam Hussein:

Weep, my poor sister, and sigh. Your suffering
moves me. But, how can I allow those miscreants to
escape? They are so cruel, so intent on my death, that
it has been some time since souls have animated their
bodies.

Kulthum:

O brother, whom Kulthum love as she loves her own
life! I will behold no more the flowery garden of your
cheek. Your lamentations sear my heart; your sighs
ravage my soul like a devouring flame. Is it not
sufficient that we weep for Abbas, Qasim and Akbar? Is
it not enough that we will weep until the end of our

days? Do not expose yourself to the blows of men with hard hearts, because I greatly fear that you will succumb.

Imam Hussein:

O my poor sister, Kulthum, you who are destined to be harshly treated, how can I respond, alas. When they have martyred me, what humiliations will those villains not inflict upon the family of the Prophet? You will be forced to go from door to door, begging your bread and to wander, head covered, from village to village. But do not slash your face, my dear sister, but take courage and be patient.

(4420)

Shahr Banu:

O you, living image of the Lion of God (Ali), may I be your ransom! Hussein, whose liver is rent by thirst, light of the eyes of Fatima! It is I, your servant, the ill-treated Shahr Banu. Torn from my native country, abandoned by all, who was my defender, no one but you! What will I do, alas, on this earth if you suffer so, surrounded as I am by the army of infidels, o king of pious men?

Imam Hussein:

Come to me, my poor Shahr Banu, come to me, o my unfortunate companion. My heart burns when I think of your solitude. Have patience and weep no more, because one day the God of the Universe will greatly ease your suffering.

Shahr Banu:

O prince without an army, bright flower of the garden of Ali, the Friend of God, the Victorious! Think of the family of the House of the Prophet; they are all the small children of the Messenger of God. Thus, no one among the tyrants had the audacity to do evil. But I, who am a stranger, I fear all, o king of pious men!

Imam Hussein:

O my faithful friend, you the companion of my youth, how great is your misfortune! Alas, I will fall unhorsed on the plain and my martyred corpse turn red as a rose. My courser, deprived of his knight, his body stained with blood, he will spill rivers of tears for the injustice of fortune and will give throat to neighs as a sign of mourning. He will return to camp and will pause in front of the tents. Then, my faithful friend, mount him and and put the bridle on his neck. You will go with God as your guide, and, in this way you will escape the misery of captivity.

(4421)

Sakina (to Shahr Banu):

Mother, my soul is escaping from my body. Why are you beating your breast and why are you weeping?

Shahr Banu:

O my Sakina, may my tongue be cut out! Know that the King of Martyrs, the joy of my heart, your father, the son of the Lion of God, prepares to go to fight or to die. He bids the last farewells to his family, because nothing can hold him, such is his desire to be united with his God.

Sakina:

It is here, o God, that I will lose my father. Alas, how can I live henceforth? Because, my God, is not my last day come? Where will I go when I need him? When I am filled with gloom, who will come to me when I cry for my father? Here me, o king, redeemer of the believers, for love of God, take me with you!

Imam Hussein:

Weep no more, my dear! You are yet small and the journey which I begin is long and painful. It is a mystery which you cannot comprehend. Return to the camp; you have not the strength to support the fatigues of the journey. Zainab will take good care of you.

Sakina:

Dear father, how can I let you depart for such cruel combat? While I have a breath in my body, do not ask, o dear father, that I cease to try to persuade you to remain.

(4422)

Imam Hussein:

O dear child whose voice is sweet, you are more dear to me than life itself. Bird whose wings are the boughs of the rose bush of my soul, it is God in whom I confide. Do not lament so; it is a Friend who will save you, and I commit you to His hands.

Sakina:

O my dear father, do you not see that I will be an orphan? What will become of me without you? Dear father, in the name of your grandfather the Prophet, come to me I beseech you, because I can take no more.

Imam Hussein:

As I have said, my little daughter, you will fall into the hands of the miscreants. Abandoned as you will be you will say: "O God, o God". Among all the men that you encounter, you will search in vain among them for a father. They will bruise your delicate cheeks and will inflict a thousand torments upon you.

Sakina:

The idea that you will leave me makes me fear that you are going to die. See, father, they come to take me away in captivity. This drop of blood which is my heart is drained by suffering. Father dear, have pity! Your departure will surely be my death.

Imam Hussein:

That is true, you have great misfortune, and I understand your tears. But open your eyes and behold me one last time. Then, when I have gone, you may weep as much as you wish.

(4423)

Zain al-Abidin:

When you are dead, I will not have a person in the world to share my troubles. Why do you not send me to war? As you know, I will not flee from adversity.

Imam Hussein:

Dear son, it is you who must take my place at the head of the Assembly of the Faithful. After me, it is you who will be the leader of prayer for the whole world. How can I allow you to run the risks of combat? Besides, who will remain to defend the women and children? It is you who must watch over the orphans, you the companion of Fatima and protector of my Sakina.

Zain al-Abidin:

O father, light of the eyes of the Prophet, am I more precious than Ali Akbar, or am I less worthy to be sacrificed? Without doubt, I am weak at the moment, but cannot I offer myself in the sacrifice of the fatted lambs?

Imam Hussein:

O my poor Zain al-Abidin! I place great hopes upon your head! Heaven breaks upon our dhow upon the ocean of evil, you will be cast upon the shore where your grief will enfold you. Only you will survive the misfortunes, and will insure the perpetuity of our lineage. After me, it is you who will be the flower of the garden of the Imams, an imperishable flower.

Zain al-Abidin:

O you, the Chosen One of God, do not speak thus! Can I live in this world without your support? No! Let me die like the other martyrs!

(4424)

Imam Hussein (to Kulthum):

O my poor sister, Kulthum, you are destined to be pursued by hatred. Watch over our unfortunate Zain al-Abidin. He is the only man in the family who will survive. If he dies, it will be the height of misfortune.

Kulthum:

O you who is sick with fever! It is not that for you that the war against the infidels is forbidden. Come into the tent. But rather it is your task to take into your hands the leadership of our House and of all our people, in the place of your father.

Zain al-Abidin:

My dear aunt, leave me in peace! I wish to sacrifice myself for my father, Hussein, the illustrious Imam. Let me perish in his place, let me fall under the daggers of those mangy pariah dogs.

Kulthum:

*Do you go, sick as you are, to strike strong blows?
Your body is consumed by fever. Come, because the long
journey will exhaust you.*

Zain al-Abidin:

*My life is a small thing! Let me sacrifice myself
for my father. O, what torture it is to hear you speak
such things, my aunt.*

Sakina:

*When our father is gone, we will have only you to
protect us. Come, for God's sake, renounce combat. Do
not abandon us, have pity upon us.*

(4425)

Zain al-Abidin:

*O my sweet sister, how can you remain insensible to
the condition of our father? He is alone, the enemy
lurks all around us, and should I not attempt to repel
those cur dogs? Let me sacrifice myself for you, I beg you.*

Imam Hussein:

*What do you say, my dear child? It is I who must be
sacrificed. After me, you will be the Imam of the
Worlds. Without an Imam, the world will fall into ruin.
Come, you must remain with the captives. It is you who
must be responsible for the defense of these poor
exiles.*

Zain al-Abidin:

*O light of the eyes of the Prophet! What can I do
alone? O loving father, from who will I beg assistance
when you are no more?*

Imam Hussein:

*When I am no more, take good care of Sakina. See
that she comes to no harm. If her foot is pricked by*

a single thorn, my heart shall suffer one hundred stab wounds.

Zain al-Abidin:

O God of the Universe, henceforth of what importance is my life, and how can you abandon me to despair?

Imam Hussein:

O Zainab, you whose heart is broken, victim of the treachery of fate! Return to camp and get me a shroud, that I may be clothed, o my sister without reproach.

(4426)

Zainab:

Dear brother, o king of religion, your words sear my soul! O Zephyr, blowing across the desert, waft to Najaf and say to Ali, my father, the Lion of God, that he must at this moment come to this evil plain and that he give a blessing to his son Hussein.

Imam Hussein:

Great God! For the Prophet, have pity on the unfortunates. Be their defense against the brigands without faith. Hearken to my prayer, o God of the Two Worlds.

Zainab:

O dear brother, o king in exile and without support! I would kiss your cheeks bathed in light; I would kiss your perfumed body. Allow me to contemplate your noble presence and place my life at your feet,

Imam Hussein:

O light of my eyes, my unfortunate sister! I can no more be your companion nor support, I can no more be your brother after today. You are my support in lieu of my brother, you are my Qasim and my Akbar. Go and bring my faithful courser.

Zainab:

O you who makes the streams to flow, continue to deliver powerful blows to your resonant chest! It is fitting to beat the drum when the king mounts his horse. Where is the standard bearer, where is he who carries the banner, o prince, my master? Where is your army, where are your troops, my lord? Or is it that you must carry the standard on your own shoulders?

(4427)

Imam Hussein:

It is you, o my standard bearer, you who are chosen among all men. Is it you, my brother the Holy Abbas? But you have been martyred and I now have no standard bearer. Come for one instant and see my destitution. Come and take in your hands the magnificent standard, because I am determined to have the heads of those miscreants.

Zainab:

O unfortunate exiles, be considerate of me, go to the spot where Abbas lies martyred. There you will find where the Holy Abbas has fallen, he who suffered so much. Greet him on my part and say to him that his sister Zainab sends this message: "Dear brother, assemble all the martyrs, bring them before my brother Hussein and, to do him honor, rank them some on the right, some on the left, because the king who sits on the throne of the world is leaving and you, Abbas, take the standard in your hand. Assemble all the martyrs and be quick."

Imam Hussein:

Cease your sighing, o my sister, for the love of God! (He prays): O God of the universe, You to Whom all secrets are known, observe the miserable state to which I have been reduced. My situation is truly intolerable, O God! See that Zainab does not dealy in bringing my noble horse! (To Zainab): Come, hold my stirrup, o my poor Zainab. It is well that I depart, since no one comes to my assistance.

Zainab:

O God, have pity upon our misery. Hussein, my brother, there is no one for whom I would rather hold the stirrup. Ah well, it is I whom you have chosen, and you make me glorius. Mount, o moon of the sky of nobility, mount, and may the evil eye not touch the sun of your beauty.

(4428)

The Angel Gabriel:

O Hussein, you for whom one hundred Gabriels would be happy to sacrifice themselves! I and all the Angels of Paradise, under the command of God our Master, we have left the Sublime Throne and descended to the plain of Karbala to help you to mount your horse., o king of kings of religion. Come, Michael and Israfael, hold the stirrup of Hussein. Come, o light of the eyes of the Prophet, bestride your noble courser; let me take you by the arms, and with all your soul follow the way of martyrdom. The houris will show you the way, and you will have in your hand a Cup of Crystal (The Holy Grail?) which will provide you with pure water.

Imam Hussein:

O Gabriel, what you say to me is marked with the benevolence of God and fills my heart with joy. The Creator will reward you handsomely. Go, return without delay to the court of our Master and say: "Hussein the son of Ali, told me to say: O Judge, consider that, if it pleases You, I am committed with all my soul to the way of martyrdom. On this miserable earth, because of my lovr for You, I offer my neck to the blows of the impudent Shimr. If it be Your will, I bow to You, I am in your power. For the price of my blood, O Creator,

merciful master, pardon the sins of the people of my grandfather on the Day of Resurrection.

The Angel Gabriel:

You have the power to serve serve as ransom. O light of the eyes of men and djinns. King of kings of the two worlds, Holy Imam Hussein, may your faithful Shi'as be not subject to anxiety: all will enter into Paradise.

Imam Hussein:

My time is coming, farewell! Farewell, o my family, farewell!! Soon yur eyes will stream with blood for my sake, farewell!

(4429)

Sakina:

Father, do not go, do not leave me alone. I pray that you will not perish, for I am so full of gloom that my soul founders in my breast.

Imam Hussein:

O Sakina, light of my eyes, my unfortunate child, what shall I do? Destiny is fixed, for all eternity. It is written that you shall be prisoner of that troop of brigands and that you shall fall into the hands of those villains.

Sakina:

Father, how can I bear the sight of yur body writhing in dust and blood? I am only a little girl and I need your support. Let me kiss your feet; I know that I will see you no more. O! What I would not do to spare your eyes!

Imam Hussein:

My beloved Sakina, my dearest, o incomparable daughter, you are going to lose your father, the Kufans will kill me and you will be deprived of my presence.

Zainab:

Great God, how cruel is this parting! It is as though all the suffering of the world had fallen on our shoulders. How accursed was the day when we left Medina! I never thought to arrive at such a pass, surrounded on all sides by pitiless enemies.

(4430)

Imam Hussein:

When I left Medina at the beginning of such a long journey, I knew well that I would never return. I weep for you with all my heart, but what can I do except submit to the will of God. O God, you see in what condition I am and you know that, if it pleases You, I will sacrifice my life. O Creator of day and night, I leave to Your care all those who are dear to me, above all the unfortunate Zainab. And you, Sakina, my little daughter, I come to bid you farewell. Come, because we will not be reunited until the Day of Judgement. May God protect all of you, may God aid you!

Sakina:

Dear father, am I not your favorite child? Can you not give me a moment? Am I not your servant? Let me kiss your hands, that I may lighten the dark clouds that darkens your visage. Let me kiss the mane and the shoe of your courser.

Imam Hussein:

O charming daughter, come to me for a moment. That which you say to me sears my heart, but you must

accustom yourself to the idea that you no longer have a father. All of you, return to camp, because I have not the strength to hear more. My illustrious grandfather will greet me in Paradise. This is not the time for words. May God aid you!

Zainab:

Remain an instant, for we will never see you again. Are you in such a hurry to reunite with our father?

(4431)

Imam Hussein:

O my sister, do not lament so! I go to sow confusion in the souls of those infidels. Your beautiful standard I will hang around my neck, it will be with me when I die.

Zainab:

But every moment that you remain here is a blessing without price for me! Let me breathe the fragrance of your hair. I will pack that fragrance with my provisions for the journey. How can I resign myself to your departure? But what can I do, alas, for the time marked by destiny has come.

Imam Hussein:

O my sister, cease to sob! Return to camp! Do not destroy the edifice of my patience and the tranquility of my soul!

Zainab:

How, without you, can I take my rest in the tent? How can I live, separated from you, even for a moment?

We are strangers here, captives deprived of all aid. How can you abandon us in this condition, even for an instant?

Imam Hussein:

Submit yourself to the Will of God! Remove yourself from the field! Go and have patience! All of you, my women, hidden from the eyes of men, farewell, farewell! All of you, devoured by thirst in this accursed land, farewell, farewell!

(4432)

Zainab:

O Ali, keeper of the groves of Paradise, see what occurs at Karbala. Did you not say that the Hour of Judgement is coming? The unique redeemer goes: our brother advances all alone to do battle with his mortal enemies.

Imam Hussein (in prayer):

O Ali, to you I confide my children. Heal the illnesses from which my orphans may suffer. While you enjoy your slumber, all of my family are led away in captivity and the enemy army is rabid for the blood of your son!

Zainab:

O Hussein, you depart paying no heed to Zainab. You go to grace you head with the crown of martyrdom, but is it necessary to lose your life? You go to reunite with Fatima, but is that a reason to abandon Zainab?

Imam Hussein:

You speak truly. I do not heed the words of Zainab and I leave her in the hands of the enemy. Do not weep,

I will intercede for you before God; but, you will see, I will return to my people! May God protect you, my sister, may God protect you from all evil.

Zainab:

O Muhammad, our Hussein is leaving. I see him depart and know that he goes to his death, alas! O Prophet of the religion, lift your head for an instant from the tomb and see the miserable state to which we are reduced!

(4433)

Imam Hussein:

O Prophet of God! Cast Your gaze upon me. Hear the lamentations of my children. Karbala is in consternation; o say that the Day of Judgement is coming. O grandfather, hear the cry of Hussein!

Zainab:

Great God! I can take no more! I have reached the extreme limits of distress. May my sighs accompany us on the journey! And may the tears of my eyes be the provisions for this journey!

Imam Hussein:

O disloyal Heaven, great is your injustice! It is you who led us to Karbala, who left us alone, abandoned by all on this plain of affliction, without friends nor family, here where unfortunate orphans weep, poor children taken from their native land! Will no one come to our aid? O what a fine reward I will be given on the Day of Judgement!

The Angel Fotro (Petrus) or Peter:

Greetings o ornament of the Throne of God! May I be your ransom, o light of the eyes of Fatima! Myself and all the angels, we are disposed to sacrifice ourselves

for you. Why are you here on the plain of Karbala, all alone, with no one to bring you aid?

Imam Hussein:

I salute you, o angel! Be assured of all my devotion. But who are you, who gives us such a cordial greeting? Since we arrived here, we received no greetings save the blows of axes, sabers and arrows.

(4434)

Fotros:

O light of the eyes of the Prophet, ornament of the crown that surmounts the throne of God, I am one of the angels of the court of the Creator, and my name is Fotros. By will of God, I command a legion of forty-seven thousand angels, who will all faithfully obey my orders. One day, I was guilty of a grave fault in regards to him whom all the universe adores (Jesus). I was driven from the Heavenly Sanctuary, o Imam of the century; my wings were consumed by fire, and when they saw me in such a state, all the angels were reduced to tears. Then I was thrown from Heaven to earth, o king of the world and of religion, and, for thirty-thousand and twenty-seven years I will be exiled on an island (hill?) of Rome, deprived of the Divine Grace of my Creator.

Imam Hussein:

Tell me, o Fotros, as you are my friend, how did you return to the Divine Grace of God? How were your wings and plumage replaced? Tell me, o angel, for the love of God!

Fotros:

I am your ransom, o light of the eyes of the universe! One night, as I awaited the commands of God, I saw Gabriel-Amine who descended from the sky with an

escort of angels. I said to him: "Where do you go in such haste?"

Imam Hussein:

Repeat it to me truly. What did Gabriel-Amine say? Tell it all.

(4435)

Fotros:

O chosen one of the Supreme Judge, Gabriel answered: "That you obey my demands, illustrious Fotros! God, this very night, gave to Ali a unique gem brought into the world. I went to congratulate Ali, with that troop of angels, since the Throne of God and all the Heavens rejoiced at that event." I timidly said to Gabriel: "O my brother, take me with you, for love of God! Gabriel took me with him to the place where you were born, I stroked your cradle, and my body was covered with plumage and I had wings, as you can see. By your grace, o redeemer, God restored my plumage and my wings. Thus your birth, o king, was for me a blessing, and my blessing seeks its roots.

Imam Hussein:

Tell me, beautiful angel, what made you traverse this mournful plain?

Fotros:

And yourself, why did you come here? And why do you shed so many tears? I was on high, singing the praises of Him to Whom the angels are confidants, when I learned that you are here, all alone, surrounded by an army of infidels. Then I asked of the Creator permission to descend to the earth and here I am to aid you, o unique Imam. Forty-seven thousand angels accompany me, o

master, and all of us have come to this plain to assist you.

Imam Hussein:

O beautiful angel, may the Creator reward you for your goos action. As for myself, I am determined to give my life for the redemption of my people. May God reward you for coming to my aid, but now return to Heaven and weep for my destiny!

(4436)

Fotros:

O irreparable harm! Imam Hussein will fall in this ill-omened plain, his head lacerated by the swords of infidels! Weep, o angels, weep rivers of blood and tears and cry long dirges!

Imam Hussein:

O infidels, you who seek my death, say to Ibn Saad to come here. That he must come alone! I have a request for this pitiless man.

Ibn Saad:

Why, young man, do you not rest in your tent? Why did you take the trouble to come here? I am devoted to you, o light of the eyes of Fatima! I am willing to serve as your ransom, o ornament of the throne of God. What do you desire? Give me the command, and I will do all that is within my popwer to obey.

Imam Hussein:

O Omar! Do you not know who I am? Did you not know that I descend from the Messenger of God? Was not my mother the daughter of the Prophet? Was not my father Prince Haidar (Lion, epithet for Ali ibn Abi Talib)? O Ibn Saad, man without faith, do not offend my illustrious grandfather! How will you answer to God, on

the Day of Judgement? Nd how will you answer to my grandfather?

(4437)

Ibn Saad:

I knew your grandfather well, he who was Muhammad the Arab, and I cannot pronounce his name save with the greatest respect; your father, who was king of the country and obeyed God alone; your mother, she is the one who is called the best of women. As for you, it was the Angel Gabriel himself who curry combed and groomed your horse. Your brother was called Hasan the Chosen, something of which I am well aware. Your glory is without limits. But Yezid has promised, at this very hour and day, to give to me the governorship of this province, and, in exchange for this promise, he demands your head. Thus, if nothing stops me, I am determined to kill you.

Imam Hussein:

O accursed man without shame, you who do not recognize the goodness of God, how can you commit such crimes against the Family of the Blanket? Do not torment me more and let me return to Hijaz by way of Arab-Iraq. Or if you find any inconvenience in my taking that route, I could cross Anatolia or go to Africa or Europe. I pardon you for the death of my brother Abbas, on condition that you let my relatives keep their clothing and baggage. I will pardon you for the death of poor Ali Akbar if you will spare my sister Zainab the shame of being led under the skies on the back of a camel, and I renounce calling you to account for the murder of Qasim the betrothed, so that his unfortunate fiancée may not come to know the agony of captivity.

Ibn Saad:

No! I will not allow you to go neither to Anatolia nor to Europe. You will not escape the torments which I have prepared. Yezid has given me signed orders to engage you in combat, with saber and lance. If you wish to save your life, there is only one way: declare that Yezid is in your eyes the Imam of the century!

(4438)

Imam Hussein:

O tyrant! O outlaw! O heretic! There is not another person in the world as vile as you. Who would thus destroy and ruin his own religion, except you, may God confound you! I have no help save that of God the Unique, and whenever they comes to me, I will submit to His orders. Be my witness, o God, that from my love for You, in the presence of the infidels, I make an act of total submission to Your Holy Will.

Ibn Saad (to his soldiers):

O soldiers, observe the bow in my hand! Finish with Hussein the Son of Ali. With your hearts inflamed by anger throw yourselves upon him, and whoever wishes to see his friends once again, let him be carried on the wings of arrows.

Imam Hussein:

Great God! Do I have no other soul in this world to sacrifice to You? O God of love, I have fulfilled my promise. By Your grace, you are equally faithful to the promises which You have given. (To his horse): O you who are rapid as Borak, you who has no equal in the race, see how I am alone among a multitude of infidels. Come and give ear to my last will and testament, because how will I escape from the multitude of my enemies? I will mount you no more! Here is my final act! When I am dead, o courser more rapid than the wind, return to the camp of the Family of the Blanket.

Dip your face and head in my blood until they are as red as the wild poppy of Mt. Demavand. Then the unfortunate ones will know that my martyrdom is consummated.

(4439)

Ibn Saad:

Take your saber, o young Nasrani, and sever the head of the young man with the radiant countenance. In exchange, I will give to you a beautiful robe.

Nasrani (To Imam Hussein: Note: "Nasrani" means "Christian"):

Greetings, o you who have suffered so much! I have been sent to sever your head from your body, but I approach you with great respect. I see that you are of the illustrious family of Ali. When I first saw you, I beheld your noble origin. If you are not Jesus, son of Mary, you are certainly of the same lineage as he.

Imam Hussein:

Know, o young man, that after Jesus it was Muhammad whom God sent to establish the Law in the world. The heir, the cousin and son-in-law of Muhammad, that illustrious personage, is the Imam Haidar (Ali), the king of kings whom certain people (ghulat: extremists, heretics) venerate as God Himself and others invoke under the name Ali Mortaza, whom the Europeans know as Abu Ilya, and who others, Syrians, call Abu Shentya. The first of these was my grandfather and the second was my father. He is much greater than I whose heart is broken.

Nasrani:

May I be your ransom, o master of the earth and of the century! The words which you have spoken illuminate my breast! But, I ask, tonight what will I see in my dreams? Because, after a moment, I will have no more employment.

(4440)

Imam Hussein:

Tonight, o Nasrani, you will have your elbow over your ear, and by the miraculous breath of Jesus, to whose religion you belong, Jesus will announce that you will enter into Paradise, and these words will free your heart from the chains of infidelity.

Nasrani:

O majesty, you do not know me well! Thus, when my tale is finished, I will return to my corner and will not know what else to do. You ask, o excellence, that I abandon the religion of the Messiah. Receive me, vile sinner that I am, and let my two hands be severed from my arms, o prisoner of tyrants, if I should draw a sword against you, o master! Pardon me, bestow your favors upon me, and do me the honor of admitting me to the religion of your father!

Imam Hussein:

Say: "I confess that there is no other God but God, that Muhammad is the Messenger of God and that Ali is the Friend of God."

Nasrani:

O God, be my witness on the Day of Resurrection, that I said: "I confess that there is no God but God, that Muhammad is the Messenger of God and that Ali is the Friend of God."

Ibn Saad:

O Nasrani, why do you beat your breast? Why do you cast dust upon your head? Why do you tremble and why do your cheeks run with tears?

(4441)

Nasrani:

O accursed one, man without shame, abominable tyrant! When you sent me to sever the head of Hussein from his body, I was a demon, but I have become a Solomon. I give thanks to the Supreme Being because, from being an infidel, I have become a Muslim. I was a slave, but now I am a king; I was ignorant, but now I possess knowledge! You hurled me to the bottom of the pit, but I escaped, covered with one hundred honors. You have thrown me into the hell of calamities, but, like Joseph, I have escaped from prison. I am determined to sacrifice my life for him, and that is why I am joyful and I smile.

Ibn Saad:

If you desire a large promotion, bring me the head of Hussein, son of Ali. I will see to it that Yezid grants your request, and I will answer for you, on the Day of Judgement, any questions which the Prophet and God may pose. O Senan, son of Enes, take a well sharpened dagger and sever from his body the head of Hussein, the light of the eyes of Haidar.

Senan:

O prince, I am completely subservient to your orders! But you command me to slay Hussein. This is a very heavy and onerous task! Ah well, so be it. I will renounce my own religion before I render homage to Yezid, o chief! (To Imam Hussein): And you, Imam of the Century, pronounce your Confession of Faith, as I am

about to sever your head from your body with this sharpened dagger.

Imam Hussein:

Why do you intend to kill me? Impudent man, do you know less than a dog? How are you called, accursed one? Tell me your name, all of it.

(4442)

Senan:

Know, o one who takes his place among the best, that I am Senan, son of Eles, o unfortunate one! Pronounce your Confession of Faith, because I am going to cut off your head, and your bdy will fall to the earth as carrion.

Imam Hussein:

I know well that it is not you who wishes to kill me! My killer is Shimr, that vile heretic! No, it is not you who wishes to kill me.

Senan (to Ibn Saad):

O chief, I renounce the promotion and the robe with which you wish to gratify me. How can I slay the children of the chosen one? How can I put them in chains or bring to you the head of Imam Hussein?

Shimr:

Tell me, Senan, how is it that you have the affrontery to appear before me with a face which expresses such pain? Why do you tremble like a willow tree? Are you frightened of Hussein? When you left you were like a man, but you return like a woman, all in tears!

Senan:

Know, o Shimr, ignorant heretic, that I venerate the Messenger of God, the grandfather of Imam Hussein. I was determined to sever the head of Hussein from his body, to obey faithfully the command which I had received. But Hussein opened my eyes and cast a blessing upon me. His eyes are like those of a Prophet. Now my body is trembling and I am filled with shame.

(4443)

Shimr:

Ah well, I will slay Hussein, I who have no fear of God nor of the Prophet. It is I who will kill him, I who fear not the Virgin Mary. I will slay Hussein! My heart cannot be touched by pity. It is I who must be feared and no one else! It is I who will slay Imam Hussein. (To Imam Hussein): Say to the cup-bearers of Kai Khusrau and the Byzantine Emperor to pour a drop of water on your parched throat. Tell them to come to your side so that they may see the blade which I am going to sink into your neck!

Prince Abdullah (to Zainab):

O my beautiful aunt, may I be your ransom! The voice of Hussein, devoured by thirst, has reached me. I will go to thee battlefield, to see who has arrived. These people are so wicked that all the world is darkened.

Zainab:

O my poor nephew! Return, I beg of you, my dear! I beheld the death of Qasim, I am in mourning and wear black. Return, little child, where the voices are sweet, return, o living image of he than whom there is none greater.

(4444)

Abdullah:

Hussein, your brother, is all alone and without help. If he should die, what a misfortune for us! Come, for the souls of Ali Akbar and Ali Asghar do not hold me back any longer, o my aunt without reproach! Return to the camp and do not make a crime of my sadness, because I will never return to camp without Hussein.

(To Imam Hussein): O descendant of the Prophet of God, I am your ransom! I am Prince Abdullah, the orphan of Hasan. Why do you not return? Why do you not come to see if Zain al-Abidin is recovering from his illness? Look on me with benevolence, for I am your guest. I am already an orphan; do not make me an orphan for a second time. If you should die, we are all orphans. Leave here and return to camp!

Imam Hussein:

O blooming flower of the garden of my poor rother! Why have you left the camp, o child of misfortune? Return, my beautiful child, because these villains will kill you!

Abdullah (to Shimr):

See! Hussein is at the end of his strength. Have you no remorse? Impudent man, return the fatal blade to the sheath! Do you respect no one and nothing? Let me, at least, approach the relatives of Hussein. Let them blindfold him. And if Hussein must leave this world, then kill me as well, because my heart is weary of living.

Shimr:

Go, o child, step aside. If you do not, I will kill you, and that would be a great tragedy. Know that I do not fear to shed blood. I have thrown to the earth a thousand such as you.

(4445)

Imam Hussein:

O my little angel, you are most welcome! But do not worry, because I will follow you. (To Shimr): O accursed one, you who will slay me and inflict upon my family so many torments, show me your chest! My grandfather, the Messenger of God, said to me that my assassin would be a mangy cur dog, with his chest scarred with leprosy.

Shimr:

O little son of Ahmed the Chosen, see my chest. Come and look well! Remember, I am going to cut off your head, o Hussein son of Ali! You treat me like a mangy cur dog, following the words of the Prophet. Know, it is I who will cut off your radiant head with a dagger sharpened by hatred.

Imam Hussein:

O grandfather, would that I had a thousand souls to sacrifice! Alas, the sign of which you spoke, according to the commands of God, I saw on the chest of that miscreant. Without a doubt, it is well that he will kill me.

Shimr:

Yes, all that the Chosen One said describes me well. It is well that the verse "Qalou qatalou" is fallen from Heaven. I am yet going to sever your head from your body, o Hussein son of Ali, light of the eyes of the people of this century.

Imam Hussein:

O accursed tyrant! Why such haste? I had barely arrived when you began to persecute me so, because no one is coming to assist me in my misfortune.

(4446)

Shimr:

O Hussein, in the state in which you find yourself, who could help you? Will come to your aid?

Imam Hussein:

It is my mother who comes to me, and I hope that the sight of her face will fill me with joy. O impudent man, give me a moment. I hear my mother! O, how sad she is!

Fatima:

O you who are about to succumb under the blows of an unjust destiny, let your mother be sacrificed in your place! O you who are abandoned by all, even your closest relatives!

Imam Hussein:

O my poor mother, you who comes to share my pain and anguish, come and see in what condition I am in!

Fatima:

O light of my eyes, how can your poor mother strive to stanch the flow of blood from your eyes! If only I had permission to give my life for you!

Imam Hussein:

O mother whose heart is lacerated, you who weep under the burden of misfortune, it is I, whose eyes are filled with tears, who would sacrifice himself for you. Come, and see to what a state I am reduced!

(4447)

Fatima:

*O, is the winding sheet of Akbar red like a rose?
Or is the tunic of Qasim soiled and caked with mud, tell
me!*

Imam Hussein:

*O mother, Akbar has died a true martyr; the corpse
of Qasim writhes in a the sea of his own blood. And I,
see, o my mother, in what condition I am. Come, and see
what has been done to me!*

Fatima:

*O my unfortunate son, come near. How can I see you
engulfed by woes. Seeing you thus, how can I not
lacerate my heart with more cries than a nightingale?
How, seeing all this, did I not say to you, my darling
son, did I not rend the robe of my life; how is it that
you did not tell me of your approaching death, o God, o
God! O Heaven, I will never cease even for a moment to
protest with all my soul against tyranny. How can You
not heed the thousands of prayers for justice?*

Imam Hussein:

*O my noble mother, may I be your ransom, because I
see that you follow me closely! And you, zephyr, carry
my regards to Medina! Give this message to my daughter
Fatima. Say to Her: "Destiny has not hearkened to my
vow, and I will not be able to return. I will see you
again on the Day of Resurrection!"*

(4448)

Zainab:

O Ibn Saad, unjust, ruthless and piyless man, much blood have you spilled! Humanity, honor and fidelity, why have you renounced all of that? Since when have the Arabs lost all respect for the best of women (Fatima)? You make merry while my brother Hussein is tortured. You give water to your horses while Hussein has not a drop to drink. It is today that I, his sister, will lose Hussein, today that he will fall, his body transfixed by all the length of a dagger, his hands and feet turned towards the Kibla (towards Mecca). Let me blindfold him.

Imam Hussein:

O Zainab, return to camp! It is finished, as I said. Go, so that you may not have to see my body fallen under the dagger. Go, my sister, that you may be spared the fate of Hussein. Fatima will blindfold me. When you take the road to Syria, to Iraq or to Medina, think to save your own life and the life of Sakina! Render to me the services which are the duties of a sister, and be a mother to my children!

Zainab:

O Heavens, the axe of tyranny is severing the roots of my being. Do my desperate cries not reach Your ears? I am Zainab, Zainab the sister of the poor Hussein, unfortunate daughter of the inconsolable Fatima. What have I done to deserve such punishment? Why am I falling into the abyss? Why?

(4449)

Imam Hussein:

See the dagger hanging over my head! Ah well! I am content with You, o my God! I have never doubted the promise which You gave that on the Day of Resurrection You will pardon my sins and pardon the sins of all the Shi'as, even the guilty, because today I ransom them with the price of my blood. As for me, it is with joy that I recall the Prophet of God and I proclaim: "I confess that there is no God but God, that Muhammad is the Messenger of God and Ali is the Friend of God."

Shimr:

Come, and cover the saddle, harness and stirrups of my horse with pearls and precious stones. Behold the face of the favorite child of the Prophet. I severed the head from the body of Hussein, the son of Ali; what a fine service have I rendered to Yezid!

Ibn Saad:

May your two hands be severed from your arms, of mangy cur dog without religion! For that which you have done, what will you answer to Her Holiness the Best of Women (Fatima)? What answer will you make to the Lion (Haidar) of God (Ali)? You have made he who was the light of the eyes of Fatima to fall a martyr under your saber. (To his troops): The world is now as Yezid desires it to be., and all of you wished. Sound the drums as a sign of rejoicing, because he is dead, the dear child of Fatima, who will be praised for all eternity by men and djinns!(89)

- FINIS -

In another Ta'ziyeh which deals with the passion of Imam Hussein, the Imam says:

(4445)

Imam Hussein:

"To you I leave my will and testament, o my family, God be praised. I know the when you return to Medina you will give my regards to all those who knew me. O Shi'as, from this time forward when you drink fresh water recall the the parched throats of my orphaned children. When you hear of weddings and rejoicing, recall the widowed bride of Qasim whose feet were tinted with henna. When you see children nursing, recall our Ali Asghar deprived of milk. When you see a fatherless child weeping, remember Sakina, my afflicted daughter. When you travel about the world and see a woman captive, recall my unfortunate sisters. When you see an adolescent youth, recall with compassion my Ali Akbar. When you see a man whose arms were amputated by tyrants, think of my holy Abbas. Throughout the world, when you see a stranger, remember the solitude of my infant children."(90)

In the same ta'ziyeh, Ibn Saad says to Imam Hussein:

Ibn Saad:

"I know that you are the light of the eyes of (Fatima Zahra, daughter of Ahmed (the Prophet Muhammad)). I know that your character is pure and holy. But you will perish by the dagger of hatred and tyranny. And your imposing height will tumble from the saddle and strike the earth."(91)

- FINIS -

THE TAZIYEH OF THE MARTYRDOM OF HUSSEIN

"The taziyeh plays are somewhat similar to the mystery cycle plays of medieval Europe in that authorship is corporate and anonymous. Thus, many communities all over Iran possess a cycle of plays from which to select when circumstances allow performances during the month of Muharram. Clearly, the most important play from any community's cycle is The Martyrdom of Hussein, since his martyrdom is the central focus for the entire mourning ritual. This play is

always performed on the 10th day of the month of Muharram - the historic date of Hussein's slaughter.

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Regardless of when the texts were collected or from what community, the plays that deal with the martyrdom of Hussein share many similar segments of action. All versions stress Hussein's utter desolation. This is accomplished in several ways. The most emotional way is to include scenes that deal with the slaughter of his infant son and little nephew - the only males left in his family. Another way is to include scenes in which other weak and defenseless persons offer to enter the field of battle in a vain attempt to replace strong champions already slain. Along these same lines, some plays include a scene in which the women travelling with Hussein are forced to take on duties usually relegated to men. Another series of scenes focuses on two kinds of temptations Hussein must face. Each time Hussein bids farewell to a female relative, he has to fight against the natural urge to remain alive to protect her from captivity. Each time a powerful being arrives to offer assistance, Hussein has to fight against the natural urge to restore the balance of unequal odds. In each case, Hussein overcomes the temptation and chooses martyrdom. Thus, flexibility and fluidity are part of the dramatic tradition.

In its traditional state, the script for a play consists of acting sides - little strips of paper containing only the lines and cue words of a single character. The acting sides are accompanied by a key that provides the chronological order of the speeches. These stand as a 'recipe' for performance. A complete play in chronological order is a *jung*.

The Martyrdom of Hussein offered here was translated from Persian and is from the collection belonging to the city of Khour, a small oasis in the center of the Kavir desert (Houart 1974). Although it is not certain when the ta'ziyeh tradition developed in Khour, records show that by the last quarter of the nineteenth century this city possessed 60 plays that were performed at the rate of one ta'ziyeh per day until the end of the month following Muharram. As a result of a local quarrel between two brothers in 1933, the entire collection was destroyed by fire. Fortunately, copies of six plays were in the possession of other Khour citizens and thus escaped destruction. These scattered texts (in the form of actors' sides) were gathered in 1865, recopied onto fresh pieces of paper and placed in the

care of those responsible for producing the annual performances. Five of the extant
(4447)

texts were edited by Morteza Honari and published in 1974 as Taziyeh dar Khour.

Although the Khour version of The Martyrdom of Hussein includes most of the segments of action typical of this play, each segment tends to be lengthy. Due to constraints of space, therefore, at times, a segment of action from another version has been used instead (it is quite common in the ta'ziyeh tradition to mix parts of one manuscript with another). This version is part of a collection gathered by Alexander Chodzko, cited as the first European to work on Persian folklore (Calmard 1992). Born in Poland, he completed his studies in Oriental languages in St. Petersburg in 1830 after revolutionary activity forced him to leave his native land. His expertise in Arabic, Persian and Turkish earned him a position with the Russian diplomatic corps and he was sent to Persia. There, he served as translator and interpreter to the Russian missions in Tabriz and Tehran, as well as consul at Rasht. By the time Chodzko left Persia in 1840, he had collected a great variety of manuscripts, among which was a collection of 33 ta'ziyeh plays purchased from the director of the court theatre in Tehran. Four years later, Chodzko, now settled in Paris, resigned from the Russian diplomatic service and eventually donated his collection of manuscripts to the Bibliothèque Nationale. In 1876, Zahra Eqbal, assisted by Muhammad Jafar Mahjub, edited a publication of six plays from the Chodzko collection under the title Jung-i Shahadat (1976). As we have noted, most T'aziyeh are entirely sung, in this respect being more similar to the medieval liturgical dramas than to passion plays, which the T'aziyeh most resemble in all other respects. However, in the following example from Khour, the heroes and heroines sing their lines, while the villains declaim their lines in a harsh voice. The T'aziyeh are indeed diverse, and far from stereotyped.

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THE MARTYRDOM OF HUSSEIN FROM THE TA'ZIYEH OF KHOUR

Cast of Characters (in order of appearance)

Shemr *the cruelest of the commanders
opposed to Hussein*

Ibn Sad *the commander of the forces
opposed to Hussein*

Zainab *sister of Hussein and Hassan*

Hussein *son of Ali and Fatemeh, grandson
of Prophet Muhammad*

Archangel Gabriel

Rabab *(also called Laila) Hussein's wife
and mother of his infant son, Ali
Asghar*

Harmela *one of the villains opposing Hussein*

Sultan Qais *king of India*

Vizier *prime minister of the king*

Abdulla *Young nephew of Hussein, son of Hassan*

SHEMR:

I address you, o Ibn Sad of the blessed countenance, we have slaughtered the pious household in this desert. There is no one left except for Ali's Hussein. All have been martyred with poniard and sword. It is now the turn of that light of this world and the next world. It is necessary that he should die from dagger and spear; that his household and children be captured and all the pigeons of his harem be bound up. We will go joyfully before Ubaid and Ibn Ziyad and gladden their hearts by the slaughter of the son of Fatemeh.

(4449)

IBN SAD:

Tell me, what remedy should I create, O cursed one full of flames and chaos? How could my heart give acceptance to the slaughter of Hussein? Let that which we have done in this desert of sorrow and calamity be enough. It is enough that Abbas was malevolently martyred. It is enough that his Ali Akbar was cast down from his feet; Qasem, the bridegroom, reddened his palm with blood [rather than henna]. The foundation of the house of Faith has been destroyed by your oppression. What more do you want from the life of sorrowful Hussein? What more do you want from that broken-hearted one without supporters?

SHEMR:

Understand without a doubt, O Ibn Sad of the blessed nature, that you must gird yourself for the slaughter of Hussein. If you don't have the stomach for the slaughter of Hussein, go back to Kufa and I will replace you as commander.

IBN SAD:

May your tongue be cut outm O treacherous dog! What kind of things are you saying, O tyrant? What knowledge came for the slaughter of Hussein? What explicit command exists for the dispute with Hussein? Is not Hussein the candle in the night of Ahmad [Muhammad]? Is not Hussein the rose bush in the garden of Muhammad? Is not Fatemeh, the best of women, his mother? Is not Gabrielthe comber of the hair on his head? In obedience to the order of Ubaid, son of Ziyad, it is not possible to cast eternity vainly into the wind. You did not turn away from the vengeful path so that we could have made peace with the king the Faith, O unscrupulous and ill-fated one. Peace could replace the formation of battle and insurrection; he could eturn to Medina with thoughts of pleasure.

SHEMR:

O chaste ones of Hussein, tell Hussein to come outside, so that the heart's desire for his slaughter may erode for an instant.

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SHEMR:

My Hussein is asleep, O infidel full of commotion and mischief. I fear you may wake him - softer, softer. Hussein is asleep, O infidel full of commotion and chaos. For the sake of Rasul [Prophet Muhammad] of the east and west, softer, softer.

SHEMR:

I address you, O daughter of the Rasul of God, the Prophet of God. Go and tell Ali's Hussein, 'O chief, you must face your death in this situation.' Tell him that now is not the time for sleeping. I will take you to Damascus presently in desolate desolation. All the people of your harem will become dejected and thin.

ZAINAB:

The issue of Ali Murteza [an epithet] is in sleep. O unscrupulous one. Don't shout, for God's sake, softer, softer. I will inform him of your conversation now, O cursed one. Allow me to wake him, softer, softer. O brother, Shemr came to me, wake up. I will be dyed in indigo at your death. I am disabled, wake up. The army of the enemy has arrived. O king bereft of army and aid. We are even now surrounded by the army, wake up.

HUSSEIN:

I dreamed I was in a meadow. Why didn't you leave me in peace? There were houris and gardens and castles; why didn't you leave me? My grandfather, the best of men, was standing there on one side. On the other side was my father, Ali Murteza; why didn't you leave me? My mother wore black clothes and sat in mourning. She was lamenting for the sake of someone; why didn't you leave me? My grandfather was saying that Hussein would be killed. Zainab would become the captive of the antagonists; why didn't you leave me?

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ZAINAB:

You were asleep, O brother. Shemr was just here. He said, 'I will take Zainab to Damascus in woe and keening.' My heart is sad and afraid from the events of ancient fate. I am afraid, O dear brother, that I will be dejected and captive.

Imam Hussein comes out of the encampment and speaks of the infidels who are standing close to the encampment.

HUSSEIN:

Tell Ibn Sad, who is less than a dog, that one of the lineage of the cupbearer of the Kawsar [a river in paradise] asks for him.

IBN SAD:

Hussein, O prince of Medina, king of the throne of the two worlds, what is your request to the repulsive, reckless tribe, tell me?

HUSSEIN:

I am the glorified smoke of God, powerful one in the presence of Gabriel. I am the possessor of accomplishments such as reason and love and have no desire for Kufa and Damascus. If it were a question of land and kingdom, it is ours from the fish to the moon [meaning the entire world]. Have mercy on me now, as my heart is bleeding at your hand. All of you get out of my way, so I may take these vulnerable people and relatives and, with bleeding heart, exit from the land of the Arabs.

Ibn Sad, who has been facing Hussein, now speaks.

IBN SAD:

O lord, of what virtue to me the miracle of the Qur'an? What effect would it have if you were to read me the whole Qur'an? Listen to me and give your allegiance by the directive of Ubaidulla. Yazid is lord this day from Arabia to the dust of Tawran [Transoxania].

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HUSSEIN:

At last, have some pity on my wretched self, pity. For this unfortunate king, pity, pity! Even though I could take Arabia and half of the Tartar land, I am the wretched one of this region today. Even though I could take retribution for the 100 acts of malevolence against me, I am at your disposal today. The children have been dry-mouthed for three days and nights, O cursed ones.

IBN SAD:

Have no thoughts of water from the malicious and the rebellious. No one will give you water in this land.

HUSSEIN:

O oppressor, tyrant, rejected and unscrupulous one, give me a respite to take farewell from my holy family.

IBN SAD:

Permission granted, O ruler of the dry-mouthed. Take farewell of your harem with weeping eyes.

Imam Hussein returns to the holy family and Ibn Sad and Shemr return to their army base. The Imam addresses his household.

HUSSEIN:

Greetings to you, O holy family of the Prophet. O Zainab, O Kulsum, O Ruqiyah and O Rabab, my greetings to you.

ZAINAB:

Brother dear, may I be ransomed for your pearl-bearing, blood-gushing eyes. You bring news of your approaching death to your dejected sister with every breath.

HUSSEIN:

(to Zainab): Bring an old set of clothes to me, sister, so that no one in this assembled army may covet it.

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ZAINAB:

You must wear jasmine clothes, O my flower. Where is it customary that you should put on old clothes? You are the

king of Hijaz [Western Arabia] and it is customary that you should wear silk of Yemen like a king of Yemen. My heart aches for your request to wear old clothes. What is the reason for putting old clothes on your body?

HUSSEIN:

The one by the name of Shemr will be malevolent to me today. He will sever my head with the merciless poniard. This old garment will ward off the heat of the desert from my body to some extent. Shemr, who might take new garments from my body, may repent from such an act at the sight of this garment.

Zainab gives the garment into Hussein's hands. It is a full-length white garment on the surface of which small and large red stains have been placed. As Hussein puts it on, Zainab sings:

ZAINAB:

O Hussein, may Zainab die so she may not see your death. O brother dear, congratulations on your garment! Either remove that garment from your body, dear brother, or place me alive in the grave, dear brother. (She continues in another tune.) Walk for a bit, so I may gaze at your stature and pick one flower from your moon of a face. Have mercy on my state, brother dear. My wings are broken, brother dear.

[Hussein and Zainab lament together as he asks her to care for his orphana and describes the signs of his death to come.]

HUSSEIN:

Rise up from your place, Zainab, s it is not the time for weeping and supplication. Your Hussein is alone and friendless. It is time for you to assist him. In your compassion, serve me and bring my battle implements to me. Ask them to bring Zuljenah [his horse] before me, lovingly.

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ZAINAB:

Where is the standard bearer of your soldiers now, O king of the depleted force? Who will bring Zuljenah to you? Where is your murdered Ali Akbar, who suffered an untimely death, so that he may hold your stirrup, in

rue, with boiling heart? Where is Qasem to hold your saddle cover in his arms with rue?

HUSSEIN:

Keening for the passage of time, which does not stand firm for an instant. Where is the loyalty of fate that one cannot rely on it? You [God] once assigned Gabriel as caretaker of Hussein's saddle cover; now Hussein has no one to hold his stirrup at the time of mounting.

Imam Hussein puts on his shroud. The shroud is a piece of white cloth about two metres in length and one and a half metres in width with a hole in the center for the head and neck. When it is worn, half of it lays in front and half in back. It is also spotted with crimson paint to represent blood. Hussein takes up his sword and puts it on his boots. As he is doing so, Zainab sings:

(4455)

ZAINAB:

Hussein, brother of Zainab, has no assistant or friend. His sorrows are numberless and he has no one to commiserate with him. He is keening from his kinless state. Why should he not keen? He has no Ali Akbar or famous Abbas. Should I go to hold Hussein's stirrup, or should I take his elbow? My torn heart cannot endure two

loads. Hussein, you go in front and we will fall into ranks behind you, so that Ibn Sad cannot say that Hussein has no soldiers.

(Addressing the harem) At this moment, women of the harem, all courageously rank yourself with military discipline to spite the spiteful enemy. My sister, Kulsum, you come to my side. Laila [Rahab], you place yourself at my right. You also bend the neck to obedience, O bride. At the time of virtuous battle, take Zulfeqar [Ali's famous sword]. Ruqiyeh dear, say your prayers, as your prayers will be granted since you are so young and your heart burns more fiercely in the flames. Hassan's orphans, loosen your hair and say a prayer for kindness. O God, may no sister in the world see her brother's death with wet eyes. There is not a single one to befriend us. Who has ever seen a woman become the holder of reins!

GABRIEL:

O Hussein, may 100 Gabriels be ransomed to you! At the order of Glorious God, I and all the angels have arrived at the desert of calamity from the highest throne of God, so we may hold your stirrup. O emperor of the Faith. Take the bridle of Zuljenah's head, Mikhail. Take Hussein's stirrup in your palm, Sarafil. Come and mount, O light of the eyes of the Prophet, as I take your elbow with wet eyes. Place your foot on the mountain of martyrdom with heart and soul. The houris of paradise are waiting for your footsteps. There is a brass bowl in the hands of the cupbearer of the Kawsar that is full of pure water for you.

(4456)

IMAM:

You have gladdened my heart by God's graciousness, O Gabriel. May you receive good reward at the hand of Glorious God. Go now, in immediate haste, to the Court of Justice. Say that Ali's Hussein has made a request: "O Deity. Behold, O Creator, how I, for the sake of Your command, willingly place my foot on the mountain of martyrdom. In this land of calamity, my head is at the

edge of reckless Shemr's dagger in an eager and accepting manner. Since the command is Your command, I bow before it. I have placed my head in the snare of acceptance, submissively. By my blood, O Almighty and Merciful God, forgive the community of believers of my grandfather on the Day of Resurrection."

Gabriel:

May I be your ransom, O light of the eye of the two worlds, the emperor of two worlds, your excellency, Imam Hussein. Don't be concerned for your Shiites, Hussein. Because of this, they will enter paradise in countless numbers.

[...]

[Hussein's 23 year-old son, Sujad, wishes to fight but he is so ill that he barely recognizes his own father. Imam Hussein Sujad that his duty is to survive the battle and carry on as the Imam. Following this, four persons offer to fight and each is martyred in turn: Habib, an old retainer, Abis, Shawzab, and two young sons of Zainab. Dervish arrives to offer a bowl of water to the afflicted camp. Imam Hussein refuses this gift and miraculously changes the water to gold. The Dervish offers to fight but flees in terror when faced with the enemy. Imam Hussein's little daughter, Sukaina, clings to her father as he bids her farewell. Zainab laments as Imam Hussein bids her farewell.]

In the encampment, Zainab and Rabab stand over the cradle of Ali Asghar. He is a baby of one or two months, a son to whom mother and father are dedicated.

(4457)

Rabab and Zainab:

My little child, hushaby. One who has not drunk of my milk, hushaby. The playmate of Sukaina, whom I brought from Medina. O my baby without peer, the comfort of my life, hushaby, hushaby. O my baby without milk. Baby who has not drunk of my milk. Your cradle has become your grave. The arrow of calamity has become your nourishment. The comfort of my life, hushaby, hushaby. My sweet-tongued one, hushaby.

Rabab (the mother of Ali Asghar rocks the cradle and speaks):

My little one, why are you wailing? My indigent one, why are you weeping? You rend my breast with your nails. I don't know if there is any milk left in my breast, O glowing flower, so that I might slake your thirst with the milk of my life. O Zainab, for what purpose have you come to the cradle? You don't sleep in your restlessness. Where is your Abbas to bring you water? (Takes Ali Asghar to Imam Hussein) Dear one of her excellency, Zahra, behold the state of Ali Asghar. Ali Asghar has fainted from excess of weeping for water. Take him and consider his wounded state. Request some water for him from that malevolent tribe.

Hussein:

O Zainab, Umm Laila came to me on this plain and was wailing from her heart - in woe, in uproar and loud wailing.

Zainab:

Brother dear, Ali Asghar has fainted from thirst. Laila beats her head for her defenseless baby. O weary-hearted Laila, bring Ali Asghar's swaddling clothes before the sovereign of the sky, that master of slaves.

At this point they bring a camel. Imam Hussein mounts the camel, takes Ali Asghar, holds him up in his arms and addresses the infidels.

(4458)

Hussein:

O troops of Kufa and Damascus, all come before me. Bestow a gentle balm to the wound of my bruised body. You recognize what you see. Don't leave it in thirst. Since this baby has no fault, and cannot enter into combat with these soldiers, make him happy with a drop or two of your water. He cannot even cry 'woe' from being so disappointed of heart. Give him a haven, as he has no protection.

Harmela (performed by the same person who represents Shemr, Harmela steps forward, takes bow and arrow in hand):

Hussein, O issue of Zahra, you are the king seated upon the throne. Don't seek a drop of water from the repulsive and reckless tribe. Behold the calamity-arousing arrow which is in my bow, for it will spurt pitiful poison upon the throat of your Asghar

He loosens the arrow in the direction of Ali Asghar and Ali Asghar's swaddling clothes become bloody. Imam Hussein takes the baby in his arms.

Imam Hussein:

O God, You, who are cognizant of all piety and treachery, [are aware] that my child is no less than the foal of Saleh. You tortured the Jews for the sake of the foal of Saleh. [Now] burn all the non-Muslims in the flames of your anger.

[According to a footnote (on page 128) in the dissertation of Mehrangiz Hatami Farahnakianpoor, A Survey of Dramatic Activity in Iran from 1850 to 1950, from Brigham Young (University in Provo, Utah, U. S. A.) in 1977, this was a special camel which produced enough milk to feed half a tribe. Some in this tribe became greedy and killed the camel's foal, hoping to get more milk. The camel's milk dried up completely and the camel laid a curse on the tribe. Apparently, this curse ultimately destroyed the entire tribe.

(4459)

Zainab (Coming before Imam Hussein):

Hussein, Zainab is boiling in sorrow from the sacrifice of his heart. Brother dear, why is Ali Asghar sleeping in your arms.

Hussein:

Come sister, come out of the tent and behold with both wet eyes. Behold Ali Asghar drinks water from the pool of Kawsar.

Zainab (takes the child into her arms):

Brother dear, why did they not show some mercy in friendship? The blood of my heart flows forever from my two eyes. Take this baby from me and bury him in friendship. He will rest now in love and loyalty.

Imam Hussein (takes the child):

O my God, the foal of Saleh is not higher in rank to You than my Ali Asghar. Since You wished it thus, may he be ransomed to You, as well as my head, my body, my (Ali) Asghar and my (Ali) Akbar.

[Imam Hussein dismounts from the camel and lays the baby on the ground. He digs a grave with his sword. At this time, he replaces the baby with a dummy and the baby is taken away. Imam Hussein prays over the baby and lays him to rest within the grave. As he begins to throw dirt on the baby's face, Rabab hussies in from the tent.]

Rabab:

Don't lay the bricks of the tomb until I arrive and take a last look at the face of (Ali) Asghar. Alas, (Ali) Asghar's throat, this suckling baby, is ripped to pieces by the arrow of tyranny. May the most exalted God give us justice from this malevolence-seeking, tyrannical tribe, as they have tyrannically killed the crown of my head: both my Ali's, great and small [Akbar and Asghar]. My dearest, light of my eyes, when you get to the heavenly paradise, take my pleas before your grandmother, her excellency (Fatima) Zahra.

(4460)

Imam Hussein buries the swaddled dummy of the baby.

[...]

[A messenger arrives with letters from Hussein's daughter in Medina. (The Khour version started with a scene in which Fatima, Imam Hussein's daughter, gives the messenger the letters.) Following this, Zafar, King of the Jinn, offers his army to aid Imam Hussein. Imam Hussein thanks Zafar but refuses the offer. Imam Hussein points out that although he could single-handedly crush his enemies, he accepts his impending martyrdom.]

Ima Hussein asks Ibn Sad to come to the center of the arena and they engage in question and answer.

Imam Hussein:

Come for a moment, alone, before me, O evil Ibn Sad.

Ibn Sad:

What balm do you apply to my bruised heart in your kindness, O king?

Imam Hussein:

The purpose of my coming at this moment is to ask for a drop of water.

Ibn Sad:

Know that water is out of the question for you on this plain.

Imam Hussein:

How long do you intend to keep my miserable self in thirst?

Ibn Sad:

Until evil Yazid becomes grateful for my endeavors.

(4461)

Imam Hussein:

Why should Yazid be grateful to you, tell me, O ignorant one?

Ibn Sad:

If I cut your head from your body, Yazid will be pleased with me.

Imam Hussein:

What reward will you receive if you take him my head?

Ibn Sad:

In exchange for your pure head, I will govern in Rayy.

Imam Hussein:

Don't be deceived by Rayy, as you will not eat its wheat.

Ibn Sad:

If there is no wheat, my heart will be easily satisfied with barley.

Imam Hussein:

What is the purpose of killing Hussein for a piece of barley?

Ibn Sad:

To prevent you from possessing a post in Iraq or Arabia.

Imam Hussein:

I withdraw from Iraq and Arabia and turn my face to the land of the Franks.

Ibn Sad:

Don't struggle in vain, as I will not allow you to go to the land of the Franks.

(4462)

Imam Hussein:

I withdraw from Iraq, so open the way for me to go to Ethiopia.

Ibn Sad:

Impossible, this is impossible, as you yourself are well cognizant.

Imam Hussein:

Tell me, what have I done? In sincerity, did I engage in a pure or in a polluted course?

Ibn Sad:

You must drink from the cup of death which is full to the brim.

Imam Hussein (raising his head):

O God, you are compassionate! You are merciful! I have reached the end of my arguments with these ones who have lost the way on this plain. Ali (ibn Abi Talib), mighty one of the universe, O mighty Wali (friend) of God, behold! Your Hussein is alone in combat with all these foes.

[...]

The battle between Imam Hussein, Ibn Sad and Shemr begins. While the battle is raging, Sultan Qais, king of India, and his Vizier enter onto the stage of the Ta'ziyah. They are clothed in gorgeous and ornamental clothes and are holding swords.

Sultan Qias:

O Vizier, I have fast become very sorrowful today.

Vizier:

Yes, I, like your excellency, feel uneasy.

(4463)

Sultan Qais:

Vizier, I have fast become depressed today.

Vizier:

Yes, I also am struggling with my destiny in this manner.

Sultan Qais:

Vizier, do you have any idea what day of the week it is or what month?

Vizier:

Yes, it is the month of Muharram, Friday, Ashura [the tenth day].

Sultan Qais:

During each month of Muhammar, I become very depressed.

Vizier:

Yes, I also become weary of life in this way.

Sultan Qais:

Vizier, do you know how long it has been since the Hijra of the Seal [Muhammad, the last prophet]?

Vizier:

Ninety-two years have passed since the Hijra of that prince of the world.

Sultan Qais:

Vizier, I am very afraid that the Faith will fall under a severe illness.

Vizier:

What is your fear for the Faith, o direct me, O lord?

(4464)

Sultan Qais:

I fear that my master, (Imam) Hussein, son of Ali (ibn Abi Talib), may come to some injury.

Vizier:

Don't speak of misfortune as the words may bring some to pass.

Sultan Qais:

I fear for (Imam) Hussein, O God, don't render me hopeless.

Vizier:

I am very frightened by all your words regarding (Imam) Hussein.

Sultan Qais:

O God, protect (Imam) Hussein from sorrow and suffering.

Vizier:

What is your fright, what is your fear that you run so anxiously toward the wilderness?

[At this moment, a lion appears. This is portrayed by an actor wearing a costume made of yellow cloth and carefully constructed to represent a lion.]

Sultan Qais:

O Vizier, behold a fierce lion comes from the thicket.

Vizier:

By God's Muhammad, you yourself are a lion. Why are you afraid of a lion?

Sultan Qais:

Give me a bunch of arrows, so I may weary him of his life.

(4465)

Vizier:

Gird your will to aim the arrow and conquer the lion. (At this moment, the lion, saying "Ali, Ali", attacks them.)

Sultan Qais:

Vizier, the lion has turned and is after our lives.

Vizier:

Tell your God, O king, to save you from this disaster.

Sultan Qais:

Vizier, if you have any new incantations, bring them to mind.

Vizier:

There is no escape unless (Imam) Hussein comes to your aid.

Sultan Qais:

(Imam) Hussein, O lord of the good, king, aid me, aid me.

[At this moment, Imam Hussein leaves the field of battle with his bloody shroud and sword. He goes to befriend Sultan Qais.]

Imam Hussein:

Here I am, O beloved one. I have just arrived. I raised a sigh of woe from my heart for your dejected wails. I come, O wounded friend, I come, I come, with many wounds, I come, I come to aid you at this time. Since you are a friend, I respond to your lamentations. O lion, did not my father repeatedly tell you in minute detail that all those who place their love with us are forbidden for all the wild animals?

At this point, the lion circles Ima Hussein and kisses his feet.

(4466)

Sultan Qais:

Hussein, you are the source of power for the community of believers, O one of Mustafa [Muhammad] lineage.

Imam Hussein:

I am he, yes, O lord. What is your aim; what is your request?

Sultan Qais:

Come to India and leave the calamity-filled Karbala behind.

Imam Hussein:

What would be the profit of remaining here after the youthful (Ali) Akbar?

Sultan Qais:

Hussein' request has only to be uttered to be obeyed.

Imam Hussein:

Return to India and be my mourner for a ten-day period.

[Sultan Qais, his Vizier, and the lion leave the arena. It should appear that this scene took place in India and that Imam Hussein went there in response to the plea of Sultan Qais who was a Shi'ite. The battle begins and Imam Hussein continues.

[...]

O master of Zulfeqar, the time for aid has come! O father of the seven and four, the time for aid has come. O conqueror of Nahrawan and victor of Khaibar [reference to Ali ibn Abi Talib], until the time when I forfeit my life, the time for aid has come. All those [in the audience] who are the special Shi'ite of Ali [ibn Abi Talib], raise the cry of "Hail Ali" from the heart. All those who are members of the community of believers of the grandfather of [Imam] Hussein, raise the cry of "hail Hussein" from the heart.

(4467)

Ibn Sad:

O troops, Hussein is standing in the arena. Separate into four groups and surround him from all four sides. Strike that lord with arrow, spear and vengeful stones. Throw the light of the eye of the Prophet to the ground. To gain the acceptance of tyrannical and treacherous Yazid, take revenge on the life of that kinless king. All who strive now will enjoy the fruits of status and post.

[The wails of "allah Akbar" from Imam Hussein and the running of Shemr and Ibn Sad, the movement of the swords and the exciting sounds of the drums all serve to create tension. After a while, Imam Hussein falls to the ground. The mourning commemoration [this play] reaches its climax. Imam Hussein gathers the dust under his head, and, as Ibn Sad and Shemr attack him, he speaks.

Imam Hussein:

O dust of Karbala, befriend me. Since my mother is not here, mother me. O dust of Karbala, be a balm to my

head. I am dejected and defenseless for the sake of my father's Shi'ites.

[...]

(zainab rushes out to the battlefield and laments Hussein's condition.)

Ibn Sad (bringing out his poniard):

Who from among the commanders of this army will take this poniard and go to the slaughter ground and sever the head of the king of the martyrs from his body, so that I may receive the reward from Yazid?

(4468)

Shemr:

O lord, give the cutting poniard to me. I will sever the head of this king of the dry-mouthed ones. I, who do not possess a speck of Muslim feeling in me, will strike with my boots at the chest that holds the standard of God.

[At this moment, Abdulla, the son of Imam Hassan, who is a little boy, runs from the encampment to the arena.]

Abdulla:

God, what do I see in the gallows of the universe? What profit comes from the malevolence of the foe. Perhaps they have thrown my uncle, Hussein, onto the dust of the arena from his seat on the horse's saddle. O aunt, gaze at this wilderness which has turned into the plain of Resurrection by the malice of the foe. One oppressor hits his side with a stone. One infidel shuts out his life with a dagger. (He sits in Imam Hussein's lap.) Greetings, O flower of the true garden. O dear uncle, may this dejected and miserable one be ransomed to you.

Imam Hussein:

Uncle's dearest, why have you come to this place at this time? Arrows fall like rain from this tribe; why did you come? The wound of [Ali] Akbar is on my heart; you have come to light my eyes. Don't preen; may I be your ransom? You have come on the [final] journey.

Abdulla:

Dear uncle, I have come to greet the martyr. I have come from the veiled place to kiss your feet. I have come to be beheaded on your lap, to be killed and ransomed for Ali Akbar. I will go to the Prophet and complain of his community of believers. I will narrate the beheading of Abbas to Haidar [Haidar ibn Abi Talib].

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Shemr:

Who are you, O child of the auspicious countenance, that you make a stream of blood flow from the sea of your eyes?

Abdulla:

Why do you ask my name, O result of the repulsive? I am an orphan child, Abdulla by name.

Shemr:

O orphan, I have no fear of shedding blood. I have cast 1,000 orphans like you into the dust.

Abdulla:

O you who are in haste to slaughter me, may all your hopes be unfulfilled after my slaughter. How long will you remain ignorant of the Day of Accounting? I am thirsty; thirsty for a drop of water.

[Shemr pulls Abdulla away from Imam Hussein's lap and slaughters him. Zainab tries to pull Shemr and Ibn Sad away from Imam Hussein.]

Zainab:

Give me a moment's respite to pull [Imam] Hussein's feet toward the qibla [The direction to which all Muslims turn when they pray: Mecca] and gaze my fill of Hussein's beautiful face at this moment of dying. Finally, this dry-mouthed one has seen the wound of a brother, the wound of Abbas; the mourning of the youthful [Ali] Akbar also (have I) seen. Hold on a moment, so my sorrowful self can come above his head and loyally bind his wet eyes at the moment of death. Don't hit this wounded breast with your booted foot. Don't stab this wounded throat with the vengeful poniard.

(4470)

Imam Hussein:

Return to the tent, my miserable sister, so you will not see me thus under the poniard. I am on the slaughter-ground near the corpse of Ali Akbar. You go to the tent to be near my Zain al-Abidin [Sujad]. Your destiny and mine was set thus from eternity without beginning: you would be a captive and I would sit in blood.

Shemr (comes above Hussein's head):

O Hussein, say your shahada [The Muslim creed, which states, "I bear witness that there is no god but God and Muhammad is the Messenger of God". The Shi'ites add, "And Ali (ibn Abi Talib) is the Wali (Friend) of God."], O Hussein, as I will sever your head, O Hussein, I strike the first blow to bloody the heart of [Fatima] Zahra, I will make Ali [ibn Abi Talib]'s eye an Oxus River with my second blow. The third blow will blast a hole in the heart of the dejected Mustafa [Muhammad]. With the fourth blow, I will melt the body and life of Mujtaba. I will make Sukaina an orphan with the fifth blow. The world will be cast into fright and terror with the sixth blow. The seventh and eighth blow will destroy the world. I will roast the hearts of the Shi'ites with the ninth blow. I will strike the tenth blow and bloody the heart with the eleventh blow. I will make the houris and Jinn and angels insane by this. I strike the final blow and finish Hussein's business. I raise his light-filled head on the point of a spear and Greetings!

[Typically, the ta'ziyeh of Imam Hussein ends with the arrival of the lion from the scene of Sultan Qais. This lion arranges the corpses as it laments silently.] (92)

The following Ta'ziyeh is from Kashan and was signed by Gholam Husayn Saberi, dated 1331 AH, i.e., 1911 or 1912. Despite its recent date, appears to be a combination of two earlier Ta'ziyeh, which leads one to suspect that Gholam Husayn Saberi was the "scribe" or **munshi** rather than the author in the strict

(4471)

sense. In this particular example, the good characters sing their lines, while the evil characters recite them. As I do not have access to the Persian text, I do not know what verse forms are used. I can find no indication as to the musical modes (*dastgah*) used, nor any instructions for **mise-en-scene**.

THE MARTYRDOM
OF THE LUMINOUS LEADER OF THE BANI HASHIM
HAZRAT ABU'L-FAZL AL-ABBAS

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Imam Hussein	Sakina
Abbas	Amir
Zainab	Shahr Banu
Ali Akbar	Shimr
Qasim	Ibn Saad

[At the perimeter of Imam Hussein's encampment on the plain of Karbala, the night before Ashura.]

Ibn Saad:

O King of a small army, look toward the battlefield and observe the strength of a great army. O Commander of the Faith, turn away for a moment from your noble family and count the stars if you want to know the number of Yazid's army. Arise! Destiny has chosen you for martyrdom.

[In the encampment of Imam Hussein on the plain of Karbala.]

Imam Hussein:

O Fate. though you may cast upon me, Hussein, immeasurable injustice, load me with oppression, bare me naked, and cast me down in the dust, I will not complain, and my lips will be tightly closed like a flower bud. But you, O Fate, must look at the beautiful image of Abbas and regret his imminent loss.

(4472)

Abbas:

O sky, look at Hussein, the Moon of the two Easts. Fill your eyes with tears. O sky, because the king of one small army is forlorn, rip your blue garment of patience to shreds. On the day of battle, if you wish respite from the roaring of Abbas, take refuge in some faraway niche of the universe.

Ali Akbar:

O Merciful God, I am Ali Akbar. I am distraught, mourning for my father's grief. Kindly grant me the pride and happiness of sacrificing myself so that I may be honored in front of my uncle.

Zainab:

O Creator, have mercy upon Hussein. Show me kindness and relieve my pain. My brother is alone in this strange land. There is no remedy for his affliction. O God, the cure lies in your hands.

Imam Hussein:

O Brother Abbas, O Commander of the Faith, listen for a moment to this forlorn one. Use this opportunity to dig a ditch around the tents.

Abbas:

O King of the Lands and the Seas, I will obey your command if you will accept me as your servant. Ali Akbar, the light of my Eyes, come here with your followers, companions and Qasim, and all our righteous friends. Ja'afar, go to the left flank to assist from

the north. I will go to the south with illustrious friends.

Ali Akbar:

O Imam of the Heavens and Earth, Hussein, let me sacrifice myself for you. I am going to aid my uncle Abbas. O Crowned Uncle, may I be thy ransom. Leave the digging to me.

(4473)

Abbas:

I am digging this ditch, dear God, so that my sisters will not be afflicted and dishonored.

Ali Akbar:

I am digging this ditch, dear God, so that Umm Layla will not be afflicted and dishonored.

Qasim:

I am digging (rest of text missing)

Abbas:

O God, when will this night become dawn? I await tomorrow when my hands will be cut from my body.

Ali Akbar:

O God, when will this night become dawn? I await tomorrow when Umm Layla will mourn my death.

Qasim:

O God, when will... (text missing)

Imam Hussein:

O God, when will this night become dawn? I await tomorrow when I will fulfil my covenant.

Zainab:

O God, when will this night become dawn? I await tomorrow when I will sacrifice my children for Hussein.

Abbas:

*O brother, o Magnificent King, your holy command
is fulfilled. The trench is dug.*

[In the enemy encampment]

(4474)

Ibn Saad:

*According to the order of unjust Ibn Ziyad, the
children of the Prophet should burn with thirst.*

[In the encampment of Hussein]

Imam Hussein:

*Our enemies know no decency nor shame. They have
no respect for the Prophet. Full charge ahead, o good
brothers. Forward to fight the wicked.*

[In the enemy encampment]

Ibn Saad: (addressing his army):

*O wicked, rebellious, sinister group, set fires
around the tents of Hussein.*

[In the encampment of Hussein]

Zainab:

*O God, I am distressed and fearful. They have set
fire around the tents. Why is Hussein's encampment on
fire? O my hopeless Hussein! O my brave brother Abbas!*

Imam Hussein:

*O distressed sister with dishevelled hair, why are
you crying so loudly? The enemy has not yet removed
your veil. By God, your Hussein is still alive.*

Shahr Banu:

O small flower bud from my garden, why do you look withered? You do not sleep in the cradle, and set fire to my soul. Though you are uncomfortable with the heat and the fever, sleep, my beloved child. O soother of my soul, you are so restless because of thirst.

(4475)

Ali Akbar:

O God, why is Shahr Banu wailing tonight? Her cries reach the skies searing my soul. O sad mother, (Mater Dolorosa, why are you weeping or mourning? Your Akbar has not yet died.

Shahr Banu:

Ali Akbar, you know our circumstances and the feeling of the homeless. It is kind of you to visit with the afflicted. O son, Ali Asghar has fainted. He may die from thirst. Call in the others.

Ali Akbar:

Do not worry, mother, I shall fetch water for him. That will bring back his strength. Taking courage from his need, I will bring the sweet water for the dear, miserable baby boy.

Shahr Banu:

Dear Ali, do not venture on to this dangerous and frightful plain. May a thousand Asghars be thy ransom, O handsome boy. I do not want you to go, my dear, stalwart boy. I am afraid something may happen to you.

Ali Akbar:

Do not cry, do not wail, do not tear your ringlets. Do not dishevel your hair. With God's help, I shall bring water presently.

Shahr Banu:

O God! Protect my Ali Akbar tonight. He is the

happiness of my heart and the tranquility of my soul. O Karbala, you destroyed my life, and bestowed great oppression and tyranny upon your guest.

Abbas:

O Lord, why is Shahr Banu weeping tonight? Her anguish has quickened the heart of men and jinns. O Lady of the Camp, what troubles you tonight? It seems from your anguish that our fate is already sealed.

(4476)

Shahr Banu:

May I be your ransom, Abbas, o Commander of Just People. Why should I not weep? The infant Asghar has no milk and Ali Akbar has gone to fetch water. Alas, I am worried that some evil may come upon my darling of Egypt and Canaan [=Joseph]

Abbas:

Do not grieve. Lions' cubs do not fear jackals. I shall go to bring the Moon of Canaan back to you.

Ali Akbar:

O Lord, may I have the luck to bring water for Hussein's children. O garrison guarding the water, disperse, or else I shall send you all to Hell. Now Ali Akbar has come to fetch water from the Euphrates for the thirsty.

[At the Euphrates embankment.]

Ibn Saad:

Akbar, O King of the deserted ones. Seek no water! This water for you is a rae gem. Tell Hussein the price of this water is to swear allegiance to Yazid.

Ali Akbar:

God is Great! With the help of my grandfatherm I shall make tonight the day of judgement for this infidel gang.

Ibn Saad:

O group ... (text missing)

Ali Akbar:

O water of the Euphrates, have you not a grain of shame? On the day of retribution, (Fatima) Zahra will be weary of you. It is not right, it is not fair for me to drink water while my father thirsts.

(4477)

Ibn Saad:

Soldiers, stop this young man from carrying water with him to the tents of Hussein.

[They fight]

Ali Akbar:

A thousand thanks, O Lord, for helping me to exit safely. I am not going to be embarrassed in the presence of Shahr Banu, nor will I be ashamed before Asghar.

[In the encampment of Hussein.]

Abbas:

Thank God, Ali Akbar is safely returning with water. He fought with the prowess of Haidar. I shall intercept him on the way, and conceal myself under a veil in order to test him.

[Between the two encampments.]

Ali Akbar:

Who are you who blocks the path of the hunting lions?

Abbas:

On whose order have you come to the Euphrates at

Ali Akbar:

I have come to fetch water for the thirsty.

Abbas:

Let the thirsty drink blood.

Ali Akbar:

Young man, Asghar has no milk to drink and is dying of thirst.

(4478)

Abbas:

Let thirst wither his glowing face.

Ali Akbar:

Out of pity I shall not kill you tonight.

Abbas:

I have compassion for that water which you are carrying tonight.

[They fight.]

Ali Akbar:

Young man, you possess the same strength as I.

Abbas:

May I be your ransom, you have such strong arms.

Ali Akbar:

Your voice sounds familiar to me. Beloved of the universe.

Abbas:

I know you. May the world be your ransom.

Ali Akbar:

I am Akbar, the son of the King of the people.

Abbas:

May my soul be your sacrifice, I am your Uncle Abbas.

Ali Akbar:

I beg your forgiveness, for I did not know it was you.

(4479)

Abbas:

Young man, may I be your ransom, for I blocked your way in order to test you. Wait a moment, O Light of my tearful eyes, for I shall take the news of your coming back to the tents. Glad tidings, O people of the camp, young and old. Happy Ali Akbar has brought water with him.

[In Imam Hussein's encampment.]

Ali Akbar:

O mother of Asghar, come and take water to the milkless babe. Take water for the weak infant child.

Imam Hussein:

Abbas, go and rest. Rest from the trouble of the day. Gabriel will be watching over me tonight more than ever. O sister, go spread bedding for my pure brother. I am overcome with desire to meet my celebrated grandfather.

Abbas:

Brother Hussein, my heart flutters and sleep has escaped my eyes. I shall put my sharp sword and my shield under my head lest the wretched enemy should surprise me.

Imam Hussein:

Ali Akbar, this night take off the armor of trouble and pain, take off the sheath of martyrdom. Go to sleep, O Tranquility of Your Father's Soul, for tomorrow you shall roll in a sea of blood.

Ali Akbar:

O God, how can sleep enter my tearful eyes tonight?
I shall put my sharp sword and my shield under my head.
O wind, blow a breeze upon my sister Sughra tonight.

(4480)

Imam Hussein:

Come, Qasim, my precious nephew, tonight I am planning a feast. Sakina, spread open the bridegroom's bedding like a flower, for tonight I want to keep the image of a bridegroom in my mind.

Qasim:

O God, why is the bride of death my compnaion tonight? Is she not aware of the bridegroom's despondent heart? On the wedding night the bridegroom eats sweets, yet tonight sugar tastes bitter in my mouth like snake's venom.

Imam Hussein:

Zainab, the enemy seeks war and a crying loneliness is our condition tonight.

Zainab:

Tonight is the night of farewell. O, what loneliness, and the enemy approaches.

Imam Hussein:

Tonight Abbas' hands are folded beneath his head. O, what loneliness! Tomorrow, they will be cut off like branches from the tree in Paradise.

Zainab:

Tonight, I can look at Ali Akbar's body. Yet tomorrow I will see this flower chopped into a thousand pieces.

Imam Hussein:

Tonight, Qasim is asleep in his bridal chamber, as elegant as a cypress tree. Tomorrow, the hands of injustice and oppression shall turn his chamber black.

Zainab:

*Qasim is sleeping in a sea of light tonight.
Tomorrow he will be wedded to his dark grave.
(4481)*

Imam Hussein:

*Tonight, Ali Akbar is in a deep slumber. Tomorrow,
he will be swimming in his blood because of the tyranny
of the enemy.*

Zainab:

*Asghar sleeps in his cradle tonight. Tomorrow he
will rest forever, on his gather's shoulders.*

Imam Hussein:

*Tonight Sakina sleeps next to her father. Tomorrow
she will be captive and numb in the hands of the enemy.*

Zainab:

Next to ... (text missing)

Imam Hussein:

*Go to sleep, dear sister. I bear witness by the
Essence of God that all of us, the male members of the
Prophet's household, save the sickly Abid, will be put
to death at the hands of the oppressors.*

Zainab (to herself):

*Use the opportunity, Zainab, to pour out that which
is in your heart. Sit alone and wail over your luck. O
depressed Zainab, be ready for catastrophe and think
sometimes about Damascus and sometimes about Kufa, and
sometimes about Karbala. O Morning Wind, my patience is
finished. O zephyr, blow to Najaf and to
Medina. Tell (Fatima) Zahra of our misfortunes. O
Zainab, omit these long complaints.*

(4482)

Abbas:

Arise, Abbas. Keep watch over the women's quarters. This is no time for sleep for Zainab's heart is heavy with pain, Hussein is asleep, and the enemy lurks in the dark. It is time to keep watch. It is the final sleep. O God, grant respite for Zainab, respite for the helpless, homeless Zainab. She will ride dishevelled and the sound of music will rise in the air. In her forlornness, no hand will stretch toward her. Abbas should die for you. O Father, O Ali (ibn Abi Talib), we have come from Medina to your neighborhood and this is only a short distance from your grave (= Najaf). O my crowned Father, Ali (ibn Abu Talib), conquerer of Khaybar, come to Karbala and look upon us, the forlorn ones.

The Veiled Amir:

I am here, I am here. I have just arrived. My dear, I heard your call in Paradise.

Abbas:

I smell the pleasant perfume of ambergris. Is this Jacob leading the lost Joseph or is it a harbinger of good news arriving from Canaan? I cannot take my eyes away from him, although a shaft of light penetrates my eyes from him. Who are you, o Unparalleled Apparition?

The Veiled Amir:

God created me, yet I am Lord of the universe.

Abbas:

Do not advance further.

The Veiled Amir:

How will you stop me, O lion?

Abbas:

Fear my sword and remain where you are.

(4483)

The Veiled Amir:

I fear no one save my Creator.

Abbas:

My sharp sword will cut your head off.

The Veiled Amir:

Bravo to you, O One of good repute.

Abbas:

For what reason, O Illustrious One?

The Veiled Amir:

For your loyalty to your brother.

Abbas:

How do you know that I have a brother?

The Veiled Amir:

I know you, O Splendid Bird of Paradise.

Abbas:

Your voice is familiar to me.

The Veiled Amir:

*Yes, and I am disturbed over your becoeming marked
for death.*

Abbas:

What brings you to this blood thirsty desert?

The Veiled Amir:

I am concerned about six of my brave sons.

(4484)

Abbas:

Name them with dignity.

The Veiled Amir:

One looks like you.

Abbas:

Cite his name, O King of the People.

The Veiled Amir:

Know that his good name is Abbas.

Abbas:

*And tell me the name of that one who is the Light
of my eyes.*

The Veiled Amir:

He is the leader and the elder. He is Hussein.

Abbas:

Are you the King of the two worlds?

The Veiled Amir:

And are you Hussein's standard bearer?

Abbas:

I am the servant of the King of religion.

The Veiled Amir:

*I am Amir al-Muminin (= Prince of the Faithful, Ali
ibn Abu Talib).*

Abbas:

O afflicted Crowned Father.

(4485)

The Veiled Amir:

Greetings to you, memory of my youth.

Abbas:

Where have you been, dear Father, in this dark night?

The Veiled Amir:

Coming to you in suffering from Najaf (site of the grave of Ali ibn Abu Talib) to Karbala.

Abbas:

Why is your back, which was straight as an elegant cypress, bent now?

The Veiled Amir:

From the sorrow for you who are marked for death.

Abbas:

Why have you fallen into such suffering?

The Veiled Amir:

From my separation from Kulthum and Zainab.

Abbas:

What do you carry beneath your robe, o Unparalleled One?

The Veiled Amir:

There is water here for Sakina.

Abbas:

Have you an order for your son Abbas?

The Veiled Amir:

Go and rest. Sleep in your bed.

Abbas:

*I shall obey your orders, but I shall sleep with
tearful eyes.*

[In the enemy encampment]

Ibn Saad:

*It is spring and the flowers are blossoming. be
happy and cheerful for a while, Ibn Sa'd. O Lord, make
this royal appointment arrive as soon as possible.*

Shimr:

*I have just arrived from Kufa with a large army. I
have come with a roal appointment for Ibn Sa'd. Woe
to the sleepers of the Azure Valley who are unaware of
the injustices of Fate. How scented is this land, how
great is the feast in the desert. Has the navel-pouch
of the musk deer fallen on this plain? Has Solomon
spread a feast in this land? Shimr, beware, you are
crossing the lion's lair. The fierceness of the lions
will shake your being. Are you not aware that Abbas is
the hand of the Hand of God? Who can tie God's Hands?*

*Where are you going to hide when the son of Haidar
mounts his swift horse? I will tie the graceful hands
and feet of the unfortunate Qasim. When Ali Akbar wakes
up the hearts of all the warriors will tremble but I
shall attack and send smoke from Hussein's tent to the
planet Saturn. Hark, I hear sounds coming from Ibn
Sa'd's encampment. The sound of a flute mixed with that
of a lute. Sweet singing voices are rising toward
Saturn from the tents of Ibn Sa'd. Well, well, what is
the cause of your celebration?*

*Have you defeated the brave enemy? Has the
Prophet's progeny been killed? Tell the cup bearer not
to deny wine to the drunkards. Unless a good Fate
assists you, you will be foolishly pounding on an anvil
with your hands.*

(4487)

Ibn Saad:

O Shimr, be not so hot-headed, listen with your heart and soul to my advice. Hussein, the son of (Fatima) Zahra is the righteous Imam. Why must you stab him with your sharp dagger? You think that after killing Hussein, the son of Ali, you will receive the governorship of Ray and Gurgan. After Hussein's death, you will not have a single grain from Ray, and your body will be burned in hot fire. The feast has been prepared for us, so let us enjoy the musician's music.

Shimr:

O commander, your words have touched me, penetrating my heart like small arrows. Setting foot upon this earth is like giving up my life. How can one chain the Hand of God? If I destroy the house of my endurance, even a hundred Abu Turabs could not rebuild it.

Ibn Saad:

O Shimr, the royal edicts have been issued in your name, and the Ruler has empowered you to govern the Arabs and the Persians. Your service must be superb or else there will be no gold, no silver and no money. O you infidel, why did the evil infidel send you to the battlefield? Do not trespass the line of justice and do not kill the sacred prey. I do not advise you to go to war. Do not fight but make peace, do not harm the King of the people. The world became a flower garden by their blessed coming and made the life of friends joyful.

Shimr:

Why are you so lax, Ibn Sa'd?

Ibn Saad:

Patience is necessary in this affair.

Shimr:

How long must we be patient? Power and position are at stake.

(4488)

Ibn Saad:

Well said. It is time to think about victory and defeat.

Shimr:

Men must be guided by sages. You give the orders.

[Ibn Saad gestures without answering]

Shimr:

The love for the world fills my heart with infidelity to my Faith.

Ibn Saad:

What should be done? Say it, thinking of the day of retribution.

Shimr:

Why did you come to Karbala with horses and an army?

Ibn Saad:

Why did you come with sword, dagger and spear?

Shimr:

You signed the order to kill Ali's household.

Ibn Saad:

You light the fire of fighting and war.

Shimr:

You heard the name Ray and said, "I have got my wish."

Ibn Sa'd:

Why did you accept the robe of honor from Ibn Ziyad?

(4489)

Shimr:

I wear the robe of honor, and I take the consequences.

Ibn Saad:

Like you, I have given up my conscience and my religion.

Shimr:

This futile talk stems from fear.

Ibn Saad:

Do you know that our opponent is Ali's Abbas?

Shimr:

And do you know that our army consists of lion hunters?

Ibn Saad:

Do you realize that the Bani Hashim are very brave and strong?

Shimr:

Do you know that Abbas is related to me?

Ibn Saad:

So what! You should know that Abbas will not befriend us.

Shimr:

I will deceive him, I will make him desert Hussein.

Ibn Saad:

It cannot be so; he is a lion and he is loyal.

Shimr:

Then what can we do about Yezid's command and decree?

(4490)

Ibn Saad:

I am in despair and pessimistic concerning anything in the world.

Shimr:

I will have to tie their hands, or they will tie mine.

Ibn Saad:

I will have to break hearts, or else my own heart will be broken.

Shimr:

I will have to set heads upon spears or lose my own.

Ibn Saad:

I will have to face the battle or else I will have to run away in disgrace.

Shimr:

Go, rest, and be aware of what goes on.

Ibn Saad:

Go, brief the army and strengthen their morale.

Shimr:

You go and order them to beat the drums of war.

Ibn Saad:

Drummers, beat the drums till the sound of drums reaches the ninth heaven. And you, Shimr, go and talk To Abbas.

(4491)

Shimr:

O Ibn Saad, I am going to talk to brave Abbas, to make peace tonight. Or else in the morning I'll make him swim in his own blood. What is the hurry, damned

Shimr? Is my luck sleeping? Why are my mind and heart so tense and disturbed tonight? I need wine to sooth my nerves. Do not go, there is danger on the way. Turn around, for the province of Ray is what counts.

[At the perimeter of Hussein's encampment.]

Shimr:

For God's sake, answer me, Abbas. Either give me the answer or be ready for battle. Nights like these are not for sleeping. He is not visible to me even as the sun in the night. The darkness of the night brings my love to the surface. Love induces different aims in each person. As for me, I am captured by the promise of the prince of darkness.

[to his Dasmascene dagger]

It is time for you to spill blood. Come out of your scabbard, o crescent moon! If my sword fails to conquer during the battle, and my dagger fails to cut the throat of the Imam, the son of the Imam, then let us have peace, and I am for war. If you want peace, I am for war, if you seek it I see a holy ghost standing guard. Whose tent is that? My humble intelligence cannot describe his attributes, and how could I? Can an ant describe the attributes of the kingly Imam? O King of the universe, sublime prince Abbas, come out of your royal camp.

[In the encampment of Hussein]

(4492)

Abbas:

Someone has been calling me from the left and from the right. He calls my name and by this name he seeks to disgrace himself and achieve fame. People have forsaken Hussein for Yazid - I am afraid they will all

become idolators. Why does this upside-down world not come to an end? The exalted are cursed and the mean are revered. Arise! The earth is filled with calamity and sedition. Straighten your back and observe the tumult behind the tents. O Ali Akbar, the beautiful cypress of Hussein, and Qasim, the candle in his gloomy nights, rise up and hold your swords to watch over his camp for the breeze wafts the smell of blood from the plain.

Shimr:

Greetings to you, who are praised by God day and night.

Abbas:

Someone has called me by name from a distance. What is your auspicious command, O Exalted One? Who are you who has been calling my name from afar? Who are you who is thundering behind the tents?

[At the perimeter.]

Shimr:

O standard-bearer of Hussein, King of Karbala, be well. Salutations! O Commander of the opposing army, be well! I am eagerly awaiting you. Welcome and Be merry, for a feast has been prepared in your honor. The golden torches were set up in your honor. It is light from the earth to the sky. I am at your service, O Abbas. Give orders to this worthless servant of yours.

[In the encampment of Hussein.]

(4493)

Abbas:

Who is it that is praising me? Who is it that pretends to guide me. And who is the man who is trying to trick me? How can I welcome the standard-bearer of the villain? If you want to approach the tent of Abbas, then you want to be cleft in twain - so come forward.

Shimr:

O beautiful and radiant Prince, for me you hold the rank o a king and the Ruler of the Earth. You are as magnificent as Solomon! I am only a weak ant. The learned and the ignorant both call me Shimr, but I am only a beggar at your court.

Abbas:

O filthy, ugly, atheistic oppressor, I do not wish to see your sinister face. Robber of faith, outcast of the faithful, I have no business with you. I serve the people and the religion. You are the enemy of Hussein, I am the slave in his service. It is clear what you are. It is clear what I am.

Shimr:

O King, my head and soul are under your feet; so much so that I am ready to fight for you. I carry an order from Yazid appointing you commander of the army. Let me fight at your side.

Abbas:

Do not abuse my name in front of my noblemen. for as long as I have my head and soul together, with many of my companions I shall sacrifice myself for the beloved.

(4494)

Shimr:

Why do you cast aside the generous decree of the King of Syria (Yazid)? One who walks should look in front lest he fall into a hole. O semblance of Ali, have you not heard that a tiny mosquito can kill an elephant? You boast, saying that you are Hussein's servant. But remember how much Joseph suffered at the

hands of his brothers, and that the villain Cain killed his brother because he had a grudge. Moses was a righteous prophet but he let his people suffer from thirst. Desert your brother so that pain and sorrow will desert you. Come to our army, and accept its command.

Abbas:

O Disgraced One, you know nothing of Abel's status. You are trying to make me look like Cain. Have you not heard the Qur'anic verse about sacrifice? Can you not distinguish between that and the story of Cain? If you are not aware of the high rank of the descendants of Ali, then read the revelations of the Qur'an. The Creator out of His munificence has bestowed upon us Salsabil, Kawthar, the Euphrates and the Nile as a dowry. Stop this nonsense, O Rude One, for I cannot forsake Hussein. Your attempt to mislead me is like Satan's attempt to deceive Ishmael inside the Ka'aba.

Shimr:

It is not without reason that I, Shimr, came on such a dark night. Otherwise it is not a good time to visit a friend. The love for a kinsman stirred my heart. The one who does not fall in love in spring is not a man. A plant that does not sprout at Nowruz is nothing but firewood.

Abbas:

It is the insult to Hussein in your talk and not the affront to politeness that shocks me. The sacrifice of Ali Akbar makes me hot with anger at you. This is a great and serious matter.

(4495)

Shimr:

Pledge allegiance to Yazid and rescue yourself from death. Better to be a commander than to die in your own blood. Listen to my advice, my words are as precious as pearls. One should not tell the words reserved for a friend to a stranger. Nor should one complain about a friend to an enemy.

Abbas:

Look at Hussein. Destiny is pulling him towards his end and he cannot hide his feelings. He laments the forthcoming captivity of his loved ones, he grieves the imminent death of Ali Akbar.

Shimr:

Let me give you a word of advice, do not consider it wrong. The flower's freshness lies in the Zephyr wind. Caging nightingales in the season of roses and tulips is nothing but persecution. No one loves you as much as I do. You are like the sun.

Abbas:

Listen to the children, to their burning, torrid groans. Turmoil rules this plain. What religion allows such oppression upon Hussein's children? Do not think that Hussein, the Cypress, is trembling because of a Zephyr wind, but because he hears the nightingales (his children) moan).

Shimr:

Be Yezid's ally from the bottom of your heart and take command of the Syrian army. Save me from turbulent fear for you. Following Hussein is a hope built on credit. Do not exchange cash for credit. Forget the promise of Paradise. Fight not, make peace, save your life; one should not let an opportunity go by.

(4496)

Abbas:

I have taken an eternal oath to submit my life, to set my body upon the edge of a sword and a spear. This blaze is like that set upon Abraham. The love of God permeates me so give me no advice. No physician has a remedy for love. Your path is a dead end, a path full of sin. May arrows pierce me if I close my eyes on Hussein. Keep away, for your words have boiled my blood. Your malicious company sets a terrible torture upon my soul.

Shimr:

We came to this plain upon the King's (Yezid's) orders with the army and its commanders. By God, there are no virtuous men in the army. We rested during the day while the sun was up. We have come at night to see the Moon (Abbas). Join us and become the commander of our army. We have come a long way to see you.

Abbas:

We are here on this plain not to seek glory. We have been forced to take refuge here. We are here neither to fight nor to make peace. We are servants and lovers of the Imam, Hussein. We have come from Hijaz to the banks of the Euphrates standing firmly beside Hussein. We are here to enforce our rights.

Shimr:

O excellent one, I am disappointed in you. I am Shimr with a thousand things on my mind. If Hussein is right and born right then I have a quarrel with truth itself. From dusk to dawn, from Kufa to Damascus, I am being endlessly taunted. How much patience do you think I have? Do not fight against me.

Abbas:

I am a lion, and my neck is chained by love. I am firm in my love for my beloved. I am a lion and the heir of the Lion of God (Ali). I have no dispute with foxes like you. Get away, O chosen disciple of Satan. I have no desire to carry on a discussion with you.

(4497)

Shimr:

A wise man would not touch a lancet. You are walking into a ditch of trouble. Being on the opposite side from you breaks my back, although I am as strong as a mountain. Have mercy upon Sakina's thirst. She will die of thirst on the banks of the Euphrates.

Abbas:

Sakina's thirst breaks my heart and your futile speech sets fire to my mind. O impudent oppressor,

depart or else I shall break your ugly mouth with a punch
and cover your body with blood and dust.

Shimr:

We are related on my mother's side. Let the
Eternal Judge be my witness. As a fasting man awaits a
signal of the end of the fast, I am awaiting your
expression of allegiance to Yazid.

Abbas:

On this journey, the only thing on my mind is
Hussein. I am among people, but my mind is somewhere
else. I cannot stop frequenting the court of the King
of the universe, Hussein. There is fortune in his
service and salvation at his door. O bastard, what is
your religion that our blood is sweeter to you than the
milk of your mother?

Shimr:

Are you not withdrawing from the prime of your
life? Do not give up the riches of the world for the
sake of one brother. A man's life is short. Come with
me and I shall show you a carefree life full of pleasure
and luxury. O Lord, I am your slave - be my master.

Abbas:

When I ride my horse on the day of battle, I shall
smash the warriors' heads and I shall paint the sharp
side of my Hatdari sword purple with blood. Get away or
your body will become the target of my sword.

(4498)

Shimr:

Do not be perturbed, O son of the Arab Amir, whale
of the Red Sea, warrior of all the Arab territories.
Look at my sword. It has defeated Kurds and Zabulis,
yet I stand before you obsequiously.

Abbas:

Speak nonsense no more, rude, damned one. Do not
count yourself equal among us. Your father is a Syrian
and mine is Arab. You have no status. Get away or you
will be the target of my sword.

Shimr:

You are the flame of the tribe's candle for you are related to me through your beautiful mother. Do not pride yourself on being Hussein's water-carrier. I have got for you a letter to glory. Your humiliation is my disgrace and your suffering is my shame.

Abbas:

How could there be another Murteza? The sky would never dream of another woman such as Fatima Zahra. I live in the shadow of my brother, the King of religion. Shame upon me if I desert Hussein. Get away or else your body will be the target of my sword.

Shimr:

Do not be perturbed, do not kick your servant from your door.

Abbas:

This is all deceit, this is a trick. I know it.

Shimr:

I am Shimr; I have come to make you aware of what is good and what is bad for you.

Abbas:

What is the enemy preparing? I shall take out my spear.
(4499)

Shimr:

Do not boil with rage. I am your guest and my heart palpitates.

Abbas:

Is it not Hussein who is your guest, whose wife sleeps thirsty?

Shimr:

Greetings to you from Kuli ibn Sa'd Azraq.

Abbas:

What do they have to say to Abbas, o persecutor?

Shimr:

They offer you lands in Ray, Rum, Farang and China.

Abbas:

For what purpose? For what reason? Say, infidel.

Shimr:

To forsake Hussein, and become the commander of his enemies.

Abbas:

God forbid, God forbid. Shut your mouth, o cruel oppressor.

Shimr:

You are alone and Hussein is alone. One flower does not make a spring.

Abbas:

The love of Hussein, the grandson of the Prophet, is priceless to me.

(4500)

Shimr:

Sit happily on the throne and I shall stand guard.

Abbas:

Seeing handsome Qasim makes me happy.

Shimr:

Come to my side and become the leader.

Abbas:

I feel ashamed for Sakina's thirst.

Shimr:

Come to my side and I will fill your saddle with gold.

Abbas:

I would rather die than see my sister, Zainab, handcuffed.

Shimr:

Are you willing to see Kulthum held in disrespect and homeless?

Abbas:

I am will to see her weep upon my grave.

Shimr:

I will give you so much gold and so many gems that you will not be able to count them.

Abbas:

And what shall I answer my father, Ali?

Shimr:

Say, 'I am sorry, for it was law and order.'

(4501)

Abbas:

I will be ashamed in front of Fatima Zahra on the Day of Judgement.

Shimr:

You do not appreciate the Ummaya Monarchy, my friend.

Abbas:

A wise man does not do something that he will regret.

Shimr:

Listen carefully, peace is better than war.

Abbas:

For me, life is a disgrace without the Prince of Religion.

Shimr:

You cannot rival such an army, o second Haidar.

Abbas:

I shall destroy Kufa as easily as Khaibar.

Shimr:

Innumerable soldiers will come from Kufa, Syria and Aleppo.

Abbas:

And Abbas will face them all like a formidable lion.

(4502)

Shimr:

Your scimitar shakes the skies. Angels are the slaves of your court. I pray that nothing wrong comes to you. I owe so much to your old mother. I cannot be ungrateful to her. For the last time I say, come to us or you shall be killed. Your end will come soon.

Abbas:

Shame on you, ungrateful one. Why have you obliterated all respect for Ali's household? We do not need your kindness, o impudent snob. On the day of war I will not ask for your help. Let your army roll in today until the end of the world. Let them fill the space from east to west, from the sky to the fish. they will all be broken like a small bristle by the scimitar of Abbas.

Shimr:

I am your slave, ready to sacrifice myself. I have a command from Yazid, my lord. I am the son of Zal, Rustam. I am the warrior Afrasiyab. Like Faramarz, I am the champion of the army. I am a temple, I am a convent, a priest, a monk, a Zangi. I closed the book on Uthman, I am a will of iron. Woe to the time when my horse is saddled and I enter the stage of war. Neither the enemy's horse nor the rider shall last long fighting against me. Now, hear more: I am a rogue and a thief. I steal people's collyrium from their eyes. I am Satan's guide and perceptor. I am the teacher of that wicked creature. Seven hundred and seventy followers learned from me. I know the mysteries of all nations. Only one equals me in knowledge, I am the mufti, I am graceful. I am a sage; I may be doomed to burn in Hell, but I can raise hell in Karbala. I am an old dragon, a scorpion, a goat, a snake. Sometimes I am thunder, sometimes lightning, sometimes fire, sometimes soft, sometimes cold, sometimes burning like fire, sometimes fast, sometimes slow, sometimes as black as a snake. At times I am bitter as venom. I am the enemy of God, His Prophet and Murtaza. I am not the victim of oppression in the catastrophe at Karbala. I am the oppressor. You may think I am a grocer from Damascus or a haberdasher from Zangibar or India or one of those filthy mouse-eating (or lizard-eating) Arabs. I am your enemy, the seed of
(4503)

menses, traitors and adulterers. I have seven breasts like a dog. I am the role-carrier of Shimr and the invoker of the King of religion, Hussein. I hate Shimr, that son-of-a-bitch.

Abbas:

O shameless bastard and impudent son of the damned Zuljusah, I swear by the great God, His Prophet. and by the broken heart of the pure (Fatima) Zahra that no matter what their number, no matter from whence they come, even if the sand of the desert of the leaves of the trees turn into armies of the foe, I will not be afraid nor alarmed. I will draw my sword, call Haydar's name and attack your armies. O outcast on the Day of Judgement, I swear by the hands of Hussein's standard-bearer, which are the hands of Ali. Who can equal God's hands? O damned people. When I put my feet in the stirrups and mount my horse, I will not take off my

boots nor shall I remove the helmet of bravery and zeal. I shall not unfasten the lion's armor from my back until I have had justice from the people of oppression and evil. Then I shall ride to Syria where I shall unseat the damnable adulterer, the cruel, oppressive son of the cannibal Hind (Yazid) from his throne. I shall lead him on a leash in public and make him run after a horse. I shall humiliate him to the fullest and bring him to the bench of the honorable judge Hussein ibn Ali Abu Talib. All the people shall know that courage such as this is not characteristic of ordinary men except for Abul Fazl, the standard-bearer, who is the water-carrier of Hussein's orphans. I will be proud of myself before the jinn and angels because of this great achievement. If the purpose were not Hussein's martyrdom I would get permission from him to use my sharp sword to strike terror in Karbala in such a way that nothing would grow from now to eternity for friend or foe. But what can I do? If I do not immolate myself for the followers of my father, who will become the intercessor for this poor nation of sinners? I swear by God that I have accepted my death and to having my head raised upon spear-points. I shall be grateful for God's mercy. Go, o son of Satan. Boasting to Abbas, from now until the Day of Judgement will do you no good.

(4504)

Shimr:

From what ... (text missing)

Abbas:

I am a pearl from the sea of wilayat. I am a lion and the son of the Lion of God. O inferior oppressor, Karbala alone cannot frighten me. Even if you fill the universe with soldiers I will not fear them. I will fight all of them and corner them. I will erase the name of Yazid, that infidel dog, from the face of the earth. I will throw him in the dust and humiliate him! But what can I do? The Shi'a are sinners and need Hussein's intercession. O friends of Hussein, cry out "O Ali!"

Shimr:

O friends ... (text missing)

[In the encampment of Hussein]

Ali Akbar:

O God, what is happening on this plain of calamity? There is turmoil on the plain of Karbala. This night, the spiteful enemy has launched a surprise attack on us. With no water in my throat, I am going to fight the deceitful foe on this miserable plain. Bless me, should I die, my dear father Hussein.

Qasim:

O God, what is happening on this plain of calamity? There is turmoil on the plain of Karbala. This night the spiteful enemy has launched a surprise attack on us. With no water in my throat, I am going to fight the deceitful foe on this miserable plain. Bless me, should I die, my dear uncle Hussein.

(4505)

Sakina:

O Lord, has the world come to an end? Have the wheels of the universe stopped turning? O uncle, standard-bearer of Karbala, get up and take a look at us. I see the standard but not the standard-bearer. Aunt Zainab, homeless Zainab, wake up, wake up, wake up. The cruel enemy surrounds the camp. Wake up, wake up.

Zainab:

O sweet singing nightingale, why are you wailing in the middle of the night? Why are you sighing so desperately from your heart? Has fire kindled your soul? Why are you wailing in the middle of the night?

Sakina:

Come, o aunt, observe the turmoil and listen to the enemy's drums beating. I have no desire to live. Wake up my father.

Zainab:

Zainab is distressed. Has her luck turned from her? Prepare yourself for captivity. The confusion and uproar is coming from the enemy. Zainab will certainly be taken prisoner. Wake up brother. Wake from your restful sleep and look into Zainab's eyes.

Imam Hussein:

You interrupted my dream of a musk-scented paradise. You interrupted my conversation with my father and grandfather. I heard my mother's voice saying, "Hussein will be our guest tomorrow night." You interrupted my dream about my brother.

Zainab:

O companion of my sad heart, the enemy has penetrated the camp. You can hear the beating of the drums of war by the despicable enemy. Listen, o brother, for I am going to be taken into captivity.

(4506)

Abbas:

I call upon you, Qasim and Akbar. Roar the thunderous cry ALLAHU AKBAR (God is Great).

Imam Hussein:

Call Abbas, my close companion and great and gallant warrior.

Zainab (entering the tent of Abbas):

Abbas, O brother, light of Haidar's eyes, the dearest offspring of the Prophet is calling you. I see the standard, but I do not see the standard-bearer. Maybe he has deserted us.

Imam Hussein:

Do not wail, dear sister. Hurry and send Ali Akbar to me.

Zainab (entering the tent of Ali Akbar):

Akbar, my darling, open your eyes. Fear makes my bones tremble. Opne your eyes. Alas, o brother, there is no sign of Ali Akbar. Where has he gone? My sweet Ali Akbar?

Imam Hussein:

Do not wail, do not weep, do not groan. Go, call the light of Hasan's eyes to my presence.

Zainab (entering the tent of Qasim):

O tranquility of my soul, o sweet Qasim, wake up. Alas, o my brother Qasim is not in his bed either. Fate has turned against us.

Imam Hussein:

O sister, gather all the children and sit in the tents. I shall look for Abbas and Akbar so that I can thwart the army of darkness. O brave brother Abbas, standard-bearer of my army, and Ali Akbar, my son, where have you gone?

(4507)

[Sees Abbas]

O Abbas, where have you been? Without you I am helpless.

Abbas:

O mighty King, joy of Fatima (Zahra), greetings to you. Why do you hang your head? Wht are you so sad? Are you thinking about martyrdom?

Imam Hussein:

O light of my tearful eyes, greetings to you. Joy of my heart and my soul, greetings. Your absence in the encampment distressed me. I had to guard it alone against the infidel villain.

Abbas:

Know, dear Brother, that in the middle of the night Shimr Zuljushan came to my tent. His words set fiore to my heart and finally I chased him away with my sword.

Imam Hussein:

I have heard that the commander of the enemy gave a written decree of amnesty to Shimr to deliver it to you. Go ahead, deny your brotherhood with the Prophet's heir. Tell helpless Zainab that she is not your sister. You need not help me, the forlorn one. Ali Akbar suffices for martyrdom with us. Go and save yourself, and God be with you.

(4508)

Abbas:

O friends what should I do with my shame? Hussein has discharged me from his service. My sword and dagger are useless except in the service of my brother. If you, Hussein, are not my protector I have no use for my helmet. I shall go barefoot to do homage at my father's grave. Where shall I turn for friends? O people, I am abandoned. O cruel Karbala, where is your hospitality? O earth, I shall bury my head in your bosom for I have no mother to lean on. O Zephyr wind, blow on Medina and tell my mother that I have been abandoned. I am without friends or family. The forlorn are buried without a shroud nor camphor, and they take their dreams and hopes to their graves with them. How awful it is to die in a strange land. O dear Sakina, my niece, be my intercessor with Hussein. Go to your father and implore him on my behalf and tell him, "O father, my uncle seems abandoned by family and friends. He is alone."

Sakina:

O matchless uncle, why are you crying? May Sakina be your sacrifice. O uncle, do you want Hussein's head mounted upon a spear? I am distraught. Do you know

what you have done? Uncle, you broke your promise to my father. You conversed with the damnable Shimr. You broke my father's back.

Abbas:

Come here, dear niece. Come close, o broken-hearted one. Sit on my lap like a flower. Your sorrow has set me on fire. Your face is pale as the moon from thirst and there are fever blisters on your lips. I am the water-carrier and it shames me. There is nothing I can do. Blood runs down my eyes from sorrow. Hussein is friendless and weary, and Qasim shall wear a shroud instead of wedding garments. After I die the spring of our lives will dry up as in autumn and the world will succumb to the terror of our enemies. They will show their wickedness and set fire to our tents. I grieve for you, for they will burn your clothes and chain your arms and laugh at your cries and slap your beautiful face. Where will I be at that hour, to take revenge upon those infidels, to save you from evil?

(4509)

[There is a pause]

O Hussein, to whose court angels come in need, no one has ever dismissed a servant such as Abbas from his court. If you are ashamed of me as a brother, take me as a servant, do not think that I am the darling of Medina. Do not send me away from your blessed presence. It would be the greatest disloyalty to leave you. Take the standard away from me and give it to Ali Akbar and let him be your standard-bearer instead of me.

Imam Hussein:

Do not say those words, o Abbas. You are my most respected brother, o Abbas. Do you want to make me sad? Go say farewell to the distressed Zainab.

Abbas:

For the sake of the martyrs, I beg forgiveness from whomever I have made unhappy or injured on this journey. Pretend it never happened.

Zainab:

O joy of my youth and the cane of my old age. You are going now, and by God my captivity will come true. My humiliation will be a guarantee of your eternal life.

Abbas:

Alas, from now on it will not be possible for us any more to go from Hijaz to Medina, in glorious grandeur, so that I could carry the flag in front of your camel all the way to the Prophet's grave.

Zainab:

I swear by my mother's and father's graves that you and Hussein are one and the same to me. Do not think, o brother, that I consider myself your equal. I am your servant. I swear it on (Fatima) Zahra's grave.

(4510)

Abbas:

Please do not say these words. You are the lady of Hussein's camp and I am his obedient servant. I, the despondent one, am not your brother but the humblest of your slaves.

Zainab:

From the Prophet I heard that you would die as a martyr in Karbala. Now that I shall not be permitted to see your noble face again, allow me to kiss your hand.

Abbas:

Lucky is he who has a mother in a strange land if not a mother, at least a sister. Come, sister, hear my last will. Let me tell you my last wishes. Take care of Umm Kulthum. Wherever there is a mourning ceremony take her along. If by chance you journey to your home town, tell my old, lonely mother that if she has not been pleased with her Abbas up to this time, she should not be sad, since he has redeemed himself; she should be proud. If you see the bride-to-be of the martyr Akbar, my little daughter Sughayra, tell her I am sorry I did not arrange to see her wedding to Akbar.

There will be three signs of my bitter death. Hear them from me, mournful sister. The first one is when the flag falls and the enemy shall sigh with relief. They will say, "Hussein has lost his brother". The second is when the oppressors cut off my hands from both arms. The third is when you hear my cry. Then cry out, "O God, save him!" Then, my despondent sister, you must drag my body away, for I have a countless number of enemies. My pure body will be covered with myriads of wounds. When they take you to Damascus, they will show you the martyrs first. Prince Akbar's mother will embrace her son's corpse. Sakina will cry for her father until she loses her mind.

(4511)

Do not leave me alone in the midst of the martyrs. Tell Umm Kulthum to dishevel her hair and wail for me. O sister of the King of Martyrs, wrap me in a shroud with your own hands. I do not want the enemy to see my defiled and camphorless body. The enemy may think I am an orphan who has nothing but tears in his eyes. There is no more time, sister, forgive me, forgive me. Farewell.

Zainab:

O God, O Just One, I wish that no sister would ever witness her brother's death. Your departure, o brother, breaks my back and ties me in chains of distress. O Just One, who has seen a sister wrap a shroud around her brother? One who has no brother is like a bird with no wings.

Sakina:

O Commander-in-chief of this meager army, o crowned uncle, standard-bearer of the King of the universe, my Prince, do you remember when your daughter, my rose-cheeked cousin, became betrothed of Ali Akbar? What a splendid wedding, what a magnificent celebration! Medina was lit with the flames of my sigh. Let me kiss your hand and be your sacrifice. I am thirsty, uncle, very thirsty. I am dying of thirst,

my mournful soul is leaving me. [She faints]

Abbas:

O Sakina, why have you fainted? I am ashamed to look at your beautiful face, Let me be your sacrifice. I nurtured you and fostered you and worried about you. O Light of my eyes, I shall get permission from Hussein to fight. Either I lose my hands and die or I will fetch water for you. Brother Hussein, how long should I witness so much pain and sorrow? How long should I stand ashamed before your daughter? Sakina needs water. Give me permission to go and fight and challenge the swords of the enemy. O dear brother, may God protect you and keep all calamities away from you.

(4512)

Imam Hussein:

It is very hot, o Abbas, as on the Day of Resurrection. You are the water-carrier. Go find water for the orphans.

Abbas:

Tell that rancorous Shimr, that Godless man, that Abbas, Hussein's servant, is calling him.

Shimr:

What... (Text missing)

[On the battlefield]

Abbas:

The children are crying from thirst. I have come to fetch water for them.

Shimr:

If... (Text missing)

Abbas:

O possessor of Zulfaqar, it is time for help. O
father of the eleven Imams, it is the time for help.

Shimr:

Friends... (Text missing)

Abbas:

O Euphrates, you are pleasant but unfaithful. Why
are you distant from the thirsty lips of Hussein?

[In Hussein's encampment]

Sakina:

Come, uncle, hurry! Fill your water pouch with
water! Help us! Come, uncle! Bring water!

(4513)

[On the battlefield]

Abbas:

Go to the tents, to the king of Karbala. Arrange
for my mourning. Go to the tents.

[In Hussein's encampment]

Sakina:

I do not need water, uncle, I need you. I must
talk to you. Come, uncle, come!

[On the battlefield]

Shimr:

O soldiers, do not allow Abbas to take water to
the tents of the King of the Universe.

[They fight]

O Hussein, I have cut off your standard-bearer's
hand. O Hussein, I have finished him on the
battleground.

Abbas:

When you are powerless, then invoke Ali. My right hand has fallen from my body. O God, let my left hand be at Hussein's service: I have yet a left hand. What a pity, one hand cannot clap.

[In Hussein's encampment]

Imam Hussein:

I hear a thunderous wailing, "I lost my hand". It comes from my water-carrier.

[On the battlefield]

(4514)

Shimr:

Weep and mourn in Karbala, for I have cut off Abbas' left hand. O standard-bearer of the believers, Abbas remember when I asked you to forsake Hussein? You said, "God Forbid". Tell Sakina that water is on its way so that she will stop her wailing.

Zainab:

Your hand... (Text missing)

Shimr:

Come, o infidel army, gather around the standard-bearer of the Lonely King. My name is Hakam, murderer of Abbas. I shall smash his brain with my club. Abbas, profess your faith before I cut off your head and separate it from your body.

Abbas:

Alas, my two hands fell from my body; they were my wings. Alas, Hussein has lost his standard-bearer. Alas, Zainab will be humiliated by scornful people. She will be tormented by my death. Alas, my mother does not know that my two hands have been severed from my body. No one could equal me in strength if my hands were still on my arms. In the midst of this tumult and

confusion I hope only to get a glimpse of Hussein's face once more. O Hussein, lonely am I. May I be your sacrifice, you are so kind and generous.

[To Shimr.]

O cowardly oppressor, accursed one. Where is justice, where is humanity? As long as my hands were mine, you did not speak of taking out my brain. Luck is on your side. Otherwise, I would have clawed your heart out like a lion.

Shimr:

Give... (Text missing)

(4515)

Abbas:

O God, Hakam's blow has knocked me out. O Hussein, come to my aid, o hope of the faithful, come and rescue your brother who is soaked in blood.

[Hussein rushes toward Abbas.]

Imam Hussein:

O brother Abbas, o brother Abbas, o brother put your head in my lap.

Abbas:

Young man, leave me alone, for God's sake.

Imam Hussein:

Do not grieve, it is I, Hussein, who has come to your side.

Abbas (to Shimr):

Do not cut off my head. Let me see my brother at my side. I am ashamed before Sakina; do not take me to the tents as long as I am conscious. Sakina has wanted water. I cannot bring her even a drop.

Imam Hussein:

O Abbas, my brother and the backbone of my army, my friend and the strength of my arms, where is your flag? Where are your hands? O strength of my arms, who has cast an arrow into your eyes? O afflicted one, you are shutting your eyes upon this world and are breaking my heart. My friend, my brother, the strength of my arm, Sakina is restless, sitting and waiting. She said, "My uncle, bring water." O God, for the sake of young Abbas, I ask you to forgive the sins of all the Shi'a.

- FINIS - (93)

Below is a selection from the "Ta'ziyeh of the Court of Yezid", whose action takes place at the court of the Umayya

(4516)

Caliph Yezid in Damascus. The following is a dialogue between Caliph Yezid and Shimr.

Shimr:

Health to you, O king of Syria!

Yezid:

Greetings, and how is it with you?

Shimr:

I have news.

Yezid:

Of what?

Shimr:

Of the battlefield of Karbala.

Yezid:

Is it news of triumph or defeat?

Shimr:

As luck would have it, victory! A thousand blessings, the whole world is at your command.

Yezid:

The King of Religion, was he martyred?

Shimr:

Yes! He was bathed in his own blood.

Yezid:

I give thanks to God. Did you participate?

(4517)

Shimr:

Yes.

Yezid:

Whom did you slay?

Shimr:

His brother.

Yezid:

What was his name?

Shimr:

Holy Abbas, the Faithful.

Yezid:

How did he fight?

Shimr:

Bravely.

Yezid:

What else?

Shimr:

The army was beaten.

Yezid:

By arrows?

Shimr:

No. He (Abbas) himself attacked like a dragon!

Yezid:

Did the army resist?

(4518)

Shimr:

No!

Yezid:

What happened to it?

Shimr:

It was put to flight!

Yezid:

By a single warrior?

Shimr:

Yes, like flies before a griffon (breed of dog).

Yezid:

How many soldiers did he kill?

Shimr:

A thousand.

Yezid:

And how was the day finally won?

Shimr:

By an assault.

Yezid:

Bravo! Did Hurr fight alongside Hussein?

Shimr:

Yes, he did.

Yezid:

But, was he not with you?

(4519)

Shimr:

He turned against us.

Yezid:

How many men comprised your army?

Shimr:

One hundred thousand.

Yezid:

And how many men comprised the army of the King of Religion?

Shimr:

Little more than a troop (of cavalry).

Yezid:

What happened to your army?

Shimr:

It returned.

Yezid:

From where?

Shimr:

From Karbala.

Yezid:

Why?

Shimr:

All were cowards and infidels.

(4520)

Yezid:

Who were those who fought for Hussein?

Shimr:

The young Wahab.

Yezid:

Who else?

Shimr:

Habib.

Yezid:

And who else?

Shimr:

Own, handsome as the moon.

Yezid:

Who else?

Shimr:

Khaled-e-As'd.

Yezid:

Who else?

Shimr:

The Turkish slave of the King of Religion.

Yezid:

Who else was killed?

(4521)

Shimr:

*Abu Amr-e-Nahshaly, and the sword of hatred cut
Soweid in two places.*

Yezid:

How was Abbas beaten?

Shimr:

He was stripped.

Yezid:

All were beaten?

Shimr:

Yes, from high to low.

Yezid:

Did they not fear the army?

Shimr:

They sacrificed their lives.

Yezid:

Did they not fear the lances?

Shimr:

No, they served as ornaments for the lances.

Yezid:

Was Akbar martyred?

Shimr:

Yes, pity the young man.

(4522)

Yezid:

Did he not see his mother?

Shimr:

Yes.

Yezid:

What did she do?

Shimr:

She lamented.

Yezid:

In Karbala, did Hussein ask anything of you?

Shimr:

Yes.

Yezid:

When?

Shimr:

Let me tell you. The people did not lament and they cried: O Hussein! Did not resound in the Heavens! When the Hand of God (Imam Hussein) falls upon the earth, when the sons of Mustapha (Muhammad) roll in blood and dust. We chose ten persons to swear an oath for the slain. We went to the place of supplication and of the Shams-ava'z Zoha, o sire. On arriving at said place, the other nine fled, but I remained there. I threw the dagger from my belt, wrapped the long skirt of my robe around my body and removed the sleeve. I beheld the Eye of Heaven, I sighed and It said to me: O shameless Shimr!

Yezid:

What did he say?

(4523)

Shimr:

He said words which inflamed me.

Yezid:

Read to me the words of Hussein, o cursed Shimr!
(crocodile tears!)

Shimr:

He begged me, "Shimr, I am thirsty, give me a drop of water and cut off my head."

Yezid:

Did you give him water?

Shimr:

No, I gave him nothing.

Yezid:

Was he martyred with his throat parched?

Shimr:

Yes.

Yezid:

That action shocks us. Did Hussein weep at Karbala?

(4524)

Shimr:

Yes, on two occasions the eyes of Hussein overflowed with tears. The first time was when Ali Akbar fell from his saddle to the earth and cried: "O amiable father, come! Then the King of Religion, like lion mounted a horse and attacked the army like a killer whale on an ocean of lances. Sometimes he struck to the right, sometimes to the left. His glance fell upon the army and the tents. Presently he cried: "Zol Djaneh", then he halted, shifting his glance to the sky and then to the earth. He lifted the corpse of his adolescent son, put it on the saddle and took the corpse from the battlefield to the tents.

Yezid:

Did Hussein weep again, o accursed one? (crocodile tears!)

Shimr:

When he lost his friends, his companions and his family. He did not ask another person to sacrifice himself. Ibn Saad said to us: "Run to the tents, see if you can find anything to plunder." All the army ran to the tents to plunder the goods of the camp. The King of Religion charitably.

Yezid:

What did he say?

Shimr:

He said: "O army with no shame, I am yet alive. Blush before my grandfather! While I live you shall not enter the camp."

Yezid:

After he was martyred, what did you do?

(4525)

Shimr:

A thousand crimes and injustices.

Yezid:

To whom?

Shimr:

To the holy family.

Yezid:

Why?

Shimr:

To please you.

Yezid:

Did you spitefully set fire to the tents?

Shimr:

Yes. We set fire to them. The smoke darkened the sky.

Yezid:

Did any child of Hussein survive?

Shimr:

Yes.

Yezid:

Who?

Shimr:

A young man who was ill.

(4526)

Yezid:

*A thousand melanomas upon your face, o Shimr.
Stop talking, I cannot endure more of such a tale.
(once again, crocodile tears!)*

(Invocation of Mir Aza)

*O God! For the blood which flowed from the head of
Mortaza Ali!*

*O God! For the pearly teeth of Mustapha (Muhammad)!
O God! For the poisoned corpse of (Imam) Hasan!
O God! For the sacred blood of the martyrs of
Karbala!*

*O God! For the hands severed from the holy body of
Abbas in the River Alquame (Euphrates)! Men and women,
beat your chests for love of (Imam) Hussein!*

*From the bottom of my heart, I, Mir Aza, am a
devotee of (Imam) Hussein (94)*

*Certainly among the longest and most comprehensive of all
taziyehs is The Miracle Play of Hasan and Husain, translated from
the original Persian by Sir Lewis Pelly and revised with
explanatory notes by Arthur N. Wollaston, first published in
1879.(94) So long is said ta'ziyeh that it must have taken several*

days to perform in its entirety. There is no indication as to stage directions nor as to what musical modes were used nor whether antiphonal singing was used. As with most Ta'ziyeh, the original author or authors are unknown. We shall include some scenes from said Ta'ziyeh.

(4527)

SCENE XII

The departure of Hussein from Medina, of his way to Kufa.

Hussein:

Troops of gloom have made a sudden invasion on the heart, the capital of the human soul; they have plundered all her property - patience, resolution, and fortitude - and laid waste her fortifications. Fate has become a guide to the commander of the caravan of faith, and Doom is ever crying, "Bind up your litters, and start." We must one day set out, my soul, from this transitory abode, and travel onwards to our eternal home.

Zainab:

Muharram has come; this is the period when moroseness encamps in the front of the heart, when the armies of grief get their barracks appointed for them, when the Vintnor of Time fills his cup to the brim with the wine of anguish and sorrow, and the tale of Karabala becomes the talk of every gathering. Abandon your tyranny, O Heaven! Have you no fear of the Living Judge? For with God all impossibilities are possible.

Hussein:

O memorial of Fatima, o my beloved sister! O my miserable and oppressed Zainab! It is time to prove your sisterhood. Come, then, faithfully, like a dear soul, to Hussein, your brother. For the olfactory organ of my soul ever detects in you the fragrant perfume of Fatima, my mother, for you are indeed like her.

(4528)

Zainab:

O you by whose name the exalted throne of God has received its glorious height, and the dust of whose court is a crown of honor for the Archangel Gabriel, the faithful spirit! Hussein, dear brother, may your sister Zainab never live to see you sad in heart owing to the outrages of Time! Why is your mind in the same condition as Zainab's disheveled hair? Why do red coral drop pearls on the surface of jasmine flowers? Why do you weep? O light of my sight! Your presence is indeed to me the source of all future happiness, since the deaths of my grandfather, father and mother.

The Imam Hussein:

Dear sister, my mind is painfully vexed on account of the vexations of Time. How can I escape with my life from the malevolent designs of seditious men? If I remain at home in Medina I am not secure from the mischief of the enemy, for they seem to be everywhere in ambush to take my life. The family of Abu Sufiyan think that should I continue to remain here that I shall create a disturbance if the affairs of Yezid's government. Lest I should become a ruling caliph myself, they are attacking me on all sides, making my life bitter to me.

Zainab:

May the sorrowful Zainab die rather than see her dear Hussein so distressed and oppressed by calamities and misfortunes! He has retired into a corner, he has withdrawn from the world, having washed his hands from the caliphate, or government, and no longer covets a throne; still they do not leave him in peace in Medina, nor at Mecca. Where or to what country shall this miserable brother of mine go, then? Poor thing!

(4529)

Hussein:

Alas! Dear brother, as soon as you mentioned the name of Karbala, you brought on me worlds of affliction and grief. The mere name of Karbala kindles a flame in my soul, which causes so many tears as to immerse me in a sea of annihilation! Is Karbala a mine of sorrow and moroseness, a source for pains and anguish of heart, that its very mention has brought an abundance of grief to my mind?

Hussein:

Zainab, poor broken-hearted sister, the brightness of my tearful eyes. You have not yet seen Karbala, you are yet resting at home; the groans of the thirsty have not yet reached your ears, to make you quite unconscious. Why should you have an awe of this name Karbala? Why should you, o sister, be thus beforehand acquainted with grief?

Zainab:

Well, brother, what does Karbala mean, where I must suffer so much anguish? I do not suppose that anything will happen to me so long as I am under your auspicious protection. Who dares, when one has a dear brother like you, do me, or any of us, the least harm?

Hussein:

I will tell you a story. I will explain to you the misfortunes on the plain of Karbala. This Hussein, whom you cannot behold sad nor sullen, him shall the wicked Shimr slay, and sever his head from his body with a dagger from behind. They shall pierce through the throat of my infant child Ali Asghar with a sharp arrow. They shall behead Ali Akbar with their cruel sword. O poor sorrowful Zainab, they shall also cut off the hands of Abbas my standardbearer. My Kasim shall be maliciously put to death by them, and Heaven shall change his mirth into mourning. In all this I recommend to you, dear sister, submission and resignation, for God indeed loves the patient and humble.

(4930)

Zainab:

Ah! Dear brother may my soul, The afflicted, be a sacrifice for you! Do not call such a place Karbala, but a place of slaughter for the family of God's prophet! Why should the tree of Kasim's stature be felled to the ground by the axe of injustice? Why should Ali Akbar, the youth, roll in his own blood? For what crime on his part ought the two hands of Abbas to be cut off? What has the infant Asghar done that his poor throat should be pierced through by a malicious arrow?

Hussein:

The helpless people of the Prophet of God have no rock of salvation to fly to for a refuge except Hussein. They have no advocate with God on the Day of Judgement except Hussein. The way of salvation is shut against them on account of their manifold sins; and, except Hussein, none can make a proper atonement or expiation for transgression. Who could save the people of God from the wrath to come, seeing that the Empire of Faith has no other king but Hussein?

Zainab:

How many afflictions did my grandfather suffer for the sake of his elect people! How many pains did my father endure for their sake! My poor mother was hurt and injured by a cursed wretch, which caused me to rend

my garments. Behold my elder brother Hasan, how he gave his life for the salvation of his people! How he tasted mortal poison at last! You also, o light of my eyes, are going to deliver your precious soul to death, by the cruel instrumentality of the wicked Yezid for the sake of the same people!

(4931)

Hussein:

How blessed the moment when I shall joyfully see the dawn of the day of my murder appearing on the horizon! Oh! How blessed the morn, o poor sister, when I shall behold myself surrounded on all sides by the army of Yezid in the plain of Karbala! For a long time I have been anxiously waiting for that day; aye, for months, for years, yes, for a great long time!

Zainab:

I, the sorrowful one, have also consented to see Karbala, and to be in bonds of affliction and trials for the sake of the sinners among our people. I agree that after your death my lodging at night shall be the ruinous places in Syria, and that I shall walk bare-footed and bare-headed in the streets of Damascus by day! Since all our sufferings tend to the happiness of our sinful people, I submit to ride, with uncovered head, on the back of a she-camel!

Hussein:

Know, o my sorrowful sister, that I am greatly distressed today on account of my sad disappointments! Dear sister, after the death of my brother Hasan it is very hard, even shameful, that I should yet live. Try, kind sister, to somehow alleviate my pains, for I am every minute at war with my ill-luck.

Zainab:

If you desire it, dear brother, to have your sorrows mitigated, to have your bud-like heart to open, walk out for some minutes to the holy sepulcher of the Prophet Muhammad, and complain to him concerning the cruelties of these your enemies.

(4932)

Hussein (addressing the sepulcher):

Peace, o sorrowful grandfather of Hussein! O brightness of his bleeding eyes! Peace o Moses, of the Sinai of faith! Peace, o curer of every spiritual malady! O beloved of the glorious Lord! You in form the express image of His person! O you to whom every secret is revealed. You precious pearl of the sea of God's nearness, I have immeasurable grief in my heart. Command a cure for it, you sorrow-recognising physician.

A Voice from the sepulcher:

O you who are immersed in troubles, you stranger in your own country, you general of the (battle) field of Karbala, you pilgrim to God, and the light of God, if you wish to be delivered from these bonds endeavor to get you soon to Karbala.

Hussein:

Oh! What good tidings! This is the very desire of my heart! This is what Hussein wishes. The precious gem of the intercession for sinners is worthy to be purchased with the blood of Hussein, dear grandfather! Life is a trifling thing to be offered up for one's beloved; soul and body have no great value in this market.

The Prophet (from the sepulchre):

You the light of my eyes! The time approaches when you shall go to Karbala. The time of your drinking of the honey of martyrdom is close at hand. A little more, and you shall pitch your tents on the plain of tribulation; you shall listen to the mournful voice of those parched with thirst; and you shall clothe Akbar, the young cypress of the Prophet's garden, with a shrouding dress, and offer him to the most beloved as a token of affection. When the dagger of Shimr shall reach your throat, oh, take care not to forget to pray for your poor grandfather's sinful people.

(4933)

Hussein:

Oh! How can I, at such a time as that, forget your people, since I am going to offer myself voluntarily for their sakes? Yes, however great may be the severity of the trial, I will undergo all most willingly if I can but win the great object of intercession for transgressors. Seeing that it is the will of the Friend that I should obey His voice, I shall most willingly offer my very life to please Him.

The Prophet:

Since you have wholly prepared your heart for the undertaking, without any other motive but to do God's holy will; since you have taken away the heavy burden of grief that I had in my heart on account of mankind, namely, the great concern that I have for their salvation, go in peace! May God help you and assist you, o light of my eyes! I know that you have been longing in your heart for this office for many years.

Hussein (returning):

God be praised! I succeeded in my object. The news of Karbala has removed all sorrow from my mind. I have found behind this veil what my heart has sought for years. Now I am made free. I have washed my hands of life. I have girded myself to do the will of God.

A Messenger from Kufa entering Medina:

O you daily visitors of the enlightened sepulchre of the Prophet! O ye attendants at the threshold of the just one! Be pleased to direct me to that place, the porchway which is swept daily by the wings of Gabriel. I have come from Kufa, intending to have the honor of kissing Hussein's feet, and have brought him letters from Muslim, his cousin.

(4934)

The People of Medina:

Know then, o blessed-faced messenger, that your house belongs to Hussein, the illustrious offspring of the Prophet.

The messenger (to Hussein):

Peace be upon you, O candle burning before the face of the Prophet, you great founder of the temple of Islam, and cynosure of faith! I have just arrived from Kufa, o advocate of sinners, to kiss the dust of this heaven-like threshold. I have a letter from poor Muslim addressed to the dust of your holy feet, o most excellent king of all creatures, and several others written by the chiefs of Arabs in that country to your holiness, o Imam of the age!

Hussein:

O newly-arrived messenger of the destitute ones! On you be peace! Come near, for I smell the scent of separation from you. Your very countenance testifies to vagrancy and homelessness, and the blackness of your hair points out gloominess and dejection. Give me the letter of my exile cousin; let me see how he complains of his misfortunes, Deliver to me also the writings of the irreligious inhabitants of Kufa, severally and respectively, o good messenger.

The Messenger (delivering the letters):

O royal personage, to whose enlightened mind every secret is made manifest! Know first of all, this letter is from Habib the son of Muzabar; this other is from Shis the son of Raba', the unlucky wretch; this unhappy letter is from Shimr the accursed, from the address of which one can smell the scent of blood; this writing, again, is from the impious Ibn Sa'd; and this one from Barkar the sone of Hasin. O intercessor on the Last Day! The remaining letters are from your sincere friends, who are all anxiously waiting for your auspicious arrival at Kufa.

(4935)

Hussein:

O God, You are well aware that I have no other alternative save that of going to Karbala in a most miserable manner. Tell me, o messenger, in particular, how fares Muslim among the inhabitants of Kufa.

The Messenger:

May I be a sacrifice for you, o chief! When Muslim came to Kufa, the people of the city made the dust of his feet a crown for their heads, so glad were they to receive him. He entered the great Mosque and sat on the pulpit to declare to the people his credentials, and all the inhabitants of the twon extended to him the hand of loyalty. Now they are humbly entreating your heaven-resembling majesty to honor them with your august presence and direct the matter.

Hussein:

Alas! You did make me, o Heaven, to wander away from my home and country! You did at last remove me as a nightingale from the flower-garden! I fear, o cup-bearer of the age, that you will cause me to taste the same drink, at length, which you did previously pour down the throat of my brother Hasan.

The Messenger:

O solar orb of the sphere of the Imamate! O sky of generosity and seat of magnanimity! Why are you disinclined towards the people of Kufa? Why did you suspect their sincere assurances of allegiance? The expanse of the city is, throughout, full of beautiful tulips; her lilies are scarred because fo your absence! Have the goodness to honor the place with your gracious presence, and to remain joyously in that abode of delight.

(4936)

Hussein:

O Ali Akbar you the light of my heart and eyes! Go and call to me the fugitives and wanderers. Say, "Hussein, the king of faith, orders you to assemble all in the Mosque, for there have come letters of much importance from Muslim, and he intends to have them read from the top of the pulpit, that all you his friends may know the contents of the same."

Ali Akbar:

O ye assembly of friends and helpers, be it known to you that there have come letters from Muslim to my father. Gather you all from all quarters to the Mosque, according to the order of the chief of religion, the king of the two worlds, to hear there the important contents of these letters when read from the top of the pulpit.

Hussein (To Abbas, his brother):

Get you, dear brother, to the top of this pulpit, and explain to the assembly the import of Muslim's letter. Declare to the multitude of hearers the whole of what he states about himself.

(4937)

Abbas (in the pulpit, reading the letter):

A humble letter from Muslim to the king of all nations, the moon of Iraq-Arabi, the monarch of Iraq-Ajami, namesly, Hussein." After the ceremonies of sincere service, and the conclusion of heart-felt prayers for success in respect of the Imam, he goes on, saying, "O solar orb of the sphere of faith, although the country of Kufa is a field of tulips, yet without the rose of your face all are but throns in my eyes. The blow of your separation has rendered me disabled, and the fire of your absence has set my weary soul in flames. Come quickly to Kufa, for all the people of the country earnestly desire to see you, o most excellent Imam! Have the condescension, o sphere of generosity, to move hitherwardm as soon as possible, that you may provide direction in the paths of virtue to a people who are cheerfully expecting your blessed arrival."

Hussein (to Abbas):

O you by whose sword houses of emity have been turned into ruins, you whose awfulness has nade Heaven's back to tremble, read out also the letters written to me by the perfidious citizens of Kufa, the obstinate hewers of the tender pants of the garden of the family of Muhammad.

Abbas:

The Arab chiefs most humbly petition the dust of your sacred feet, o prince of genuine genealogy, saying, "The land of Karbala from end to end is a beautiful rose garden; the carpet of tulips and lilies is manifest and

spread everywhere. The Euphrates is as restless as quicksilver, anxious to meet you, and the land of Karbala has worn out its eyes in looking out for your coming. Come, come, all of us require and Imam; both high and low are, with their souls, desirous of receiving you. If you would refuse to come to Kufa, we shall make bitter complaints of you to Muhammad, the Prophet of God."

(4938)

Hussein (ascending the pulpit):

I fly to refuge to God from Satan the reprobate. In the name of God, the gracious, the merciful:- Oh, my lovers at home; you holy pilgrims in the way of faith; my sorrow-sharing, trouble-accompanied friends, today I am going to leave the country of Hijaz for Iraq, or Mesopotamia, to be a guide of director in religious affairs to the inhabitants of Kufa. Since we cannot hope to return from this journey of ours, in any of you, therefore, have at any time been offended by Hussein's conduct towards him, I beg him, seeing it is a time of everlasting separation, to pardon the faults of this poor exile!

The Inhabitants of Medina:

May all the inhabitants of Medina be a ransom for your soul! Come, let us revolve around you, o high priest of all mankind! Tell us how to act after your lamented departure; and what else can we do but rend the garments of our patience?

Hussein (returning home, and addressing Zainab):

O you who are concealed behind the veil of modesty! You sounding bell of the caravan of the plain of Karbala! Come, for the time of desolation has commenced; make at once preparations for this dreadful journey. The period has arrived, dear Zainab that you should leave home forever, to dwell in the solitary wilds of Karbala.

Zainab:

Alas! The promised time of the Apostle of God has come! The period of Hussein's flight to Karbala draws near! Alas! Woe to me! I am going to wander away from Medina! I am going to be a captive in the solitary desert! Oh! Dear brother, make no mention of traveling in my presence, for my melancholy heart becomes terribly disquieted by this word.

(4939)

Hussein:

Poor sister, what can Hussein do, seeing that he is under a great responsibility? I am, dear sister, obliged to go away from Medina, otherwise how would I leave the holy monument of God's chosen Prophet? But I cannot help it now! Go I must. There is a mystery not yet disclosed in regard to this journey. Take with you, sister, funeral garments and aromatic spices, since such things are the chief provisions for this road.

Zainab:

Oh! Do not mention funeral garments before this sad woman; make no mention of traveling nor separation from home. Do not utter the name of shrouds, or I will dress myself in them! Do not make this afflicted woman devoid of endurance and patience. In the presence of a nightingale whose rose garden has been visited by withering days, make no mention of the autumn season, nor name any meadow.

Hussein:

Do not wail, o honey lipped sister; call my brother Abbas. Fetch me also the coat of mail belonging to my father Ali, and the standard of Muhammad the universal Prophet, which things alone are left us as memorials in this world. For today I intend to give to Abbas, with my own hand, the office of standard bearer. Fetch me also weapons of war, and put them on Ali Akbar, my son, the brightest light of my eyes!

Zainab:

Gather yourselves together, all you multitudes of men, and congratulate Abbas on his new appointment, for today the uncle of Sakina is about to receive the standard bearer's office from Hussein the King of Medina. Today my Abbas is the commander of the Army of Islam.

(4940)

Hussein (to Abbas):

Dear brother, light of the eye of the noblest of men, o blossom of the meadow of Ali the cosen of God! O Abbas, hold this standard by my authority, and be my helper in the time of adversity; you will be the standard bearer of my army in this present enterprise.

Abbas:

May I be a ransom for you! I am obliged to you for the great favor conferred on me; most willingly Will I serve you at all times. Do not think of Abbas as a faithless servant, nor that he will ever leave you alone on this journey. I do not consider myself as your brother, but rather the as the dust of your feet; a slave of yours, having the ring of slavery in his ears.

Hussein:

Come to me, you light of my father's eyes; fasten to your waist the sword of Haidar (Ali ibn Abi Talib) the warrior; place the shield between your shoulders, dear Ali Akbar. And put on all armor of war, you brightness of my tearful eyes!

Ali Akbar:

I am the least of servants at your gate, o eternal king! May I be offered to the dust of your feet, you beloved of Muhammad! I wear the armor of war according to your imperial command. May Ali Akbar be a sacrifice for you!

Hussein (to Qasim, his nephew):

Come to me, my poor disappointed Qasim; come, for your sudden separation shall make my smoke ascend; come, let me put on you the armor of my excellent father, for I well remember the command of your highly beloved brother.

(4941)

Qasim:

I am ever thankful to you for the favors bestowed upon me; I am continually rejoicing in your loving kindness. Till the end of time I shall subscribe my name as your slave. By the dust of your feet do I swear that I consider myself a slave of yours bought with money; the collar of servitude I always wear about my neck.

Hussein:

Go, dear Sakina, to your matchless sister Fatima the younger; tell her that I wish to see her before I leave. Bring that poor suffering child here to me that I may see her pretty face once more.

Sakina (addressing Fatima):

Come with me, dear ailing, feverish sister, because your father has made preparations to go to Karbala; all the relations are busy about starting the journey; it is not time, sister, to sit still. Come, sister, it being the last hour, lose no opportunity of seeing your father and receiving his well-wishing adieu.

Fatima:

Oh, speak not a word as to journeying lest I travel away from the world, lest I perish owing to this painful news! Hold, sister, the arm of this afflicted one, that I may pass somehow to my new traveling sun, and seeing once more the luminous face of my father, may be inspired with hope, and may enlighten my tearful eyes with the light of his countenance. I am certain that I shall carry with me to the grave the desire of seeing

him again; then let me have a full vision of him in this last moment.

(4942)

Sakina:

Look upon us, o spheres! We are companionless; we two nightingales belong to one and the same rose garden! Both of us are bound with chains of separation, and our hearts are sorrowful owing to Heaven's cruelty.

Fatima the Younger (addressing Hussein):

O father! Why do you not inquire after the state of your poor sufferers? Why do you not ask about the disturbed mind of your miserable prisoners? What has happened that you have put me out of mind altogether, that you never inquire concerning the soul-searing pain of your distressed children? You take all your family with you on this journey except me; you make no inquiry after, you do not care for, those stricken with fever! Why should you bind me fast with chains of separation, without ever asking the patient what she she mentally suffers?

Hussein:

O you who has waned into a crescent, owing to the effects of continually suffering from fever, you that has become as slender as a thread, you are fatigued with illness, you are enfeebled by fever; no strength, no spirit is left you, poor thing! To take you with me on such a journey is not proper; remain quietly and cheerfully at home.

Fatima:

Oh! You have set my feverish body on fire, dear father, with what you say. Why do you bind me with the chains of separation? Consider me as one of the maidens

of your family, if I cannot have the honor of being called your daughter.

(4943)

The Imam:

You poor, feverish, patient child, who suffers grievously from the absence and separation of your dear father! Do not lament, o prisoner of sorrow, the evening of your longing desire shall before long break forth into morning. As soon as I arrive at the plain of Karbala I will send your brother Ali Akbar to bring you to me. Do not be sorry, light of my tearful eyes!

Fatima:

Dear father, if I die at home of grief, who will wrap this destitute creature in winding sheets? Who will mourn and lament for me? Who will rend his garments to signify sorrow? I know, dear father, that I shall die, with tearful eyes, as a stranger in my own country.

Hussein:

Though in your desolation you expect help from me alone, yet remember what I say: God's tender mercy is greater than that of any loving father's. You cannot appreciate the high value of affliction in the sight of God. Be sure, dear child, the sigh of the desolate has a wonderful effect. Go and wish all your loving relations and friends a happy journey, for this is the time of our departure, this is the hour of parting.

Fatima (addressing the family):

Dear ones, you must at last leave me, as the light has departed from my eyes! You travel on, as the light has departed from my eyes! You travel on, and my lamentation will follow after it! I beseech you to take particular care, in this your journey, of my dear

sympathizing soul, that is, my father. I beg of you never to neglect your kind duties to Hussein.

(4944)

Hussein:

Come, Abbas, dear brother, you equal of my soul! Get you on horseback like a prince royal. Have the things for our way to Kufa ready, and prepare necessities for the road for the family. Set a golden litter for Zainab, and place Kulsum on a camel, o solar orb of the height of certainty! Let the caravan of the destitute ones all mount and set out at once for Kufa. Depart, all of you, tearful as you are, on the first opportunity to the graveyard of Baka outside of Medina.

Abbas:

Let it be known to you, my relatives, friends, companions and camel drivers, Hussein, the Imam of the time, has ordered you to load your camels. And you family, or household of Muhammad, ride out all of you to Baka.

Fatima:

O camel driver, do not bind up your litters today; suffer me not to have a heavy weight on my mind!

Sakina:

Come, sister, let me wish you adieu! Heaven seems to be maliciously striving with us!

Fatima:

Come, dear sister, it is the day of Separation; let me kiss your eyes, as I may not see you again!

Sakina:

Come sister, let me kiss your hands and feet, and wish you farewell.

(4945)

Fatima:

God be with you, Dakina, dear sister; you are going, and Medina is ruined!

Zainab and Kulsum:

If we were unkind, no matter, we are now going; if we were a heavy burden to you, we are no longer present. Remain in your houses; we, being homeless, must go from here.

The People of Medina:

Without you it will not be pleasant at all; without you the candle of faith cannot have its usual brightness. You are going away, and how difficult it is for we sorrowful creatures to live without you!

Zainab and Kulsum:

Dear ones, pardon the offence Zainab and Kulsum may have given you during their stay here. Be kind enough to overlook our faults. O relations and friends, if we have at any time wronged you or injured you, we humbly beg your pardon.

The People of Medina:

You were our best friends, but, alas, you are going! You were our soul and our spirit, but, alas, you are leaving us! God forbid that you should have done us any wrong; you were kinder to us than our true mothers, but, alas, you are departing!(95)

(4946)

SCENE XIII

Withdrawal of Hussein from the road to Kufa.

Hussein (encamping in the vicinity of Kufa):

Fate, in this journey, will release us from the confinement of this world; Destiny's hand will pass us soon from humility to exaltation. The unstable spheres made me wander away from the divine sanctuary, and are now impelling me with strong impulse to the sacred shrine of Karbala. I that Heaven during this journey is about to deprive Zainab of atience and Umm Laileh of endurance, by bereaving me of my son.

Zainab:

I know well that this journey is laden with misfortunes, but what the spheres have ultimately in view I cannot tell. From the tinkling of the caravan bells one can well infer that the journey is a dangerous one.

Hussein:

Aye, dear sister, this journey comprises numerous troubles; it involves painful sorrows for brothers, distracting grievances for sons! The bank of that river must embrace the elegant stature of your noble Abbas, deprived of his hands, as a palm tree of branches.

Ali Akbar:

O friends, the ramparts of the city of Kufa are quite visible now; I can see the very branches of her palm plantation from here. Give notice, o Zephyr, to the inhabitants of the city of the arrival of roses at

*the rose garden; whisper in their ears that the sweet
tongued parrot is come.*

(4947)

Hussein:

*The aspect which you see cannot be a rose garden,
of nightingale. If it be a garden at all it must be one
filled with thorns. The long, slender things which you
see with your eyes cannot be palm trees, dear one, they
are spears and lances borne by the people of Kufa.*

Ali Akbar:

*Father, it is certainly the beginning of our
vernal season! No, I was mistaken, it is the autumnal
time of our verdant meadow, to be sure. It is the hour
to strew souls in the path of the beloved; today is the
first dawn of a happy epoch.*

Hussein:

*This, my child, is the advance guard of Karbala,
the beginning of temptation, the first trial. It is the
time of utter desolation for the country of Medina; the
period of mourning and crying for my dear child Sakina.*

Sakina:

*Arise, dear aunt, Heaven has plucked me up by the
roots! From the vault of the spheres a stone has been
cruelly hurled on the bottle of my life. My body, dear
aunt, is trembling and quivering like a weeping willow
tree. May I be offered for you! I am terribly afraid of
that advancing army.*

Zainab:

*Why have you untied the knot of your curls, dear
niece? Why are you so soon alarmed, darling? There is no*

occasion that your body should tremble like a weeping willow tree; do not lean so sadly on the side of the litter, poor child!

(4948)

Sakina:

No, dear aunt, it is a time for groaning and a proper place for trembling. Dear aunt, I have become a restless nightingale. Heaven's project is to render me fatherless. The army or troop which I see is no more than a pretence.

Zainab:

My nightingale, dear brother, has again commenced her lamentation! O Solomon, show forth your indulgent favor to a lame ant. Your child's face has turned pale, her curling hair is disheveled, her mirror is buried in rust, no color is left in her face!

Hussein:

You shall not sigh and groan much hereafter, o Sakina! You shall have plenty of stories to relate, oppressed child. My beautiful lustrous pearl, my priceless gem, you shall suffer grievous thirst on the banks of a limpid river; remember that!

Hur, happening to come to the same spot, says to his band:

I see there some tents and pavilions; on the other side of them I perceive a body of troops. I am sure it is the camp of Hussein, the light of Zahrah's (Fatima, mother of Hussein) eye; for, behold, hie beams of transcendent light dart from their faces toward Heaven!

Hussein:

O cypress of the orchard of Ali, you brave hero, Abbas, my dear brother, turn the reins of your horse

toward that crowd and see whether they be friends or enemies.

(4949)

Abbas:

O noisy, malicious, hypocritical army, on whose slaughter have you and your general with one accord set out? What is the name of your commander? What are his schemes of war or peace? Tell me, are you of the genuine Arabs of the interior parts, or are you of this province of Iraq only?

Hur:

O young man, we are soldiers of Ubaid, the son of Ziyad, sent by him to fight the battle of faith. Whose are those troops standing there on one side of the tents, having beautifully set themselves in array like the eyelashes of the sacred gazelles?

Abbas:

That army belongs to the heir-apparent of the cup bearer of the tank of Al-Kauzar, that army pertains to the light of the eye of the dignity of God's Prophet. The commander or general of that army is Hussein the son of Ali ibn Abi Talib, whose own eldes son is Ali Akbar the brave.

Hur:

O sun-faced, exalted, glorious young man! Since that camp and the troops there belong to Hussein, I have a great many reasons to be joyful. I was seeking him in Heaven; but behold, he is before me on earth! I will now destroy his men and make captives of his family.

Abbas:

O commander of the army of the wicked, you boast too much, and without reason, of manliness and bravery.

I wish to God that I had permission from his majesty Hussein, the King of Hijaz, and I would show you the folly of your assertions.

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Hur:

Reason says, "Connive at shame and seek also no honor"; but Love says, "Why have you held your tongue from speaking?" Unsheath the glittering sword, and put the world in confusion; slay the horse and his rider one after the other, and make streams of blood flow.

Abbas:

I am standard bearer of the army of Hussein, the king over land and sea. No, I am a slave born in the house of the family of God's Prophet. Be good enough to tell me the number of your army, and please give me full information about the same.

Hur:

Who are you, good tempered young man, who inquires about the number of the army of Ubaid the son of Ziyad? Why have you come out against us to prevent our march? Tell me, o Heaven throned one, to whom are you tied by affinity or consanguinity. You wonderfully resemble Ali ibn Abi Talib in regards to your complexion. Tell me, are you related to the King of Karbala or not?

Abbas:

I am he whose name is Abbas, from the terror of whose sword Heaven's back is bent into a bow! I am he whose Father is Ali ibn Abi Talib, the Friend of God, who could overthrow lions in the field of courage! If I draw out my sword from its sheath, lions' hearts shall melt into water from fear. Seeing that you have learned now what my name is, be so kind as to let me know what is your true name.

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Hur:

I am called Hur. None throughout Arabia can equal me in war. I am one who with my hair-splitting sword can rend the heart and breast down to the waist. If I draw out my flint-splitting sword, Heaven and earth shall withdraw themselves through fear. With the dust of the hoofs of my gold-strippuped horse I can darken the bright face of the shining sun. I am not boasting, o just and pious man; if you cannot believe me, come and see.

Abbas:

Tell me, o young man of noble disposition, where are you going with such a great army? And from where do you come? What has made you so covered with dust?

Hur:

I have come from Kufa, I and all my retinue, by order of Ubaid son of Ziyad, to prevent Hussein from approaching nearer to that city; to create commotion and uproar in the world; to drench the hair of Ali Akbar with his own blood, that the heart of his affectionate mother may burn with grief. Now go quickly to the Imam of all men, and inform him of Ubaid's intention.

Abbas (addressing Hussein):

O sovereign of the country of Bat-ha (Medina), the malicious and mischievous army which approaches us belongs to Yezid. The commander of that army is Hur, who has received orders to fight against us, o most exalted being.

(4952)

Hussein:

You crooked-conducted spheres, how long will you tyrannise over us, and behave unjustly and cruelly towards the family of God's Prophet? I do not mind being murdered, but I fear that you will make the daughter of Zahrah a bare-headed captive among the inhabitants of Kufa. Go, Abbas, call to me the brave Hur, that I may know what are the intrigues of Heaven against me.

Abbas:

O Hur, chief of the army of Ubaid, Hussein, the light of the Prophet's eye, has summoned you to his presence.

Hur:

O multitude of the army, dismount all of you, both small and great, and let us go to that caravan and refresh ourselves a little and quench our excessive thirst. O commander of the caravan of faith, we are extremely thirsty! O candle of the way of every leader. We are very parched. We are oppressed by thirst in this vale of affliction and trial; and to your bounty and generosity, o cloud of mercy, we are looking.

Hussein:

Dear Ali Akbar, give them water to drink; o gem of excellent purity, refresh them. O Heaven, be turned into drops of moisture; o clouds of mercy, pour down rain on sinners!

Hur:

Behold the greatness of benevolence and goodness! Hussein the son of Ali ibn Abi Talib gives water to his enemy in this vale of fear and trial. See, I on my part drew out my sword against him, while he gives me to drink. Can a person be unmindful of him who mournfully weeps for him?

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The Imam:

O happy young man, may the name of yur parents become famous by your deeds! You must have pushed on very fast to have come so thirsty! Tell me, however, what is your name, o fortunate young man.

Hur:

O you whose marks of greatness are manifest to all, the shadow of whose palm revives the rose garden of souls, I am, o chief of the highest position, your servant Hur. This army - o just and magnanimous sovereign, may I be offered for you! - belongs to the son of Ziyad. He has sent them under my command against Hussein the king of the good. We have been pressing here and there in search of him, if by chance we might catch him.

Hussein:

O noble Hur, commander of the army of infidelity, what are my faults and crimes? What have I done against Yezid to be thus pursued by him? Do you know, o leader of the army, who I am? Have you read the praises of my grandfather in the glorious Qur'an? Am I not Hussein, the son of Zahrah? Did you not see how Muhammad sucked my throat? Be now kind enough to decide justly, whether it is proper to pass daggers on the kissing place of the chosen Prophet.

Hur:

O you to whom the Heavens bow down in adoration! You the new rose of the meadows of the emperor of men and jinn, I know that you are Hussein, and that your grandfather is the Prophet of God; but it cannot be helped, for Ubaid the son of Ziyad has sent with me a great army, such that if they draw their swords no soul from among men and jinn will be left alive! If you will not submit willingly to Yezid, you will surely be killed by the edge of the blood-dripping sword.

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Hussein:

O Hur, commander of the oppressing troop, you are well known among the tribes of Persia, if the Syrian armies should cover the face of the earth like a deluge, and if the troops of Ubaid set their standard on the planet Saturn, one individual from the holy family of Beni Hashim, lifting up his arm with the famous sword called Ju'l fakar, no soul except the Almighty God alone, should escape the edge of his bent-backed saber! But it cannot be helped now, for the ascribed of fate, destiny, has from eternity written down martyrdom against my name. But I warn you, as a friend, not to participate in this blood shed, nor give up Paradise and visit the regions of the lost!

Hur:

I tell you plainly that I cannot deviate from what I am commanded. I must open the door of war and enmity on your face. I will shed so much blood with the edge of my sword, o king, that the land of Karbala shall appear as a field of anemones or tulips.

The Imam:

O hero of the age, blush before the Lord, and have regard for the honorable face of my grandfather the Prophet. Allow me, then, to go towards Europe, or let me turn to China, of Cochin-China, Mongolia or Scythia.

Hur:

O son of the best of apostles, I am ordered by Ubaid son of Ziyad to show nothing but opposition, and to hem you in on all sides. Unless you, o poorvagrant exile, submit to Yezid, the wicked grandson of Abu Sufyan, I shall not let you move towards Kufa, nor allow you to return to your country.

(4955)

The Imam:

Be silent, o impudent one, and put an end to your words; have a regard for my majestic grandfather, the

Messenger of the Living God. O my helping companions, mount your horses this very hour, and load your camels quickly, that we may go back to our native country, Baha, and live in the vicinity of the sacred sepulcher of God's Prophet, the glory of all mankind.

Hur (holding the rein of Hussein's horse):

I will not let you move one step from here. Come on, o my numerous troops, and arrest the Imam of the age. Surround him on all sides that he shall not be able to move, lest he escape the trap. How can I let you go until I make streams of blood flow?

Hussein:

What do you intend to do, o foolish Hur? Why do you not tread the path of peace? Your impudence exceeds all bounds. May your mother sit in mourning for you! Be abashed by the face of my grandfather, o Hur; have respect for Fatima my mother.

Hur:

O origin of the great king of the age, if any other person had thus made mention of my mother's name, I would have answered him in the same improper manner. No, I would have returned a most reproachful answer to him. But out of respect to you and your mother, the best among women, it is hard for me to say the least thing, o model of true direction.

Hussein:

If you know me to be the son of Fatima, Muhammad's daughter, why do you treat me in this unjust and improper manner? What have I done to you, o ill-natured inhabitants of Kufa, that you have girded up your loins to slay me, a poor exile?

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Hur:

May my hands perish o king of the age, if I draw out the sword maliciously against your honorable face! I have not passed in this journey on any stone or clod of

earth, but have heard from it good news of my entering Paradise. I wonder what is decreed by God concerning me. I am greatly perplexed in my affairs, o matchless moon, and cannot lift up my head through shame.

Hussein:

O you who are sadly intoxicated with the wine of sorrow, if you would listen to the advice that I give you, withdraw the hand of cruelty from us; disturb not the mind of the sacred one overwhelmed with grief, but return to your place quickly, and let me alone bear the burden of my own troubles.

Hur:

O you the dust of whose feet is a crown of honor to my head, o royal benefactor of men and jinn, I will never turn aside from your holy orders, though the name of life be no longer applied to my existence. Return also to the tent quietly; let us see what will turn out hereafter.

Ali Akbar cries out for prayer:

O noble Hur, since it is the time of prayer, you may go to your camp for devotion. Turn your face to the court of the great Creator. I shall see what will happen to me.

Hur:

O champion of the field of battle, o glory of all mankind, see that you have been titled the most eloquent among Arabs, it is very proper that you should take the lead in this solemn act, and both the armies will imitate you as followers.

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The Imam (praying and addressing Abbas):

O brother, standard bearer of the faithful army, image of my chosen father Haidar (Ali ibn Abi Talib) the valiant, pitch a tent for me outside the camp, far from the pavilion, in some proper place, that I may conclude

the argument against these idolaters, and leave them no excuse.

Abbas:

The place is ready, most excellent king; it is on one side, far from friends, helpers and the wicked enemy.

Hussein (addressing Hur and his party):

O people of Kufa and Shams (Syria), o tyrannical, bloody nation! All of you, both small and great, wrote letters to me saying, "Come to Kufa and manage the government thereof", but now that I have arrived, you have begun to plot against me with your tricks and stratagems, and to play the chess of treachery and perfidy with us, Is this all your fidelity? Thanks for that!

Hur:

May I be a reason for you, o offspring of the cup-bearer of Kausar! I swear by the spirit of God's Messenger that I know nothing at all about the writing of the inhabitants of Kufa, that faithless people. But hear me, o poor exile! Turn the reins of the camels to the country of Hijaz at once; give up Kufa, for there is no fidelity amongst its inhabitants, and you are not able to make friends of them. By our Lord, I am burning with anguish at your condition; yes, the very marrow of my bones is consumed by this fire. I do not see that I can do you any other good than this, to retire to a distance from your army under the pretence that you have your families with you, and it is not proper that we should encamp close to one another. When night comes, you may, unbeknown to this hostile party go to

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any place in the country that you like best. God be with you.

Hussein:

I am very pleased with you, o young man; may your spirits ever revive! You have given me the best advice. I thank you. Go in peace; you have made the heart of the Prophet of God to rejoice; you have both done and said well; may God reward you! Although none can tell what the pen of fate has written for or against him, still we shall leave this place about midnight, according to your kind advice; perhaps we may be delivered from the evil intended against us. O assembly of my companions, brothers, friends and lovers, bind up the litters on camels and go before us to the place which my grandfather has pointed out for you. Depart quickly, this very night, dork though it may be, with tearful eyes, back to Medina.(96)

SCENE XVI

A Night Assault on Hussein's Camp.

Hussein:

Alas for your tyranny! You mean minded Sphere! How long shall I sigh against your hand? How long will will you continue your malice against us? Why are you not subverted because of your malignancy? By your revolutions the habitation of religion is brought to desolation. Curses be upon you and your actions towards the children of men!

Abbas:

O Heaven, to what extent will you be satiated with malice and iull-will! How long must we suffer from the malevolent enemy, and from the son of Ziyad? My the revolutions of time I have been expatriated from Medina, my native town; what is the cause of yur antipathy, o skies? Are you naturally disposed to cruelty?

(4959)

Ali Akbar:

O Lord, have compassion on the sad state of porr Akbar's heart! How can I see the offspring of God's Messenger so sorrowful? By the treacherous call of this wicked people, and by the tyranny of the spheres, I was forced to leave the monument of the Prophet.

Qasim:

O Lord, I am the poor orphan of Hasan, even I, Kasim. From the violence of time I am brought low and made contemptible. You, o orbitless sphere, did maliciously pour the poison of yopur mailnancy down my noble father's holy throat, and your turn has come to injure my dear uncle Hussein. Rest in your place, O Heaven, for a moment.

The Imam:

O time, let me complain of your oppression; lety me inform the world of the fire concealed in my heart. Tomorrow is the day when the Hasim's youths are all to be slain with the edge of the sword; and how can I behold it?

Zainab:

O Heaven, how can I see Hussein's face without making the hearts of men and jinns bleed by reason of my sighs and groans! O Ali, king of Najaf, behold the helpless state of your dear child, and how the fire of my heart is consumed for him. Tomorrw shall the elegant cypress of Fatima's garden fall to the ground, and my eyes shall pour down tears for him.

Sakina:

O Lord God, look upon poor wretched me! The heavy burden of my father's approaching end weighs hard on my heart. I can willingly bear any pain or grief, but to be a fatherless child, this is what I cannot possibly endure.

(4960)

The Imam:

Alas for your oppression, o malignat sphere! Behold how the parched-souled Hussein suffers Affliction and misery! Only tonight I have a little time to rest, tomorrow my throat will be cut by the edge of the enemy's sword. It is not, however, grievous that I and all my companions shall be slain, since the thing is

done for the salvation of the people of my grandfather the Prophet.

Zainab:

O dear brother, poor exile in the city of trials, what ails you tonight that you sigh so heavily from the bottom of your heart? I am distracted by your soul-consuming groans. I am shedding tears on account of your miserable state, o royal personage. What has happened to you that you are so restless tonight - that you moan so involuntarily?

The Imam:

Come to me, o poor afflicted sister, you who has withered from the blast of injustice and cruelty. Come, for my soul has reached the tip of my lips by reason of destitution, knowing that this is the last evening of my life. Come, let me behold your dear face, as I have but this one night to live.

Zainab:

O fate, let me bitterly complain of your oppression. To whom shall I turn, and to whom should I complain? In whom shall I cheer my drooping heart after you cause Abbas, my brave brother, to be a martyr? I fear that you will make Hussein's body headless by your malice. Let me, then, weep over the destitute state of his surviving son, the lord of God's worshippers. O death, be pleased to come quickly and visit me, that the bird of my soul may be set at liberty from this cage-like prison, the body.

(4961)

The Imam:

O nightingale of the meadow of trial and affliction, o poor wretched Zainab, go, for the sake of my wounded, sorrow-stricken heart, to your own bed and rest. You have but one night left to you; after that, this world shall flee from you.

Zainab:

O brother, even now the tranquility of this world is removed far from me, my bed of rest has been already taken away by the cruel, tyrannical spheres. How can I go to sleep agasin from this time forth? Heaven's cruelty has removed sleep from my eyes.

The Imam:

You speak the truth, sister, your rest is altogether cut off. On the appearence of infidelity the trappings of religion are of necessity put aside. Go now to you tent and remain quiet awhile, although rest in this world is far removed from you.

Zainab:

Fate is very hasty for the slaughter of the innocent. My heart is palpitating within me like a half-slain bird. O, bid sleep not to come tonight to my eyes; the island wherein they reside has been inundated by a deluge!

Kulsum:

O Lord God, how grieved am I in the land of Karbala! My heart bleeds for the outrageous acts of the treacherous spheres. I fear lest I become destitute and helpless, not having either brothers, nephews, of helpers.

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The Imam:

You my poor miserable sister, do not weep, and do not let your eyes shed tears of blood. Go and rest a little, and forget for a while your overwhelming grief.

Kulsum:

O sleep, do not enter my wet eyes tonight, for my eye-lids are suffused with tears. Let not sleep overtake me at all, for I have a bed spread over with embers.

Sakina:

O Lord, I do not know what is the cause of this confused noise tonight in this camp. From the cry and lamentation of those whose lot is sorrow, there is a fire kindled in my very innermost soul. Tonight my dwellingplace shines with the light of a sunny day from the candle-like face of my good father giving light.

The Imam:

Dear Sakina, do not wail tonight nor lament. Let not my soul be set on fire owing to your great sorrow. I do not know what you will do tomorrow when you are fatherless. My eyes, even now, shed tears of blood for you. Dear child, tomorrow you shall be fatherless; have your last sleep, then, in the lap of your dear father this evening.

Sakina:

Dear father, may I be a sacrifice for you! Make me sleep in your kind lap. As I am unable to bear the burden of separation from you, favor me ever with your presence. Let me always behold your moon-like face. O, may my sad soul be a sacrifice for you!

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Hussein:

Sleep in your father's lap, my withering flower. Sleep on, o newly-grown rose of my pleasure garden. You shall weep abundantly on your journey to Kufa and Damascus; now lay your head quietly on the flaming bosom of your father. Alas this pretty face, when the accursed Shimr shall buffet it! Alas this shining moon!

Sakina:

Tonight, while my head is placed in my father's dear lap, I would not care if I were to be thrown into the fire like aloe-wood.

Hussein (to Ali Akbar):

My dear Ali Akbar, you cypress tree of the garden of your father, you first-fruit of your father's meadow, how can I behold your beautiful eyes dull for want of sleep? Be at rest in your bed, o shining moon of your father.

Ali Akbar:

O Heaven, tonight I must pour down blood from my eyes instead of tears, on account of your cruelty. You have maliciously set fire to the stock of my life tonight. I fear lest the flame of my sighs should burn up the whole of my constitution if I now have but one groan from the bottom of my heart. I will, according to the command of my father, go to repose in my place, though the star of my fortune will never shut its eyes tonight until daybreak.

Hussein (to Qasim):

O Qasim, cypress of the rose-garden of Hasan's heart and soul, may my soul, that of your afflicted and miserable uncle, be a sacrifice for your handsome face! Go and sleep quietly in your resting-place for a short time, for the king of the age is moaning sadly for your misfortunes.

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Qasim:

Enter tonight, o dear father, by the door of my habitation, for my eyes are filled with tears. Where are you, o father, you whose liver was shattered into a hundred pieces by poison? Pass by my bed tonight for a moment. How can I go to my place to rest, since sleep is far from entering my eyes?

The Imam:

O Zainab, my poor afflicted sister, o destitute, helpless and unfortunate creature, o mother of my nurseless children, you in all pains and grievances my best physician, I have tonight one single request to may to you, to which I hope you will be kind enough to listen attentively.

Zainab:

May the sorrow-allotted soul of Zainab be a sacrifice for you! May all your pains come to the soul of Zainab the comfortless! What is that single request of yours, o friend? Relate it without reserve to this your home-born slave.

Hussein:

My heart, dear Zainab, is burning for Sakina. I have lost patience and endurance of her account. If a hair be lost from her ringlets it will put me in indescribable pain and anxiety.

Zainab:

How long will you make yourself sad, dear brother, for the sake of Sakina? She is ever dear to me, she is the flower and ornament of my lap; do not trouble yourself about her, she is, and will ever be, the light of my eyes. Come now, dear brother, take your rest, because your lamentations have rendered me beside myself.

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Hussein:

May I be a ransom for your soul, o light of Zahrah's (Fatima's) eye! Sleep has fled from me altogether, I am so sorry for my poor orphans. My eyes are streaming with tears for their destitute condition. Come, sister, let us take a walk in the camp of the holy family; let us see the elegant statures of our dear helpers and friends, and delight ourselves, if possible, with the sight of our brethren's rosy cheeks.

Zainab:

O mother, o Fatima, come out a minute from your grave to witness in the plain of Karbala the very day of resurrection; and you o my father, the elect, come to the aid of your Zainab's heart, and behold in what manner she is distressed.

Hussein (at the head of Abbas' bed):

Alas! Shall this elegant body of Abbas be hewn into pieces tomorrow by the violent deed of the enemy? Oh, what a pity that these hands shall be cut off from the body, in the plain of Karbala, with the sword of the antagonist in a most cruel way!

Zainab:

Unfortunate brother, may the soul of Zainab be offered for you! Cease your groanings, and do not shed pearly tears from your eyes, for, by our Lord, I cannot bear to see you in this state, it is unendurable for me to find you in such a condition.

Hussein (at the bed of Ali Akbar):

O Ali Akbar, you the light of my eyes, you are in a sound sleep now, disregarding that tomorrow, dear one, you must become a martyr. O flower of my garden, the palm tree of your stature shall be struck down from the saddle to the ground with the axe of injustice.

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Zainab:

May your sister be a sacrifice for your bleeding heart! Do not pour so many tears from your eyes. If a thorn, God forbid, should pierce your foot, it would be as if my breast of wounded body were to receive two hundred cuts at once. Do not groan so much, for your lamentation entirely overthrows the foundation of my fortitude and patience.

Hussein (standing at Qasim's bed):

O first fruit of Hussein's garden, o nightingale of the rose garden of pain and tribulation, you are gently sleeping in your bed of rest, heedless about trouble and anguish of heart. Alas for this symmetrical body of yours! Alas for these your rosy cheeks!

Zainab:

Dear brother, may I be a sacrifice for you! May Zainab's life avert your misfortunes. Mourn not so much, o brightness of the east and west. O Hussein, may I be offered as a ransom for your elegant stature!

Hussein (coming to Sakina's bed):

Sakina, you nightingale of my garden, my unblown rose, my peace of mind, sleep well tonight, for tomorrow you shall not be able to rest, your heart will burn with longing desire to see your father's face; he will forever be absent from you.

Zainab:

The morning is near, the moon has disappeared and gone to bed, dear brother, do not deprive yourself of sleep. My most beloved one, shed no more blood from your eyes, take a little rest, for I am anxious in regards to you.

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Shimr (consulting Ibn Sa'd):

Listen to me a minute, o son of Sa'd, as you are the commander of this army and its general. It is now night, the world is wrapped in clothes of darkness; the sun, the source of light, is hidden from view, and Ahriman, the prince of darkness, is at work. March with the army towards Hussein's encampment, and make a night assault upon the army of the lord of the two worlds.

Ibn Sa'd (to Shimr):

O Shimr, I have never met anyone more wicked than you, nor heard of any throughout the world as merciless as you. You have closed your eyes and are seated in your saddle. O cursed one, the Prophet of God is the noble grandfather of this personage, and his mother is Zahra (Fatima), the Prophet's daughter; do not, then, contemptuously slight him; return to your rest now at midnight; do not attempt to disturb the sleep of Hussein the son of Ali.

Shimr:

O son of Sa'd, it is the order of Yezid that Hussein should be killed by daggers, swords, and spears; and now I have the best opportunity for doing this; do not, therefore, point out to me his noble descent or ancestry. The kingdom of Rai is the charming reward for putting him to death. What do I care if, for example, the celestial globe be inverted?

Ibn Sa'd:

O Shimr, this night invasion is not a trifling matter. You have roaring lions waiting in ambush against you. Do you not see that out there is Abbas the brave, the heaven-elected king? His hand is the hand of Ali, and his sword is like Zu'l Fakar. First, you must put down Abbas before showing any hostility against Hussein; with such a foe as Abbas you cannot prevail merely by tricks and stratagems.

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Shimr:

O son of Sa'd, the mother of the famous Abbas is closely related to my mother; I will try first to draw him to our side, if possible in a friendly way, that I know best how to plan. If I do not succeed, or he will not listen to me, that I shall immediately throw the palm of his stature down to the ground by way of violence. I will treat Hussein in this the heart of the night with such malicious violence as to create commotion and tumult in the indigo-colored Heaven.

Ibn Sa'd:

Set out quickly then on this expedition, o Shimr, but be circumspect concerning yourself. Beware of the lions of the tribe of Hashim, for they have flame-effusing swords in their hands.

Shimr (departing):

The wicked Shimr does not fear anyone in the universe, he can throw confusion and noise in the two worlds. If Shimr but draw his sword from the sheath, the spheres, from dread, will tremble like quicksilver. Where are you, O Abbas, son of God's Lion? Come out of your tent for a while; be pleased to set your feet in this field for a time, o you who are the first-fruit of the garden of true direction. Kindly walk out of your tent this midnight, as it were the sun, to light us with your presence.

Abbas (awaking from his sleep):

Who was he that called me from behind the partition? Who was he that made such a noise at this hour? Who was he that so disrespectfully screamed out to me from behind the curtain? All the family are now in bed and fast asleep; being tired by the fatigues of the road, and they are hushed in sleep. What makes you raise your voice so rudely, making me restless and upset?

(4969)

Shimr:

May I be a ransom for you, o heaven-elected king, o lion of the forest of manliness and humanity! Abbas, come near; it was I that called you. Tonight I could not rest through excess of sorrow and grief. I am your humble servant, Shimr the warrior, who in the day of battle and at the time of war am the most expert in the use of the dagger.

Abbas:

What made you call me at such an improper time? Why did you approach the tent, o black-faced rogue? Are you careless of the sharp edge of my saber? Or what has

made you hasten to your own destruction? If you have come for war, let me, then, lift up my sword and cut off even the very name of unbelief from the plain of Karbala.

Shimr:

Know, oh Abbas, that we have received orders from Yezid to cut the body of Hussein into a thousand pieces with scimitars and spears. There are hundreds of soldiers who have drawn their swords and daggers with great malice, all ready to come and fight you. I am as certain as certain can be, that you cannot escape with your life, but rather must drink the poison of death at the hands of our army; but as I have some cordial affection for you, being at one and the same time related to your mother, humanity and the tie of relationship have compelled me to call on you at such a time to inform you of the danger which confronts you. Listen to me, you poor heart-wounded creature, and come over at once to our camp without the least fear or hesitation. If you follow my advice, I shall ask Yezid to appoint you as commander of his majesty's victorious army; that is all.

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Abbas:

God make your tongue dumb, you infidel, for your speech has set my soul on fire! Have you no fear of God your Creator? Nor do you care of the holy spirit of His Prophet? You cunningly spread the snare of your enticement before me, wickedly trying to persuade me to sell my religion for this world, to leave a holy brother like Hussein, in order to rub my head on the threshold of Yezid the unclean. Brotherhood is not like the attachment of a bird to its nest, which, wherever it goes by day, will at night surely return to nestly there. Fraternity is not a tree to blossom yearly and produce dear brothers. A brother is noy like a companion with whom one associates for a while, and, if gone, one may easily get another to take his place. A brother is not a physician for the cure of diseases, that if he

does not do it well you may change him for another better than the former. O cursed one, I do not think that I am worthy to be called a brother of Hussein; enough if I am considered even as an attendant at his holy threshold. I swear, by the spirit of the Prophet, that I shall never depart from him, though I am cut by the dagger into a thousand pieces.

Shimr:

O moon of Beni Hashim, o lion-like prince, I told you to abandon Hussein's service because he is alone and therefore unable to succeed. I know that if you refuse to hear me you shall most cruelly be put to death, and that Hussein shall be cut to pieces after you with this dagger; then shall we lead his family away as captives, and I myself will set fire to the tent of that chief.

Abbas:

Do you think to frighten me with battle, oh you accursed wretch? Abbas does not lose heart, as you know well. I have risked my head and hand, earnestly desiring martyrdom. Oh that this honor Could be granted to me even now!

(4971)

Shimr:

O handsome youth, as a friend I have given you the best advice that I could. Let the rest be between you and the sharp daggers of this wicked people. It appears that you must be slain by the edge of the sword. O multitude, acquit yourselves like men, and sound the drum for war.

Abbas (about to fight):

O honorable and powerful Lion of God, you piercing arrow or meteoric dart in the hand of the Almighty, help me soon by stretching forthj your divine palm. I am clinging to your skirt for help, o Ali!

Aki Akbar (awaking):

What commotion is there in the desert of Karbala?
O Lord, what can have happened in this vale of trials? I
think that the malicious troops are going to surprise
us; they seem to have gathered together, intending to
take our lives.

Abbas (coming back, falls on the enemy):

O theatre of wonders, o best of defenders, my
sovereign father, Ali the ekect, the time of help is
come. March forth to our assistance, and lay hold of the
hilt of Zu'l Fakar.

Ali Akbar (joining him):

Do not be dismayed, dear uncle, by the unbelieving
army; Ali Akbar is coming to your aid. I
shall make an utter destruction of the infidels by your
favor, leaving them neither troops nor generals.

Qasim (following Ali Akbar):

My noble cousin, do not be afraid, I am coming; I
have already drawn my sword against the enemy.
(4972)

Sakina (awakening):

Oh! What is this howling noise, good Muslims, that
I hear throughout the camp? Is the Day of Resurrection
at hand, that there are such tumults and confusions all
around? (Goes to Zainab.) Melancholy aunt, Awake! Awake!
The enemy has come upon us, awake! Awake! There is the
wicked Shimr with his army; they intend to destroy our
lives. Oh, what a time has come! Awake! Aunt, awake!

Zainab:

O my sweet-songed nightingale, why do you so moan
at midnight? O singing bird of my orchard, what is it
that makes you groan? What is the reason that you are in
such a distracted state with dishevelled hair? Why do
you tremble so sadly.r thing?

Sakina:

Come out, o aunt; behold what turbulence and confusion! Hear the roaring sound of the drum of Hussein's enemy! The plain of Karbala has become a cane-field of spears. It is filled all over with troops.

Zainab:

Oh, again Zainab is in a distressed state! Good luck has turned aside from her forever! O Zainab, make the garland of sorrow a crown for my head! Congratulate yourself on your captivity, poor thing! O brother, arise from your sweet sleep! Behold the miserable condition of your sister Zainab. O you asylum of the destitute, awake a minute from the sleep of rest, may your sister die for you!

(4973)

Hussein (awaking):

Why do you pour forth sad notes like nightingales? I hope that there is no bad news. Why are you in a distracted condition? I trust that things are all going right.

Zainab:

O solace of my dark hours, the enemy has come upon me; O comfort of my disturbed soul, behold the enemy attacking us! What you hear is the sound of the drum of war from the enemy. I fear that my head-dress will be blackened by your sudden death.

Sakina (to Hussein):

O revered father, I am your poor Sakina, hold me kindly awake to your bosom. I am so afraid of the confused noise of the enemy, my heart is quite melted, and I am shivering like a willow tree.

The Imam:

Fear not, dear Sakina, nor be disturbed in your mind, your father is standing by you; there is no occasion to lose heart. Do not weep, darling child; who dares so much as to look at the camp while I am alive? (The drums beat.)

Zainab:

Dear brother, the uproarious noise is becoming more and more; surely the enemy is invading us on all sides. My fortitude and patience have left me. Oh! Order some remedy for the sad case of Zainab.

(4974)

Hussein:

Worthy sister, go to Abbas my brother, the noblest of all mankind, the successor of Ali the Elect, and rousing him gently from his sleep, say that Hussein is calling you to his presence.

Zainab (at the bed of Abbas):

Lift up your head, brother, from your pillow and behold my miserable condition, O you lion-hearted hero! The spheres tonight are overwhelming me with sorrow; it is my turn to be wakeful, seeing that my fortune has sunk in sleep. O dear brother, the light of my eyes, earth be upon my head! Abbas is not in his bed.

Hussein:

Do not shed blood from your eyes, dear sister; go now to my son Akbar, and waking him gently from his sleep, bring him to his unprosperous father.

Zainab (at Ali Akbar's bed):

Where are you, o Ali Akbar, o similitude of the intercessor of the Day of Judgement, nay your afflicted aunt be offered for you! Oh, the weight of grief has bent Ali Akbar's stature into a bow! Dear Brother, Ali Akbar is not to be found in his bed.

Hussein:

Wail not, dear sister, may I be a ransom for you! Do not beat your breast and head, but have patience, nor groan so much, o child of Zahra; go and fetch me Kasim my nephew.

(4975)

Zainab (at Kasim's bed):

O nightingale of Hasan's garden, awake! Awake! O singing-bird of the assembly, awake! Awake! Behold the empty tent, without Abbas and Ali Akbar. Your poor uncle has summoned you; awake this moment! O Lord God, what a night I am passing! I am exhausted by so many soul-diminishing groans. Alas! Kasim is also not in his bed. There is no power nor strength but in God.

Hussein:

O poor Kulsum, my sorrowful sister, you who are wounded in the heart by Heavens's injury and violence, do not lament so much, but arise quickly from your place, and bring for me Zu'l Janah or winged horse.

Umm Kulsum (bringing the horse):

How often must my eye reach the Heavens at this hour of midnight? I do not know for what I have fallen into this snare of affliction. O mean, tyrannizing spheres, how long must I undergo affliction through your cruelty?

Hussein (riding):

Such a luminous work could not proceed from this mean people alone. It is certainly Heaven's decree and cannot be reversed. Out upon your foul dealings, o perverse Heavens! Yet I must not let the idea of martyrdom go from my head.

Ali Akbar (returning from the field):

Father, what is the reason that you have set the cluster of the Pleiades on the moon? Why do you shed tears on your cheeks? Why are you mounted on the horse, girded with your sword-belt? Is your heart, dear father, inclined to the dust, its original substance? Return, now, Ali Akbar has not yet died.

(4976)

Qasim (returning):

Dear uncle, may I be a ransom for you! Why are you seated in the saddle in such a sad manner, and with tearful eyes?

Abbas (coming back):

Why are you on horseback, o king of the righteous? You look sad, and your eyes shed pearls of tears. Abbas, your humble servant, is still alive, and the strength of his arm and his world-consuming sword have not failed him.

Hussein:

See that there was a tumult of war in the plain of Karbala, and the noise of the commotion reached the skirt and border of the Pleiades, and you were not in the camp, I rode in order to protect the family from the assault of the wicked unbelievers.

Abbas:

Yes, dear brother, the troops of Kufa and Sham (Syria) had come with the intention of surprising us at this time. I, together with Kasim and Ali Akbar, rode out to guard the camp from the infidel soldiers.

Hussein:

O brother, the cruel sphered seem to seek to supplant me tonight, and therefore will not cease from doing mischief at such a time as this. I certainly know that I cannot escape death in this plain of trials, but as I intend to pass the night in devotion, by our Lord it is better that you should kindly go just now to Ibn Sa'd, and ask him to give a respite tonight, it being a period of sorrow for me.

(4977)

Abbas (addressing the enemy):

Say to Ibn Sa'd, who does not recognize a God, Abbas, the servant of Hussein, wishes to speak with him.

Umar the son of Sa'd:

What do you have to say, o moon of Beni Hashim? I am ready to do for you anything that you wish to command.

Abbas:

O cruel, accursed tyrant, are you not ashamed before the Prophet Muhammad, the elect of God? It is night, all the wild beasts of the desert are now at rest, and you, impudent creature that you are, do not cease and desist from troubling Hussein. Are you not acquainted with the glorious position of the Imam of the age? Do you not see him to be the offspring of Muhammad the elect of God? My brother, however, intends to pass his time tonight in devotion to God, and so he asks respite from you, o treacherous dog.

Umar, the son of Sa'd:

With all my heart, I will instantly do as you have said, and chase away from my mind the thought of fighting tonight with Hussein. Let it be reported to Shimr, that the army of Kufa and Syria must return from the field of battle.

Abbas (to Hussein):

O brother, I have done as you ordered me; proceed without the least anxiety to the thing which you have in mind.(97)

(4978)

SCENE XVII

Death of Ali Akbar

Hussein:

O Heaven, you have undermined the foundation of my hope, by unjust means! My unhappy mind has not for a minute been gladdened by you, You have determined to make my Akbar a martyr today. O God, who are aware of my state, have compassion on me! What shall I do, if I do not complain, mourn, and bewail, seeing ever and anon a new grief arises, as it were, to congratulate me?

Zainab:

O death the time has come! Hasten to save me, and deliver me from the sad occurrence of Karbala! How long and how often must I see the unexpected death of my dear friends? O Lord, in what an unlucky hour must I have been born!

Hussein:

Zainab, o aggrieved sister, o afflicted, sorrowstricken girl, o luminous daughter of virtue and piety, o brilliant star of the heaven of chastity, the

time of my departure has drawn near; listen, dear sister, to what I enjoin you.

Zainab:

O poor, sore-hearted, thirsty one, o helpless, destitute leader, o support of my spirit and the strength of my soul, do not burn my heart with this your saying.

(4979)

Hussein:

O sister, it is so predestined, they shall sever my head from my body. The sea of my trouble is without a coast, and I see no remedy besides resignation to the will of God. When I leave this perishable world, you must try to resign yourself with patience so far as you can. Take care, o worthy sister, not to curse any infidel!

Zainab:

O your sorrow continually makes me shed tears! O brother, do not call me your sister, but rather your slave. I am neither strong to fight with fate, nor swift to run away from destiny. I know that patience is the only remedy in this case, but what shall I do? I do not possess it.

Hussein:

O my worthy sister, when Hussein your brother is killed, give great attention to my orphan daughter Sakina. Yes, be kind and indulgent to all my fatherless daughters, have a maternal regard for them all in the manner that you know best. Take care, especially, that none ever ill-treats Sakina, the joy of my heart, nor strikes her on the face.

Zainab:

O you who are the fundamental part of the divine scripture, do not any more distress me with your impressive discourse. May that day never come when your sister shall see your daughters fatherless! O good-natures brother, tell me if you have any other request.

(4980)

Hussein:

The desolate fortress of my heart is again invaded by grief. I feel that I must soon leave this world for the next. O afflicted sister, as this is almost the last hour of my life, I earnestly desire to see once again the dear face of Ali Akbar. Go, and call to me the similitude of the Seal of the Prophets, saying "Hussein is anxiously desirous to see the face of the Prophet of God."

Zainab:

Alas! Woe unto me! Grief is again going to plunge my head-dress in blood! Calamity intends to wrap my head with a sanguinary veil! O Ali Akbar, your father Hussein waits to see you! I believe that we must visit one another only on the Day of Resurrection.

Ali Akbar (to Hussein):

Good morning to you, o you on whose bright face the Surah "By the Sun" is but a brief comment. Good morning, o you of whose hair the Surah "By the night" is but an explication. If there is any service to be performed, say it; Ali Akbar, like a slave bought with money, is standing at the door.

Hussein:

O parrot of the banquet of eloquence, you are welcome! O nightingale of the rose-garden of mercy, you are welcome! Having a great desire to see the face of God's Prophet, I therefore sent for you, that I might behold your moon-like countenance. When the rose has vanished, the perfume must be sought out in the rose water; so now that the Prophet is no more to be seen, I out to smell his scent from your odor, come then.

(4981)

Ali Akbar:

May I be a ransom for you, o you full moon of the heaven of glory! May I be a sacrifice for your stature and visage, o chosen of the highest! The effect of the autumnal blast of malice is but to increase our joy; it is time that we should freely give our lives for the sake of the thirsty-lipped king. O sire, I greatly wish to stroll about the garden of delight. I have, in a word, made up my mind to go to Paradise.

Hussein:

O moon of the heaven of bashfulness, your similitude of the elected one of God, you champion of the army of the plain of Karbala; you have burned my poor heart with your expression, not thinking that you are the only produce left in the field for me. It is not proper at all, child, that you should leave your father a destitute exile in this country, a friendless prisoner.

Ali Akbar:

O father, I have heard that when Isma'il (In the Islamic tradition, it was Isma'il and not Isaac whom Abraham was about to offer as sacrifice) was about to be offered, God sent him a ram as a ransom. Am I inferior to a lamb or a ram in that respect? Let me then, dear father, be offered as a ransom for you.

Besides, if you intend to invite your true friend to the table of your love and obedience, it is most proper that you should offer your first-born to him as a sacrifice first of all.

Hussein:

Do not mourn so much, my poor ensnared nightingale, go to your tent without scarring my afflicted soul. You have not yet sat with the bride of the throne of matrimonial happiness, nor have you dyed your hands and feet with wedding colors.

(4982)

Ali Akbar:

Do not hinder me, father, from this dangerous intention, for I am made of earth, and to earth I must return. My marriage will take place, dear father, in the pleasant chamber of the grave! By our Lord, o father, it is necessary that I should die today.

Hussein:

O light of my eyes, your father has willingly yielded to you being slain. I resign myself to fate, let God's will be done. Since you mean to burn up my already distracted heart, go and bid adieu to my weeping family.

Ali Akbar:

Thanks be to God that the tree of my hope has borne fruit, that the tears of my earnest wish have produced desirable pearls! O family of Hussein, the time of Ali Akbar has arrived; the prospect of visiting one another again shall be realized only on the Day of Judgement. O well-behaved Zainab, my comfortless aunt, the morning of my joy is passing away.

Zainab:

O light of the two eyes of the Prophet! Alas my Ali Akbar! Alas Ali Akbar, the brightness of the eye of the virgin (In Islam, the perpetual virginity of Fatima,

even after childbirth, is widely held to be a point of orthodoxy, especially though not exclusively, by Shi'as. It is yet another parallel between the rôle of the Virgin Mary in traditional [Catholic and Eastern Orthodox] Christianity and the rôle of Fatima in Shi'a Islam) Fatima! What does your sad moaning signify? It is not time for you to say farewell. Who will help your poor father? Oh, do not cast earth on my head (A sign of grief and mourning.)!

(4983)

Ali Akbar:

O well-behaved aunt, your Ali Akbar is going! Throw earth on your head and lament; your Ali Akbar is departing! Yes, he is about to vanish with dried lips and tearful eyes, groaning from the depth of his heart; he will pass away like a morning breeze.

Zainab:

Look, dear nephew, at the multitude of the perfidious people, and do not go. Consider the miserable state of your poor aunt, and stay away. Behold your entangled father, your broken-hearted aunt, and your destitute sister, and do not attempt to start.

Ali Akbar:

O aunt, patience and forbearance have left my soul, and I must go. My heart also has abandoned its fixed abode. I must therefore depart. Meadows look like places for mourning in my sight; and here, too, blood gushes from my eyes. I cannot therefore hold back.

Zainab (addressing Hussein):

O sphere of glory, humanity and dignity; o chief of the caravan of the destitute ones, you manifest Imam! Ali Akbar is bidding adieu to your family and household. Is it true that you have permitted him to undertake this journey?

Hussein:

O what shall I say to youm worthy-conducted Zainab? Do not ask me any more concerning Ali Akbar's story. Yes, it is by my permission that he sets out on the journey. He has tearful eyes owing to his father's destitute state. I have given up my son Ali Akbar for the sake of the people of my grandfather the Prophet.

(4984)

Zainab:

O dear brother, Ali Akbar is quite young, it is not right that his spring should be turned to autumn. Oh, do not add sorrow to my sorrow! Come, let me fall before you with supplication. How can I yield assent that such a beautiful form and elegant stature should roll in blood by the edge of the enemies' sword.

Hussein:

Yes, dear sister, Ali Akbar is young, he has not yet enjoyed the pleasures of this life; but I sacrifice him for the sake of the beloved, since I wish to prove my devotion for tmy friends. Intercession for sinners, dear sister, is the great price of his blood. Yes, Ali Akbar is a ransom for many nations.

Zainab:

O Umm Lailah, put out your head from the tent for a moment. Do you not know that Ali Akbar is going on a journey? Your Joseph has resolved to set out from this Canaan-like world, while his father is looking after him with eyes full of tears. There is a son hastening towards the Egypt of martyrdom, while the father is left behind in the Canaan of faith, thirsty for water.

Umm Lailah:

O Ali Akbar, my youth, will you go away after all? Why do you not cast a glance at your poor old mother? Look at the hamndsome face of your youngest brother,

Asghar; or return, that I myself may behold your handsome countenance.

(4985)

Ali Akbar:

Yes, sorrowful mother (Once again, "Sorrowful Mother", or "**Mater Dolorosa**" in Latin, used to describe the Virgin Mary in the Catholic Church.), Ali Akbar is going away on some journey; it appears that you are not aware of fate and destiny. Here is a father saying farewell to his son, and here is a son becoming a ransom today for his father.

Umm Lailah:

O nightingale of the moon, you have cast a flaming fire into my heart. I have no other remedy but wet eyes. How is it that you pass before my face like a morning breeze? Have you forgotten the troubles that I underwent while nursing you?

Ali Akbar:

Oh! You burn my soul and heart, your saying has made such an impression upon me, your sad groans have set my poor heart on fire. Let Ali Akbar today be a sacrifice for Hussein. Imagine that you did not bear a son in this world.

Hussein:

O Umm Lailah, let the house of your heart be ruined by grief, let your dwelling place be henceforth in a corner of the habitation of sorrow. Light up the candle of zeal in the lantern of love; although you are a woman, show here a manly resolution, that is to say,

make a sacrifice of self by assenting that Ali Akbar should die, and by this voluntary submission of yours perplex and distract the wise of the earth.

(4986)

Ali Akbar:

O father, may I be a ransom for you! There is no opportunity left for discussion. The time of uniting together in friendship is gone, it being now the hour of separation. Come, please settle what weapons of war I must wear on my body. I want to go to battle, be kind and dismiss me soon.

Hussein:

O my good-starred sister, you who are in every sorrow and pain my comforter, bring weapons of war for Ali Akbar, namely, those left behind by my father Haidar (Ali ibn Abi Talib) and my grandfather Muhammad. Fetch me the head-piece of my coronated grandfather, together with my noble father's sword; bring also the shield of Hamzah, the Prophet's uncle, that I may adjust all of it on Ali Akbar's body.

Zainab:

O Lord, what shall Zainab, the poor, helpless, luckless Zainab, do? Where is the heaven-throned king, Muhammad the chief of chiefs? Does he see how Hussein looks at Ali Akbar his son, with tearful eyes? Take, O dear one of Zahra (Fatima) the holy turban of the chosen Prophet.

Hussein(to Ali Akbar):

Come to me, my son, you the light of the eye of Zahra, take the turban of the Messenger of God, and put it on your head; fasten too the sword of Ali to your

belt; wear also this coat of mail belonging to Ja'afar (Brother of Ali ibn Abi Talib) my uncle. Come, dear Zainab, as Ali Akbar has resolved to part with us forever, kindly dress him with a shroud instead of wedding garments.

(4987)

Zainab:

O, that my eyes had become blind! How can I dress such a handsome youth in a shroud? May you be destroyed, o Heaven! Do not consent any more that a woman should see the death of her beloved son. Come, darling nephew, let me dress you with funeral garments. Alas! I wish to God that the eyes of your aunt were deprived of vision before they had witnessed such a sight!

Ali Akbar:

Oh, how earnestly do I desire to go and be killed! I long to bend my throat to the edge of the sword. O king of religion, permit me to go and fight the battle of faith. Being a bird, I am eagerly desirous to repair to the meadows.

Hussein:

My dear son, do not be hasty, you shall be cruelly killed. Have patience, that your sorrowful sister Sakina may see you once again. Come out of your tent, o Sakina! Your brother Ali Akbar is going to battle.

Sakina:

O my brother Ali Akbar, tell your sister where you are going.

Ali Akbar:

Alas! What a great calamity! Sakina is coming to me. Ah me! The moon of Medina has appeared in view.

Sakina:

Why have you thrown a winding-sheet aro around your neck? Put it rather about my shouldsers, dear brother.

(4988)

Ali Akbar:

It is not a winding-sheet, sister, it is a nuptial garment; it is rather a time for joy than for disappointment or sorrow.

Sakina:

If you really go to war against the infidels, then assign me alive to the earth before you depart.

Ali Akbar:

O, do not hinder me. Look at our father, a solitary exile.

Sakina:

How can you approve that I, being brought up in luxury, should become a captive slave in Kufa or Damascus?

Ali Akbar:

How would you urge that the royal ascender of the heavenly ladder should hinder me from his society his service?

Sakina:

Do not consent that the impious Shimr should maliciously buffet me in the face.

Ali Akbar:

O Sakina, cease your lamentation and cries.

(4989)

Sakina:

Ah brother, you do not know the state of my heart.

Ali Akbar:

I go, sister, to bring water for you.

Sakina:

I will run bare-headed after you.

Ali Akbar:

Did you not ask for water, beloved sister?

Sakina:

Come, brother, cut my throat; I had rather.

Ali Akbar:

Oh! There is not much strength in my body.

Sakina:

Oh! Hussein is destitute of all help or aid.

Ali Akbar:

O father, deliver me, for God's sake!

Sakina:

No, father, pity me, Ali Akbar is too young.

Ali Akbar:

I Adjure you, by the Qur'an, to send her back.

Sakina:

I adjure you, by the soul of Asghar, to make him change his mind.

(4990)

Ali Akbar:

Go to your tent, girl! Do not beat so on your breast.

Sakina:

Come, brother, let us go back to Medina.

Ali Akbar:

I have no inclination to go to my country.

Sakina:

Fatima, your youngest sister, awaits you.

Ali Akbar:

I, being a sacrifice, must proceed towards the altar, and being a traveler on the way of faith, must repair to my destiny. We may see one another on the Day of Resurrection. I therefore bid adieu to all the family, and say, God keep you!

Hussein (addressing Ali Akbar):

May your father be a ransom for you, o my most beloved son! You are the Egyptian moon to me, and I am the Canaanite old man (an allusion to the story of Joseph and Jacob.). Come here; there is one desire or request which very much weighs on my mind: let it be granted to me unhesitatingly.

Ali Akbar:

O you who are so situated as to be only at the distance of two bows' lengths from the Deity, you whose heart is tempered by the holy elements of the heavenly

region, tell me what is the thing which is so much desired by you. May my soul be a sacrifice for this heart of yours!

(4991)

Hussein:

My desire is to kiss your throat tenderly. Oh, may Hussein be a sacrifice for your sweet talk!

Ali Akbar:

How long, dar father, will you let me have dominion over the kingdom of the body? How long must I blush at being too much fondled by you? No father has ever dealt with his son so tenderly or indulgently as you do.

Hussein:

Do you know, my son, why I love you so much? Why I treat you with affection above the rest of my thirsty-lipped dear sons? If I ever pour out my soul for you, my dear, it will be next to nothing compared to what I ought to do, because I know that I am offering you a sacrifice for the sins of mankind.

Ali Akbar:

Dear father, I am now going to the plain of war and field of battle to offer my soul as a ransom for you with tear-shedding eyes. We may see one another on the Day of Judgement. Behold how the land of Karbala is turned into a tulip-field through the blood of our companions shed there!

Hussein:

Yes, child, the desire of seeing each other will only be gratified on that day. Since you are going to Paradise, the garden of delight, I wish you joy and peace.

(4992)

Ali Akbar:

Dear father, at all times my kind friend, be pleased to say the summons for prayer as soon as I set my face towards the field of battle.

Hussein:

O God, You know that I have none besides Akbar. Into Your hands, O Lord, do I commit him. Darling son, may I be a sacrifice for your faithfulness! I will summon for prayer after you have gone.

Ali Akbar (addressing the enemy):

O hewers of the palm trees of the Hashimite plantation, o subverters of the foundation of every Hashimite structure, come to the fields and combat with heroic young men; try the strength of the hand of the Hashimite youths.

Umar-i-Sa'd:

Who are you? What do you want o noble youth? You, by the shining of whose face the sun is blushed and eclipsed. You bear a striking resemblance to the Prophet of God. I think, o young man, that you are Ali Akbar, the son of Hussein.

Ali Akbar:

Yes, accursed villain, I am Ali Akbar. Yes, you infidel wretch, I am the similitude of Muhammad. I am a guide in the way of love. I am the glory of the family of Abraham, the friend of God. I am the likeness of the rose-cheeked Prophet. I am, in short, of the seed of Hussein. I am none other than Ali Akbar.

(4993)

Umar (addressing the army):

O brave army of Kufa, Ali Akbar has come to battle; rush on all sides against him most maliciously; cast him down from the saddle, and make Umm Lailah. His mother, mourn for his death!

Ali Akbar (attacking their line):

O my illustrious grandfather, come to my assistance. O owner of the Zu'l Fakar, come and help me! Ali Akbar is left alone in Karbala on the field of battle; hasten and deliver him.

Umm Lailah:

O Muslims, my son has not returned, my sweet-tongued king has not come back! Oh, my sad thoughts have distracted my mind! I have gone mad, for I have lost my son.

Zainab (to Ali Akbar's mother):

O Umm Lailah, why do you go from your tent towards the wilderness, like Majnun (Reference to the Persian romance of Laila and Majnun by Nizami of Ganja.)? be at ease, and do not sigh, nor weep. Akbar will soon be back from the field.

Umm Lailah:

O sorrowful Zainab, is it an easy thing to see a son dying in the prime of life? Being a tree of lamentation, I must not be without fruit. Oh, may the Lord never deprive me of the society of Ali Akbar!

Zainab (to Umm Lailah):

Come, dear sister, into the tent for a moment, and beat not so much on your head and breast; for your noble

child will before long be back, your desperate hope will soon return to you.

(4994)

Ali Akbar (returning from the field and addressing Hussein):

O father, father, I thirst!

Hussein:

Come, let me place the ring of the glorious Prophet in your mouth, o meadow-dresser of the plain of hope!

Ali Akbar (to Sakina):

Come, Sakina, let me see you once more; let me again behold your face, for I must part with you forever!

Sakina (to Ali Akbar):

May I be a ransom for you and your soul, now about to perish! Strange that the afflictions of time have not made you forget Sakina. If you need anything to be done for you, or any service that can be performed by me, tell it to your sister.

Ali Akbar:

Dear Sakina, when you arrive at Medina, give my love to me beloved sister. Inform her that her dear brother, the beloved of her heart, died on the plain of Karbala, and that her Joseph was devoured by wolves; and give her this coat of mine, telling the miserable creature that my body has fallen here in the desert of Karbala. Apprise her how well her brother prospered in his undertaking, for he has fallen here on the ground, with his body cut into pieces; death did not allow her brother Ali Akbar to return to Medina and see the dear face of his sister, and fetch her thence to Karbala to her father. Tell her that I am very sorry for the failure.

(4995)

Sakina:

Oh, may Sakina be a ransom for this your shirt, and a sacrifice for the manner of your speaking! Your shirt is quite stained with the blood of your head. Oh! Speak on; how sweetly do you utter my words!

Ali Akbar (again joining the fray):

We may again see one another on the Day of Resurrection. Good-bye to all the family. (after fighting until he is exhausted.) O result of the hopefulness of the lovers, come and save Ali Akbar, who is rolling in his own blood!

Hussein (following the voice):

My red-robed Joseph! Alas my Ali Akbar! You are lost in Karbala, alas my Ali Akbar!

Ali Akbar:

O father, I am dying of thirst; help me! I am worn out from fatigue; father save me! Pour some drops of water on my dried lips, patience and endurance have left me; father, deliver me!

The Prophet (bringing water):

Oh, may your grandfather be a sacrifice for you! Drink water, drink it; may my soul be a ransom for yours! Come, here is water, I have brought it for you from Paradise. Drink, handsome creature, drink; may Muhammad, the Arabian Prophet, be a ransom for these your dry lips! Drink water, for thirst has altogether exhausted you, poor thing!

(4996)

Ali Akbar:

O my famous ancestor, I am still thirsty, have compassion on my blood-pouring eyes! I am still parched! Grant me generously the other cup of water also, for thirst has exhausted me and deprived me of all strength.

The Prophet:

This is not your share, o light of my two eyes; that cup only was intended for you. As for this cup, it is Hussein's; I am bearing it in hand for him, as he is the brightness of my eyes, he is my sorrowful, thirsty-lipped guest. He will come to see me a few minutes after your arrival, even he, the destitute, the expatriated, the parched in soul.

Ali Akbar (to Hussein):

O father, I am dying of the many wounds that I have received; help me! You have lost Ali Akbar; father, help me! This very moment I am going to embrace the beloved of my heart, death. (This reminds one of a song of the Spanish Legionnaires: "Soy el novio de la muerte", i.e., "I am the bridegroom of death". It makes me want to sing: "Legionario!, Legionario!" "[Legionaire!, Legionaire!]") I shall fall from the saddle down to the ground, fainting; father, help me, help me!

Hussein:

Woe to me! The arrow of fate has at last mortally injured my Ali Akbar! The poor child could not escape the deadly shaft of fate! How happy the hour when you stood. Cypress-like, before your father, with the hand of self-sufficiency placed ostentatiously on the waist! How blessed the time when you bade farewell to Zainab your aunt! Yes, even the moment at which you set out on this journey was a blessed time compared to the present.

(4997)

Ali Akbar:

You have come at a good time to me, o majestic being; I am dying from thirst! I am parched to death!

Hussein:

O dear child, you die after all, thirsty and in the bloom of youth! As for water, I am, my son, shame-faced before you, at my inability to procure it.

Ali Akbar:

Well have you had me married at Karbala, father! Fate has at length dyed my hands with my own blood!

Hussein:

Oh, what misery I have to bear in heart, until the Day of Judgement! Alas, what overwhelming pain! Alas, what great injustice!

Ali Akbar:

O father, if you intend to carry my body to the camp, wait until I give up the ghost! Do not hurry in this matter.

Hussein:

No, I must carry you alive to our camp, that your poor sister may once agin see you before you die.

Ali Akbar:

I had promised to get water for the children of our family; should they demand the same thing from me, what answer am I to give them?

Hussein (addressing Umm Lailah):

O Umm Lailah, the newly married Ali Akbar has returned from his journey! Congratulate him on his marriage-feast, o unhappy Zainab.

Umm Lailah:

Help me, o women, on this the wedding festival of Ali Akbar. O Sakina, bring with you ambergris, aloe wood and some rose water.

Ali Akbar:

This is the last thing that I have to speak to you, o aunt. There are two things I expect you to do after I am gone. First, when I die, do not cut your locks of hair because of your grief for me, nor scratch your face with your finger nails, as some women do. Secondly, rest as quietly and patiently as possible, and set all your affection on God alone, without giving occasion to Ali Akbar's enemies to rejoice triumphantly. Now I go, with eager desire, to the Prophet of God, testifying, in the meantime, to the truth that "There is no God besides the true God".(98)

SCENE XIX

Death of Abbas, the Brother of Hussein

Hussein:

O beloved Prophet of the merciful and incomparable Creator, look upon us, and behold the seditions raised up against us in the world O Ali, defender of God's cause, see your own dear child with eyes full of tears amid the inhabitants of Kufa.

Abbas:

O Ali, intimate of the great Creator, the Lord of the universe, o asylum of the destitute, see the cruelty of the enemy. Dear father, it is not a great distance from Najaf (burial place of Ali ibn Abi Talib) to Kufa; put out your head from the grave, and witness our destitution and solitariness. Behold the adornment of the Prophet's shoulder, the brightness of the virgin's eye, in the hands of the unbelievers.

Shimr (challenging Hussein):

O Hussein, brilliant pearl of the deep sea of God's mysteries, shining gem of the jewelry of Haidar the champion; o You whose are the seraphim, you the similitude of Muhammad the elect messenger of God, you who are like the lion of God in the field of battle, the army of Kufa and Syria all thirst for your blood. O lion-hearted, panther-tearing, victorious Hussein, hasten to battle, o judge of the conspicuous law of the Prophet, who are considered in all parts of the world as the rightful lord of all men.

Hussein:

O spheres, I am Hussein the blossom of the rose-garden of Haidar; am I not indeed the light of the two eyes of the Prophet? You cruelly did strike out the tooth of the chosen Prophet with a stone; you maliciously cleft the holy head of my father asunder; you did fracture the side of the virgin (Fatima) tyrannically and brutally; you poured the poison of your enmity down the throat of my dear brother; and now you have brought Hussein to Karbala, intending to make my sister destitute and helpless.

Zainab:

O orbit, what is the cause of your enmity and cruelty as regards Hussein, the light of my eyes? You have brought my dear Hussein to the place of trial, having made him an exile, a destitute person without any friend or relation. Did not your heart burn with pity for Hussein, whom, by way of malice, you have expatriated from home?

Sakina:

O Lord, my dear Hussein's eyes are filled with tears; I do not know what has happened to him that he is so restless. Why should my dear aunt drop her head sorrowfully on her knee and shed tears? I wish to God that Sakina had not come into the world! Well would it be if she had died in Medina.

Hussein:

Come, Sakina, light of my eyes, let me hold your head a moment on my bosom. How sorry am I that you are to become fatherless, and a prisoner among the army of the enemy! I brought you up like a rose in my own lap; but alas! I could not derive any enjoyment from your beautiful face.

Sakina:

O Lord, what shall I do, seeing that there is none to assist me? There is none to pay any regard for Sakina. I am no longer able to bear thirst, am am too weak to help myself.

Zainab:

O brightness of my eyes, o Sakina, my wingless and fatherless bird. I also, dear sore-hearted niece, am in great trouble from the pangs of thirst. I know no other water than the tears of my eyes, o soul-distressed creature!

Sakina:

O uncle I cannot do otherwise than die owing to this excessive thirst; think of some remedy for me, else I shall lose my life. I am a stranger in this place, and can scarcely find out my way to any habitation, and you are aware of my condition, that my palate is parched with thirst. Come, uncle, do, for God's sake, an act of benevolence towards me! I have lost all patience, think about some water for me.

Abbas:

O Sakina, you deprive my body of its vigor and strength by your pitiful cry. I know no water but what is in my tearful eyes; behold, the sowers of the seed of malice ready to cut at the fountainhead of the water of faith, most tyrannically. In this wilderness I am not only ashamed before you, but do not know how to look your companions in the face.

Hussein:

O noble standard-bearer of Hussein, o light of my two eyes, o you who are the strength of my arm, and dearer to me than my very soul, take a skin with you and go to the field of battle saying to the enemy, "Thus says Hussein, with a burning heart, 'Is it proper that the Euphrates, a river like the sea, should be forbidden to us? Is not this very water part of the dowry of Zahra my mother? By our Lord, my poor, unfortunate family has committed no crime in the world, nor are they of the enemies of God and His Messenger. Kindly, then, grant us a few drops of that water of which even the wild beasts of the desert always freely partake!'"

Sakina (addressing Abbas):

Come, uncle, may I be offered for you! Take from me this skin, for my body and soul are both burning with thirst in this desert. Oh! If they sell water even at the price of life, I beg you, dear uncle to get it for me!

(5002)

Abbas (to Ibn Sa'd):

O Ibn Sa'd, addicted to cruelty, you who has hoisted up the flag of your tyranny, thus says the offspring of the best of mankind, Hussein, the most exalted king, "Granting that, in your opinion, this innocent one has left no blank in the book of disobedience; admitting that, according to your supposition, I am a great sinner indeed, our children must doubtless be free from fault. If my crime has passed all bounds, what can you lay to the charge of my children? Certainly nothing. Hussein's youngest daughter is crying bitterly from thirst; be kind and merciful to the little children, and fear the cold sighs of the orphans."

Ibn Sa'd:

O Abbas, brave as a lion, and fierce as a tiger, o panther defeating, leopard hunting Abbas, you whose sword, like that of the Lion of God himself, now dazzles in Heaven, and now flashes on earth, give up the idea of getting water; it is impossible for you to obtain a drop of it until you are slain for the injustice of mankind, o Abbas.

Abbas (returning):

O Lord, what shall I do, and how shall I express my shame? I have been at the brink of a running stream, and yet my throat is dry with thirst. O Lord, how can I go to Hussein with such sad news? I wish that I had not been alive in the world today! How can I return to that royal personage with an empty skin and dried up lips? What shall I say to him to clear myself? May my tongue be dumb!

(5003)

Hussein:

Do not grieve, o Abbas, light of my sight; why should you weep, my dear brother? O rest of my soul,, what is the cause of your lamentations? I think that the inhabitants of Kufa have refused to give you water. The God of the two worlds shall avenge me on them! You need not, dear brother, be anxious owing to that. I have made the cause of the Creator manifest before the eyes of these sinners, who are as wicked as Nimrod.

Abbas:

May I be a ransom for you, o solar orb of the sphere of bashfulness! Thus did the malicious fellow answer, "If the whole world be inundated by streams, Hussein shall not see a drop of fresh water unless he first offers the hand of allegiance to Yezid; for then, and then only, shall the cuase be fairly decided."

Hussein:

O my powerful, lion-like Abbas, my valiant warrior, my famous hero, for the sake of the kind regard which you have towards Hussein, do not trouble me, seeing that I am at my last breath. It is time that you should stroke with your kind hand the heads of my children, and soothe the heart of my little daughter as an orphan girl.

Abbas:

Be the dust of your feet in this and the next world a crown for my head; be the ring of yur thralldom an ornament for my neck and shoulders. I am not a brother to you, but rather a slave, with a ring of perpetual slavery in my ears, and my mother is no more than a bondswoman among the maid-servants of your blessed mother. You are announcing to me my safety and your own destruction. Without you in this world, let the dust of the universe be on my head!

(5004)

Hussein:

The desire of martyrdom has today settled on my mind; the scar of Ali Akbar has melted me down like a candle. On whatsoever side I look in the battle, I see my own young men rolling in the dust and blood before me. Of my life there remains no more than an hour. Here is Karbala and you and my sister are all at hand. This is my daughter Sakina, and this is my poor son Zain al-Abidin, these are my children one by one, and this is the rest of the family. Be pleased to protect all kindly, after the accursed Shimr shall have unjustly cut my throat with his dagger.

Abbas:

If Abbas is worthy to receive the honor of martyrdom, why should he be prohibited from it? Am I not also of the seed of Haidar? If I do not bestow my head as a free offering in your way, let my mother sit in the house of mourning and weep for me. I desire vehemently that my body should be turned into powder by the hooves of horses for your sake. A slave, with the ring of servitude in his ears, can never depart from the gate of his master; my humble supplication to you is, not to drive me away from this portal.

Hussein:

Yes, you are a royal falcon soaring in the atmosphere of martyrdom, you are the unique cavalier on the race-ground of the kingdom of felicity. You shall precede me both as regards martyrdom and reaching Paradise; this your handsome face shall roll in blood before me. Sit down by me, dear brother, that I may with pleasure see your face once again.

(5005)

Abbas:

It is fit that you should glory, o Abbas, since your request has been granted. A thousand thanks! You have become at last a sacrifice for Ali Akbar. It is proper that you should set up the flag of glory above the two worlds, seeing that you have become a ransom for the feet of the martyr king of Karbala. Yet you are but one of the least of his servants; will it not suffice that you are addressedm o brother, by Hussein?

Hussein:

Brotherm it is high time that both of us should swim in our own blood, that both should start from this plain of affliction for the lofty realms of Paradise. Put on your armor, for behold, after an hour we must wallow, like half-killed birds, in dust and blood!

Abbas:

Henceforth it is very hard for Abbas to love, seeing that Hussein is today overwhelmed with grief. Put on your armor, o Abbas! Perhaps tomorrow you may be able to make the steed of glory leap over the roof of the ninth heaven by what you can do today.

Hussein:

O Lord, I have none left today except poor Abbas, and separartion from him will leave a scar on my heart. Must I put on weapons of war and hasten to my own slaughter? Oh! How can I choose today that my body should die?

(5006)

Abbas (wrapping himself in a winding sheet):

O Lord, where is my poor sorrowful mother (Mater Dolorosa) to see me passing in the valley of the shadow of death? Her son, who is but thirty-one years of age, being deprived of youth, is, with a melancholy heart, putting on funeral garments with his own hand. O death, give me respite for a time, that happily I may offer my head and my soul on behalf of Hussein. "We belong to God, and to Him we are returning."

Hussein (putting on a winding sheet):

Alas! I do not know whether Fatima, my poor mother, knows the sad state of her dear son. Possibly she can see now with a troubled mind that the elegant cypress of her meadow is clothed in a shroud. I cover myself with a winding sheet today because I have no one to care for my body after I die. "I fly for refuge to God from the reprobate Satan." "And we ransomed him with a great sacrifice." (Quotations from the Qur'an.)

Abbas:

Hussein is today alone without any companions. Oh that he had Awn and Ja'afar (Brother of Ali ibn Abi Talib) today on the right and on the left! Oh, what a good thing it would be if Kasim, the renowned youth, could be now with us in this state of helplessness, O Lord God!

Hussein:

Dear brother, rise from your place, and fetch me my horse Zu'l Janah so that today I may ride and fight the battle of faith against the malicious unbelievers. Know that after an hour's time you and I shall be beheaded, and, with parched lips, by the cruelty of the wicked and unjust enemy.

(5007)

Abbas:

*Place your foot in the stirrup, o king of Heaven.
May my poor soul be offered today as a sacrifice for
you! O Lord, has Hussein today no friend in this desert
who wil offer himself as a ransom for this king of noble
descent?*

Hussein:

*I place my foot in the stirrup, but angels on my
right hand, jinns on my left hand, are weeping today
owing to my desolation. O Lord, have mercy on my poor
orphans, for I am, o great Creator,
giving myself up freely today for Your cause!*

Abbas:

*I put my feet in the stirrup, but the orphans
today on the right hand, and Zainab and Umm Kulsum on
the left, are bemoaning my misery. Oh that Fatima were
now here in the fearful desert to wipe off the dust from
the face of her dear son! Hussein is thirsty, and I am
parched, while the son of Sa'd is indifferent. O Lord,
what can I alone do against such a numerous army?*

(5008)

Hussein:

O my sympathizing friend, my noble standard-bearer, o you the like of whom the eyes of the stars have never seen, the time of offering oneself a sacrifice is at hand. I cannot linger long, and defer being a martyr. It is time that I should enjoy the delights of martyrdom, and cheerfully run the race that is set before me in order to win the happy prize. If you have in your head any idea about the society of the nymphs of Paradise, accompany me, then, for the king requires a standard-bearer with him. O Dear brother, set up your flag and carry it manfully behind the back of your brother. When the ensign of my sovereignty is fully displayed, then join in the fields of trial for battle. I am like Abraham, and this field is my altar, and you, being my offering, must accompany me wherever I go. Dye your hand and sword with the enemy's blood, and fight back to back with your brother against them.

Abbas:

With all my heart, dear brother, Abbas is quite ready most respectfully to obey your orders. Set out at once this very minute for war, and trust with confidence in the great Creator for assistance.

Hussein:

The villain-nourishing world has a quarrel against us; let us turn to the tents and bid adieu to our own family, for I know well that we shall never again visit them. O poor thing, this being our last day, it is necessary that we should go and see the disconsolate ladies; we must visit Zainab and Umm Kulsum, our sisters, together with Zain al-Abidin, my friendless and sorrowful son. Oh, let me behold once more their dear faces! Have great patience, child; if I live I shall get you instantly water from the Euphrates.

(5009)

Abbas:

*O dear niece, let me kiss your throat with sorrow,
for your neck shall be galled by a rough rope put around
it.*

Hussein:

*Let me rub off the dust of misery from your face;
you shall receive many, many blows from a cruel people.*

Abbas:

*Adieu, o my invalid Zain al-Abidin! Adieu, o my
chief and general.*

The Imam Hussein:

*When you go to Syria in a most miserable
condition, take great care of Umm Kulsum your aunt, dear
child.*

Abbas:

*Oh, behold! I am taking hold of your skirts,
begging you to show kindness to Zainab in this journey.*

Hussein:

*Yes, since poor deprive Ali Akbar is not alive, be
kind and help her to ride on her camel.*

Zainab:

*Separation! O partakers of sorrow, separation!
Absence! O most intimate friends, absence!*

(5010)

Umm Kulsum:

O you who have lost your brother, help me; let torrents of heart's blood stream down from your eyes.

Zainab:

Is there anyone bereaved of a dear brother to mourn pitifully over Hussein's sad condition?

Umm Kulsum:

O dear brother, where are you going? Will you leave me alone? Where are you proceeding? Weapons of war on your body, why a winding sheet around your neck? A zealous brother you were; why do you, then, go away without saying a word? You did pull my litter from home to this vale of exile; after you have expatriated me so, why do you intend to leave me alone?

Hussein:

O Zainab, if I have lamentably left your side, you must excuse my poor friendless children.

Abbas (to the family):

O family of Hussein, Heaven is rotating in a most singular manner; it has become Abbas' turn to suffer misery.

Zainab:

Again the sound of farewell reaches my ears anew. Oh I shall well nigh lose all sense and feeling, for the anxiety overpowers me.

(5011)

Abbas:

Come, destitute sister, see my face once and for all, for we shall not behold one another until the Day of Judgement.

Hussein (to Zainab):

Come, o my sister, mother of all adversity and misery.

Zainab:

Here am I, brother, tell me what is your request?

Hussein:

What will you do when I am gone, after I am dead?

Zainab:

Alas! You shall be slain by a wicked nation?

Hussein:

O distracted creature! You shall see my head on the top of a spear.

Zainab:

O brother, may my eyes never behold such a sight!

Hussein:

You shall be shamefully made a captive by the inhabitants of Kufa.

Zainab:

Tell me how I am to bear this grievous matter, and what am I to do?

(5012)

Hussein:

O sister, always show kindness to poor Sakina!

Zainab:

Oh, do not be anxious about her! May dust be cast on my head!

Hussein:

She is a memorial of your Hussein.

Zainab:

May my soul be a ransom for the light of your eyes!

Hussein:

Sister, you shall surely see my head on a spear.

Zainab - *Dear brother, how can I have patience?*

Hussein:

You shall go bare-headed to Syria, sister.

Zainab:

Oh! What shall I do? I shall be overwhelmed with sorrow in those sad days.

Hussein:

God keep you, o you who are in a sad state! I have given myself a sacrifice for my followers.

(5013)

Zainab:

May my body and soul be offered for them also!

Abbas:

Come to me, Umm Kulsum, my troubled sister.

Umm Kulsum:

Here I am, o my standard-bearing prince!

Abbas:

Know, sister, I shall be slain maliciously.

Umm Kulsum:

How can I go without you to Medina?

Abbas:

I long to see the dear face of my daughter left behind.

Umm Kulsum:

I feel miserably sorry for you, dear brother.

Abbas:

Show kindness to my poor daughter.

Umm Kulsum:

I will spend my life in her service.

Abbas:

None must call her an orphan after I am gone.

(5014)

Umm Kulsum:

Yes, every fatherless child suffers pain.

Abbas:

None must cruelly slap her on the face.

Umm Kulsum:

Do not be sad about that; I will do my best to help her.

Abbas:

God be your keeper! I am going away, sister.

Umm Kulsum:

Go! May god be your defender and helper!

Hussein:

O Lord, help Hussein's poor sisters; see how his daughters are brought low. I adjure you, by my soul, make no more lamentations. That will do; let not your eyes shed tears of blood so copiously! Return to your tents and pay kind attentions to my poor sick son, Imam Zain al-Abidin. Have pity on this sad and sorrowful heart, and forgive Hussein and Abbas their shortcomings.

Zainab:

How helpless must the sister be whose brother dies at a distance! Let dust be cast on the head of the woman who is brotherless.

(5015)

Hussein (addressing Abbas):

Dear brother, gird your loins, for our time is very short; turn to the field of battle and make ready for war. If this army, God forbid, should separate us the one from the other, we shall never be able to see each other's faces any more.

Abbas:

I shall never separate myself from you as long as I live; and if I die for your sake, how fortunate would I then be! Should the enemy, however (God forbid!) make a separation between me and you, should they be able to remove me far away from you, where am I to see your dear face, beloved brother, and how am I to be acquainted with your circumstances in the field?

Hussein:

If you be separated from me by accident, go out of the field at once in the direction of the camp and seek me there; and if I miss you in the field, I shall try to find you there; if I fail to discover you, I will draw out my sword against the wicked enemy, and ask, "Where is my brother?"

Abbas:

When I am removed from you, lay a sword on these villains, destroy the whole of them, then probably you will find me. I hope, of king of religion, that in passing through the lines, you will be kind enough to sit at my head and lament loudly over me.

Hussein (addressing the enemy):

O you who are devoid of all reputation and honor!

Abbas :

You who have given the name of faith to infidelity!

(5016)

Hussein:

You who are destined to ill at your incarnation!

Abbas:

Are you companions of God? No, rather you are at enmity with his prophet?

Hussein:

Yezid the tyrant is from the seed of adultery.

Abbas:

And how can one born of an adulteress deserve the Caliphate or be fit to rule?

Hussein:

Can he be an ornament or adornment of the throne?

Abbas:

Ali alone and his holy children can be such as Hussein.

Hussein:

O people, I am the child of the Prophet.

Abbas:

I am the heir of Haidar's high office.

Hussein:

O you people far removed from morality, I am Hussein.

Abbas:

And I am titled the moon of Beni Hashim.

(5017)

Hussein:

I do not care an atom whether I am killed.

Abbas:

Martyrdom is the heritage of my forefathers.

Hussein:

I shall shed so much blood in the plain of enmity!

Abbas:

That the Creator of the world will say, "Bravo!"

Hussein:

O inhabitants of Kufa what are our faults?

Abbas:

Why should a stop be put to our proceedings?

Hussein:

Do you not know, o wicked people!

Abbas:

That of the family of the Prophet, small and great!

Hussein:

One faints from weakness and instantly falls to the ground!

Abbas:

Another cries "Thirst! Thirst!"

(5018)

Hussein:

Have you compassion on our souls?

Abbas:

Give us some water for our children.

Hussein:

For the sake of Yezid, who is born of an adulterer's seed.

Abbas:

How can it be lawful to be cruel to the family of God's Prophet?

Hussein:

If you will not intercept us on our way.

Abbas:

We will go to Turkey or Europe.

Hussein:

But if you will not let us escape with our lives.

Abbas:

We shall lay hold of the cutting sword.

Hussein:

What will you say to my mother on the Day of Judgement?

Abbas:

My judge shall be your adversary on the day.

(5019)

Ibn Sa'd:

O soldiers of the army, o ill-starred Syrian troops, o brave men of the field of battle and lion-like heroes, the famous Abbas, the standard-bearer of the thirsty army, the defender of the oppressed, truly Abbas, has come to the field for water; overthrow him with a volley of arrows; slay him with spears and daggers.

Hussein (*beginning to fight*):

O amphitheatre of wonders and miracles, o defender of God's cause, take hold of the hilt of your glittering sword.

Abbas:

O my crowned father, Ali the Lion of God, the elect, be favorable to my enterprise.

Abbas (*to the waters of the Euphrates*):

It is not religion, is parched with thirst; you are a good servant indeed, do not then be so faithless.

Ibn Sa'd:

O Abbas, do you wish to carry water to the camp of Hussein?

The Army (*to the Son of Sa'd*):

O cruel son of Sa'd! Behold the great Day of Resurrection! Hussein and Abbas, the two luminaries, have surrounded you on every side. Everyone is plunging himself into this sea of strife, the stock of life of the people of Kufa is set on fire with the flaming sword, which scatters to the winds, most unsparingly, the harvest of existence amongst the Syrians.

(5020)

Hussein (*fighting*):

O shameless nation, beware of the Day of Resurrection, and be abashed before the face of the Prophet, the best of mankind. Does not the cloak I am wearing belong to your Prophet! Is not this the brilliant turban of the elected Prophet which you see on my head?

The Army (*to Ibn Sa'd*):

O prince of the world, the reins are gone from our hands. Mercy! Mercy! Deliver us from Abbas, the fierce lion, and save us from the king of the age himself! Help your army, for they are all undone; the world is darkened. Alas! Alas!

Ibn Sa'd:

O gallant army, put the horse of cruelty and enmity to full speed, and make a separation between these two brothers; for there is a rule among blood-thirsty warriors, that the body of the troops should fix their eyes on the standard-bearer. When the standard is fallen, the army is defeated, the back of the king is broken, so that he loses heart.

Abbas (severely wounded):

Where are you, o Hussein? Behold Abbas in great trouble! See that my poor body is a mark for arrows and daggers.

Hussein:

Where are you, o standard-bearer of my army in Karbala? Abbas, dear brother, you water-bearer of the plain of trial, where are you?

(5021)

Abbas (coming back to the camp):

My dear Umm Kulsum, behold Abbas in calamity and distress! Dear sister, did Hussein come to the tent?

Umm Kulsum:

He came, dear brother, but he seemed to have lost himself; he had received many arrows in different parts of the body. He fell from time to time on the centre of

the army, every now and then saying, "Where is my brother?"

Hussein (coming back):

Where are you, o my noble and faithful standard-bearer? I lose all patience, o water-bearer of the plain of Karbala. Sister Zainab, do you know anything about my Abbas? Show me where he is, that I may embrace him as my sweet soul.

Zainab:

O brother, the star of our fortune is hurled down from its station. Your Abbas came indeed, but he was smeared with blood from head to foot. He inquired about you of Umm Kulsum, o most beloved, and fell back again on the army of Kufa.

Hussein:

My back is galled by the burden of separation from you; where are you, o brother? Pain and grief will at last kill me; where is my brother?

Abbas:

Thirst has undone me, o Lord; where is Hussein? I am restless and brotherless, o Lord; where is Hussein?

(5022)

Shimr:

O Hussein, I have lopped off the hand of your standard-bearer with my sword. I have made you brotherless on the plain of Karbala.

Abbas:

My right hand, o God, has fallen off from my body; enable my other hand to reach the skirt of Hussein.

Hussein:

O land of Karbala, where is Abbas the brave? O
land of Karbala, where is the nightingale of my rose
garden?

Abbas:

O hope of loving souls, come and save your
brother, who is wallowing in his own blood.

Hussein (at the head of Abbas):

O brother, brother! Now my back is broken, now my
hope is lost!

Abbas:

O Hussein, are you pleased with your servant? Are
you satisfied with his past deeds?

Hussein:

Oh, may I be a sacrifice for you and these your
wounds! I am satisfied with you may God be pleased with
you also!

(5023)

Abbas:

Now I go, with an earnest desire, to meet the
Messenger of God, saying, "I testify that there is no
God but the true God." (99)

SCENE XXII

THE LAMENTATIONS OF HUSSEIN AND HIS FAMILY FOR THE LOSS
OF THE MARTYRS IN KARBALA.

Imam Hussein:

The infidels are on one side, and my sorrowful self on the other. The rose has fallen in one direction, and the thorns in the other. O friends, in one quarter Ali Akbar fell by treachery, a martyr, and in another lies sickly Zain al-Abidin. My son-in-law, Kasim the disappointed, has been killed on one spot, and on the other I myself experience the cruel oppression of the spheres. In one corner the mother of Ali Akbar is smiting her head, while the sorrowful bride of Kasim is moaning in another. I have become a target of adversity from six causes, and find opposed to me the accursed Shimr and the army of the infidels.

Fatima, the bride:

I said, o Kasim my bridegroom, you would be faithful. I never anticipated so much oppression at your hands. You went, o Kasim, and your absence has turned my heart into blood. Have you dyed your feet with the blood of my heart as though it were henna? Certainly you have left this known world. Why should you, therefore, have any further concern for me?

Sakina:

O Ali Akbar, I shall certainly die, being separated from you! I burn like a moth, you are the fire. O dear brother, when in Paradise have respect for Kasim. O my beloved, he is not only a bridegroom, but also your guest.

(5024)

Fatima, the bride:

O Kasim, I cannot forget your love! You went before I had time to behold you. If you have not the opportunity to come to me, why does not your messenger bring me your handwriting? Why have you estranged your heart from your fresh bride? Is this what you call humanity and fair dealing? I am left a stranger, but you have no cares, as you have Ali Akbar to associate with you in Paradise.

Sakina:

O Ali Akbar, I hold you by the garment. In Paradise Kasim the bridegroom has become your guest. Say to him, "May your marriage in Karbala be propitious! Why have you brought to nothing the custom of the world, and dyed your palms with henna before even a night had passed since my death?"

Umm Kulsum (addressing the Imam Hussein):

May I be a sacrifice for you, o light of the eyes of the Prophet! May Umm Kulsum be a ransom for you, o afflicted and friendless being! Fatima the bride has nearly died with weeping. Her sighs and moans have reached the highest Heaven. Her heart is sore through separation from Kasim the bridegroom. The death of her husband has caused her to rend her garments. Tell Zainab, the afflicted and sorrowful, to comfort that aggrieved bride.

The Imam Hussein:

Come to me, o my dear sister Zainab, and relieve my patient boat from the tempestuous waters. For the death of Kasim the bridegroom, his bride is smiting her head in the nuptial room. Go to her relief, and tell her, o child, "Do not smite your head, for God is in all things the Causer of what takes place."

(5025)

Zainab:

O Fatima, do not bewail so much nor cry aloud. Decrease your complaints against Heaven and do not weep. You are the nightingale of Hussein's rose garden, and have right on your side. But do not be so distressed on account of the distance of the rose.

Fatima, the bride:

O aunt, I am justified; say, when have I known widowhood? The tears flow from my eyes spontaneously. I have not sat with Kasim in the nuptial room, and in this field of roses I had not the opportunity to bloom as a

rose. If my husband has been Maliciously killed, and I am a widow, why am I dressed in my bridal garments, dear aunt?

Zainab:

Do not bewail, dear niece, Kasim has escaped danger. The world has not as yet hurt his feelings. Keep your mind happy; he is seated by the bank of the River Euphrates, and is washing his face of the dust that has settled there.

Sakina:

How long am I to weep, o friends, owing to the pangs of anxiety for a brother? Oh that I could obtain some information concerning Ali Akbar. If he, that free and cypress statured youth, be slain, o Lord, where could his body have fallen?

The Imam Hussein:

Listen, o Zainab, to the voice of my young child. Go, o sister, and quiet my Sakina. Has anyone been so oppressed as I myself through distress? Sakina is sorrowing on one side, and the bride on the other.

(5026)

Zainab (to Sakina):

Dear niece, why have you laid bare your bosom like the morning, and rested your head on your knee like on in thought? Dear niece, do not freshen the soreness of my heart, however much, beloved of my soul, you may be justified in so doing. Do not complain, dear one, of the oppression of the world; you have always paid attention to my words.

Fatima, the bride:

It is a hard case when one is friendless and helpless, but worse that either is the pain of being

disconsolate without a husband, I am houseless and desolate away from Kasim. I wish that some kind Muslim would give me some news of Kasim.

Zainab:

Come, o mother of Ali Akbar, and kindly help me. I am alone and fatigued; come and relieve me. These two children are sorrowing, owing to their separation from Ali Akbar and Kasim. I do not know whether to comfort that one or this. By groaning and grief these infants have nearly perished. Both are wailing, one on either side of me.

The Mother of Ali Akbar:

O my beloved children, why do you melt like lighted candles? O you two lovely trees, why are you so prostrate in the mud? Do not weep so much, the time for lamentation will come later. O daughter, this is only the beginning of our troubles. We are only in the first stage.

Sakina (to her mother):

O my sorrowful mother (Mater Dolorosa), why should I not rend my garments, as my head is troubled, desirous of seeing my brother.

(5027)

Fatima, the bride:

O my sorrowful mother (Mater Dolorosa), by the Lord I swear that I cannot for one moment refrain from grieving for Kasim the bridegroom.

The Mother of Ali Akbar:

In this dilemma, what can I do for you, dear children? Alas! How am I to act? Where am I to carry my complaint?

Sakina:

If I could get any tidings, o mother, of the place where the tall stature of Ali Akbar fell! Oh! If I could only obtain information concerning him, I would rest patiently under my bereavement.

Fatima, the bride:

If it be your intention, o mother, to relieve me, give me some information concerning Kasim my bridegroom.

The Mother of Ali Akbar:

O Sakina, o Fatima, of light of my tearful eyes, where can I find any person to give me information concerning your beloved ones? The world has become dark in my eyes, and there is no light. Where shall I meet with any person to go and obtain tidings?

Sakina:

O Fatima, arise! We are in grief and sorrow; and as we are bereaved, let us together bewail our loss.

(5028)

Fatima, the bride:

Put your hand in mine, o sister. Let us go to the wilderness together, o beloved Sakina.

Sakina and Fatima (together):

Let us weep like strangers, since we are afflicted, sometimes inquiring for Kasim, and sometimes for Ali Akbar.

Sakina:

O my brave Ali Akbar, o moonlike sun! I shall die of grief for you, o beloved brother!

Fatima, the bride:

O Kasim, why have you withdrawn your garment from me? Probably you heard some harsh word from your new spouse.

Sakina and Fatima (together):

We two poor sisters have sorrow for our lot. We two poor strangers, alas! How sad is our fate!

Shahrbanu (daughter of Yazdigird, last Sassanian Emperor, wife of Imam Hussein, mother of Ali Akbar, Asghar and Zain al-Abidin):

O my poor daughters! Do not wail any more, I have neither Ali Akbar nor Asghar.

(5029)

Ibn Sa'd (to Khauli a soldier in the Syrian Army):

Why do the women of the harem weep so incessantly, strike their heads, and lament without restraint? Has any new occurrence taken place, that the children shed tears like rain? On every side I hear the voice of lamentation. North, south, east and west, I see everyone weeping.

Khauli (to Ibn Sa'd):

Know, o Amir, that the Khauli - women who are thus weeping consist of the family of the Lord of Medina, and they are shedding tears like rain. One woman has dyed her garments black for the loss of her husband; another unfortunate creature strikes her head, owing to

the darkness of her fortune. Sakina has torn her garment in two; while the bride of the disappointed Kasim wails with a loud voice. The bride moans for Kasim the bridegroom; while Sakina grieves for Ali Akbar the unmarried. All the women, owing to your oppression, o Ibn Sa'd, shed tears, and are sore at heart, lamenting the absence of their beloved ones.

Ibn Sa'd:

These grievings are not sufficient to gladden my heart. I shall this day do things to surpass Shidad (Reference to Qur'an, Surah LXXXIX). Bring to me, o tyrannical people, the weapons and garmets which are on the bodies of Kasim and Ali Akbar.

Khauli (bringing a shirt):

Of those who have died from calamity, you see in my hand what has fallen to my lot. I do not hide from you, o Amir, these are the two shirts.

Ibn Sa'd:

Speak, soldiers of Syria, whoever knows best. I would like to ascertain to whom did this shirt belong.

(5030)

Khauli:

Of these two shirts, the one that is stiff with gold and is full of slits and rents from daggers and arrows, I mean that the shirt which is stiff with blood, o Amir, belongs to Ali Akbar, the offspring of the Prophet. The other, which is stained with blood in the corners, is the wedding garment of the son-in-law of the Shah of Karbala.

Ashish (bringing a cup):

O chief! As Ali Akbar came towards the field of battle, I went mailiciously and waylaid him. When the edge of the sword struck on his head, at the same moment at the same moment I took away his cap from behind.

Ibn Sa'd:

I cannot understand, alas! What benefit there is in this world. Is not Ali Akbar's mother dead?

Khauili:

May God grant that you may be seated on the throne of grace as long as the world continues! These black locks which you see in my hand, o Amir, are two perfumed ringlets, one belonging to Kasim and the other to Ali Akbar.

Ibn Sa'd:

Make known to me, o cruel and tyrannical man, which ringlet pertained to Kasim and which one to Ali Akbar?

Khauili:

The long and black ringlet which you see belongs to poor, innocent Ali Akbar. The other lock in rolls and curls pertains to the troubled and afflicted Kasim.
(5031)

Ashish (bringing a shield):

O Amir, o originator of confusion and mischief, the trophies which I have gained in this undertaking are these shields which my hands have taken, as my heart possesses the properties of iron. This shield pertained to the memorable Kasim, and this other to Ali Akbar.

Khauili:

O Amir, who is at enmity with the tribe of the cloak (Muhammad, Fatima, Ali ibn Abi Talib, Imam Hasan and Imam Hussein), my share in these transactions consists of these two coats. The green garment appertains to the unhappy Ali Akbar; the red coat is Kasim's, the new bridegroom.

Ibn Sa'd:

Come, o Khauli, o follower of a perfidious dog, take up the clothing and arms of the young Ali Akbar, and show them, one by one, to his sister, that her afflicted soul may inhale the scent of her brother. Take them with exultation, and let her heart burn with the knowledge of her lost Ali Akbar.

Khauli (taking up the trophies):

I am he whom God has chosen to be an oppressor in this world. I am he who has not a grain of mercy in his disposition towards the world. I will dissolve Sakina's heart to water through malice. With malignity I shall roast that game of the harem.

Ibn Sa'd:

O Ashish, bring forward the clothing and apparel of Kasim the bridegroom, and carry them to the bride, saying, "May your rejoicings be propitious!" Place these articles of sorrow afresh before her weeping eyes, and if she makes inquiries concerning Kasim, tell her all that you know about him.

(5032)

Ashish:

I am he whose employment is to be oppressiveness to raise enmity and to foster quarrels. It is my business to hate Ali ibn Abi Talib and his household. The fresh bride will be shown with rage the locks of Kasim the bridegroom, to her will I also relate the particulars of his fate.

Khauli:

O Sakina, for one moment lift up your head from the dust of the ground, and look towards me, as I have news of Ali Akbar. Come, for either today or tomorrow Ali Akbar will return from his journey.

Ashish:

O bride of Kasim, the friendless, cease your cries; come, as I have news of the rose of the garden. O daughter-in-law of Hasan, if you are the Queen Bilqis (Queen of Sheba), listen to the history of Solomon from the lapwing. If the light of your eyes has passed from your sight, I have a shirt which belonged to your beloved Canaan.

Sakina and Fatima:

What a wonderful morning has succeeded to the night of separation! Glad tidings of the garment of Joseph have been brought to Canaan. Thanks to God, a messenger has arrived from the martyrs. The lapwing, unannounced, has arrived from the city of Solomon. Praise to God, Kasim has come from the field of battle to protect Fatima the helpless and houseless.

Sakina:

O youth, relate to me some anecdote of the rose and the garden. Tell me such news as you may have of Ali Akbar.

(5033)

Fatima:

O horseman, relate something fresh about my fir tree. If you have any news of the bridegroom, repeat it.

Khauli (showing the cap):

O Sakina, poor fowl of the garden of Karbala, you are featherless. Put dust on your head at once, as you are brotherless. Scatter dust on your head and look towards me; this cap is a token of the head of Ali Akbar.

Sakina (taking up the cap):

O dear brother, may I become a sacrifice for your moon-like face! I wish to God that I might be a ransom for your cap! May the life of Sakina be sacrificed for

your crown! They have at last maliciously carried off your cap from your head.

Ashish (giving a shirt):

Your Kasim has withered, o Fatima, like his garden! I have just taken off this shirt from his body.

Fatima, the bride (taking up the shirt):

At last your shirt has become saturated with blood, o Kasim! May Fatima become a sacrifice for your white neck!

Khauli (giving a shirt):

O Sakina, the body of your Ali Akbar is exposed. Your Joseph has been worried by a wolf, and this is his shirt.

(5034)

Sakina:

O Ali Akbar, the blast of oppression has turned your spring into winter, since I see your shirt stained with blood.

Khauli (showing a lock of hair):

If your heart desires to see the moon-like face of Ali Akbar, look in the palm of my hand and behold his black locks.

Sakina:

Give me the ringlet, o man, that I may smell it. What remains of life I will sacrifice for this ringlet.

Ashish (showing a lock of hair to Fatima):

O bride of Kasim the bridegroom, if you are afflicted, grieve, and behold the locks of Kasim; they still retain the stain of henna.

Fatima, the bride:

Give me the locks of Kasim, o man, that I may smell them, and wash them with the tears of my eyes.

Sakinah:

O accursed! Do not remove from me those amber-perfumed locks. I am afflicted, do not keep far from me those precious hairs. (They throw down the ringlets.) O Ali Akbar, your sister is afflicted with grief for your ringlets. Where are you, o brother? I smell you from these locks of hair.

(5035)

Fatima (taking up the locks of hair):

O bridegroom, your body has fallen in the dust of Karbala. A knot is found in your hair at last, without cause.

Khauli (showing Ali Akbar's head):

Is this the head of Ali Akbar? Look at his resplendent face. Behold how dull and heavy are his expressive eyes!

Ashish (showing the head of Kasim):

This is the head of kasim, o Fatima; look at it, and see how secretly his moles and mustaches ravish the heart.

Sakina:

You are gone, o brother, and I am dying for you. May my whole body be a sacrifice for you! You have departed from among us, and I am perishing because you are absent. I find that I have lost the shadow of your beautiful stature. You went forth, and said that you would return from your trip on the morrow. My soul will quit my body now that I find that you have not kept your promise.

The Imam Hussein:

Go, o Zainab, you have had troubles in this world! Tell those two unfortunate creatures, who are houseless, to cease wailing and lamenting. How long will they continue? It is enough of this incessant weeping and wailing. Do not increase the pains and anguish of Hussein, who is harassed enough by the taunts of his enemies.

(5036)

Zainab (to Sakina and Fatima):

O two lights of my eyes, do not wail so much with your incessant lamentations. Do not turn your hearts into blood with sighs and groans, nor increase the pains of your father Hussein.

Sakina:

Your words, o aunt, afflicted with sorrow, cannot heal the hearts of those who have lost their beloved. With your help, o women, gladden my heart for one moment, that I may behold the body of my bridegroom. Like mourners, throw th dust of sorrow on your heads. Bring to me the horses of Kasim and Ali Akbar. (They bring the horses.) Come, o bride of Kasim, with sorrowful heart, come to the aid of your sister Sakina.

Fatima:

Tell me, o sister, what I can do for these, that I may know how to help you, o afflicted and helpless woman.

Sakina:

O sister, bring here in haste the coats of poor Kasim and Ali Akbar.

Fatima (bringing the coats):

Take these coats from me, o spinster; coat is Kasim's, and the other is Ali Akbar's.

Sakina:

Bring me two bunches of roses, o sister, that I may place one on the grave of Kasim, and the other on the tomb of Ali Akbar.

(5037)

Fatima (bringing two bunches of roses):

Take these two bunches of roses from my hand, o sister. May I be sacrificed on the graves of Kasim and Ali Akbar!

Sakina (to Fatima):

Bring me also two candles, o my sister, that I may light one on the grave of Kasim and the other on the tomb of Ali Akbar.

Fatima (bringing candles):

May I be sacrificed on your grave, o my brother! Dear sister, take these lighted candles from my hand.

Sakina:

The grief of the world, o Lord, has brought my existence to an end. Fetch me, o my sister, the shields of the two young men.

Fatima (bringing the shields):

Where, o Heaven, have you cast my Kasim? Take, dear sister, the shields of the two young men.

Sakina:

The absence of the young men compels me to shed blood from my sorrowful eyes. Bring to me, o my sister, the turbans of the two young men.

Fatima:

The heavens have punished me me by rending my Joseph. Take the two turbans of the young men, o beloved sister.

(5038)

Sakina:

Go and bring me a black flag, dear sister; one for Kasim, and another for Ali Akbar.

The Bride (bringing black flags):

O Heaven, why have you caused the enemy to rejoice over us? O dear sister, take these black flags from me.

Sakina (proceeding towards the field of slaughter):

O people of the harem, the occasion for wailing has arrived. The time for proceeding to the graves is at hand. Kasim has become headless by the edge of the oppressive sword. The period for the marriage of Ali Akbar has come.

Shahrbanu (after the women have left):

I am degraded among my people, and disrespected. Having no son (at this time, two of her sons were dead, and the other appeared to be dying), I am not esteemed. Friendless and destitute, wherever I go I am of no account. I have lost my sons and am in a strange city. I expected you, o Umm Kulsum and Zainab, to be considerate towards me in the day of my adversity.

Zainab:

O Shahrbanu, you turn my dark days into night. What causes you to complain of Umm Kulsum and Zainab? When have we not done for you what your position required? O mother of Ali Akbar, how have we disrespected you? These women of the camp, o sister, are your slaves. The whole of them, as you see them now, are mourning for your dear ones.

(5039)

Shahrbanu:

If, o friends, you have love and fidelity, why have you left Shahrbanu thus alone? For want of companions she will at last die. I am a stranger, and my Asghar is lying in the dust; no one in this strange city will protect me, and enable me to carry my Ali Asghar near my Ali Akbar.

Zainab:

May the life of Zainab be sacrificed for your unhappy soul! Come, o mother of Asghar, we will help you. Although we are powerless, helpless, and miserable, we will carry the body of Asghar to that of Ali Akbar with all respect.

Shahrbanu:

My misery cannot be remedied, as my illness is incurable. I can find no respect nor regard for my dead. What suckling child has been nourished on blood? Where

may I find a winding sheet for Ali Asghar, and where a coffin?

Zainab:

We will aid in finding something for that sweet, dear child. The sacred garment of Ali Akbar shall be turned into his shroud. Cut off a portion of the same, and tie up the eyes of Asghar, o unhappy Shahrbanu.

Shahrbanu (binding up Ali Asghar's eyes):

I tie up your eyes with my own hands for want of anyone to help me. Shahrbanu is friendless, o beloved one. Zainab, put something black on my head, for Ali Asghar is dead. Think of arranging a coffin for the sweet youth.

(5040)

Zainab (bringing the child's cradle):

O Asghar, as instead of milk you have had to be nourished on blood, I have brought a cradle and will make it your coffin. O Ali Asghar, may I be a sacrifice for your severed throat! O my beloved, your cradle has become at last your coffin! O my Ali Asghar, you have experienced sufficient trouble in this desert. You have no friend, o aunt; I lament also for want of companions.

Shahrbanu:

Come, o sorrowful Zainab, and, for my sake, dye a flag black for Ali Asghar. Bring candles, and prepare a tray for mourning festivity. Come and comfort my little child with your love. My darling is going on a journey; show him respect. He is going to his brother; behave kindly to him.

Zainab (bringing a black flag and a tray):

O Ali Asghar, if I give my life for you, it would not be sufficient. My sighs for your loss are conveyed to Heaven on this flag. With sighs and moans I am making preparations for you. With tears and earth I am dyeing black your flag. O women, place Asghar's bier on your shoulders; lift up Ali Asghar's body from the ground. Come, Sakina, you and I will chant the funeral song; you in grief for Ali Akbar, and I for Ali Asghar.

Sakina and Fatima (chanting):

O dear brother, Ali Akbar the brave, o disappointed youth, o beloved brother!

Zainab and Shahrbanu (together):

Ali Asghar the martyred! O beloved, o beloved! O disappointed infant! O beloved, o beloved!

(5041)

Fatima, the bride (to the body of Kasim):

You are at rest, o son of my uncle; may peace be upon you!

The Body of Kasim:

O my destitute and wailing bride, peace be upon you! You who are troubled and afflicted owing to my absence, on you be peace!

Sakina (to the body of Ali Akbar):

O my sorrowful Ali Akbar, peace be with you! O dear brother, o houseless rose, peace be upon you!

The Body of Ali Akbar:

O Sakina, my afflicted sister, on you be peace! O my miserable and destitute sister, on you be peace!

The Body of Kasim:

*I hear your voice, o my bride. You are welcome!
May my head be your footstool!*

The Body of Ali Akbar:

*O Sakina, you have lost sight of your Ali Akbar,
and indulged in festivities after my death.*

Sakina:

*The circumstances of the festivities, dear
brother, are not such as may be heard. Your place is
vacant in the merrymaking.*

Fatima, the bride:

*O Kasim, your bride wishes you to speak and hear.
Tell me, O Kasim, what converse you have had with Ali
Akbar.*

(4042)

The Body of Kasim:

*Sakina sighs and wails over the head of Ali Akbar.
Listen how Ali Akbar reproaches me.*

Fatima the bride (to the body of Kasim):

*To the Day of Resurrection, o Kasim, I shall
remain your widow. O my youthful bridegroom, where is
the henna on your hands?*

The Body of Kasim:

*See how red are my hands, in place of henna, from
the blood of my head! But to the Day of Resurrection I
shall be abashed before Ali Akbar.*

The Body of Ali Akbar:

*O all you women who are widowed, sing mournfully
for me, but joyfully for Kasim the bridegroom.*

Shahrbanu and Umm Kulsum:

May I be sacrificed for you, O Ali Akbar! You have wet your hair at last with blood. At length the throat of Ali Asghar has been severed. A malicious arrow at last has reached his dry palate.

Shahrbanu and Fatima (together):

While alone at Medina we did not get you married, o beloved; we were unaware that the sword of the enemy would cut you down unexpectedly.

Imam Hussein (to his family):

O women of my camp, you have wailed enough. O daughters of the chosen, you have distressed yourselves sufficiently; cease your cries, and return towards the

(5043)

tents. You have visited your friends, rest content.(100)

SCENE XXIII

MARTYRDOM OF HUSSEIN

Hussein:

I am sore distressed at the unkind treatment received at the hands of the cruel heavens. Pitiful tyranny is exercised towards me by a cruel, unbelieving army! All the sorrows and troubles of this world have overwhelmed me! I have become a butt for the arrow of affliction and trouble. I am a holy bird stripped of its quills and feathers by the hand of the archer of tyranny, and have become, o friends, utterly disabled, and unable to fly to my sacred nest. They are going to kill me mercilessly, for no other crime nor guilt except that I happen to be the Prophet's grandson.

Shimr (challenging him):

O Hussein, why do you not appear in the field? Why does not your majesty show your face in battle? How long

are you going to sit still without displaying your valor in war? Why do you not put on your robe of martyrdom and come forth? If you are indeed so magnanimous as not to fear death, of you do not care about the whistling sounds of the arrows when let fly from the bow, then mount, quickly, your swift horse named Zu'l Janah, and deliver your soul from so many troubles. Yea, come to the field of battle, be it as it may. Enter soon among your women, and with tears bid them a last farewell; then come forth to war, and show us your great fortitude.

(5044)

Hussein (talking to himself):

Although the accursed fellow, Shimr, will put me to death in an hour's time, yet the reproachful language of the enemy seems to be worse than destruction itself. It is better that the foe should sever my head cruelly from my body, than make me hear these abusive words. What can I do? I have no one left to help me, no Kasim to hold my stirrup for a minute when I am about to mount. All are gone! Look around if you can find anyone to defend the descendant of Muhammad, the chosen of God - if you can see anyone ready to assist the holy family of God's Prophet! In this land of trials there is no kind protector to have compassion on the household of the Apostle of God, and befriend him.

Zainab:

May I be offered for the sad tones of your voice, dear brother! Time has thrown on my head the black earth of sorrow. It has grieved me to the quick. Wait, brother, do not go till Kasim arrives. Have patience for a minute, my Ali Akbar is coming.

Hussein (looking around):

*Is there one who wishes to please God, his maker?
Is there any willing to behave faithfully towards his
real friends? Is there a person ready to give up his
life for our sake, to save us, to defend us in this
dreadful struggle of Karbala?*

Zainab:

*O Lord, Zainab's brother has no one to assist or
support him! Occasions of his sorrows are innumerable,
without anyone to sympathize with him in the least. Sad
and desolate, he is leaning on his spear! He has bent
his neck in a calamitous manner; he now has no famous
Ali Akbar, no renowned Abbas!*

(5045)

Hussein:

*Is there anyone to pity our condition, to help us
in this terrible conflict of Karbala? Is there a kind
soul to give us a hand of assistance for God's sake?*

Zainab:

*Brave cavalier of Karbala, it is not fitting for
you to be so hurried. Go a little more slowly; troubles
will come quickly enough. Did you ever say that you had
a Zainab in the tent? Is not this poor creature weeping
and mourning for you?*

The Imam Hussein:

*Dear sister, you the rest of my disquieted, broken
heart, strike your head and mourn, you thousand noted
nightingale. Today I shall be killed by the ignoble
Shimr. Today shall the rose be turned out of its
delightful spot by the tyranny of the thistle. Dear
sister, if any dust happens to settle on the rosy cheeks
of my lovely daughter Sakina, be pleased to wash it away
with the rose water of your tears. My daughter has
been accustomed to sit always in the dear lap of her
father whenever she wished to rest; for my sake, receive
and caress her in your bosom.*

Zainab:

O intimate friend of the assembly of poor afflicted strangers, the flaming effect of your speech has left no rest in my mind. Tell me, what have we done that you should so reward us? Who is the criminal among us for whose sake we must suffer thus? Take us back, brother, to Medina, to the sacred monument of our noble grandfather; let us go home, and live like queens in our own country.

(5046)

Hussein:

O my afflicted, distressed, tormented sister, I wish to God that there were a way of escape for me! Notwithstanding that they have cruelly cut down the cypress like stature of my dear son Ali Akbar; notwithstanding Kasim my handsome nephew tinged himself with his own blood; still they are intent to kill me also. They do not allow me to go back from Iraq, nor do they let me turn elsewhere. They will neither permit me to go to India, nor to the capital of China. I cannot set out for the territory of Abyssinia, nor take refuge in Zanzibar.

Zainab:

Oh, how I am vexed in my mind, dear brother, on hearing these sad things! May I die, rather than listen any more to such affecting words! What shall we, an assembly of desolate widows and orphans, do after you are gone? Oh! How can we live?

Hussein:

O miserable creature, do not weep now, nor be so much upset; you shall cry plentifully later, owing to the wickedness of time. When the wicked Shimr shall sever my head from my body; when you shall be made a

captive prisoner, and forced to ride on an unsaddled camel; when my body shall be trampled underfoot by the enemy's horses, and trodden under their hooves; when my beloved Sakina shall be cruelly struck by Shimr, my wicked murderer; when they shall lead you away captive from Karbala to Syria, and when they shall make you and others live there in a horrible, ruined place; when you shall see all this, then yoy may, and truly will, weep. But I admonish you, sister, since this sad case has no remedy but patience, to resign the whole matter, submissively, to the Lord, the good Maker of all! Do not mourn for my misfortune, but bear it patiently, without giving occasion to the enemy to rejoice triumphantly on this account, or speak reproachfully concerning us.

(5047)

Umm Kulsum:

You strut about gaily, o Hussein, beloved of my heart. Look a little behind you; see how Umm Kulsum is sighing after you with tearful eyes! I am strewing pearls in your way, precious jewels from the sea of my eyes. Let me put my head on the hoof of your winged steed, Zu'l Janah.

Hussein:

Beloved sister, kindle not a fire in my heart by so doing. Take away your head from under the hoof of my steed. O thousand noted nightingale, sing not such a sad toned melody. I am going away; be the kind keeper of my helpless ones.

Umm Kulsum:

Behold what the heavens have at length brought upon me! What they have done also to my brother! Him they have caused to have lips parched through thirst, and me they have caused to melt into water, and gush out like tears from the eyes! Harsh severity is mingled with tyrannous cruelty.

Hussein:

Trials, afflictions and pains, the thicker that they fall on man, the better, dear sister, do they prepare him for his journey heavenward. We rejoice in

tribulations, seeing that they are but temporary, and yet they work out an eternal and blissful end. Though it is predestined that I should suffer martyrdom in this shameful manner, yet the treasure of everlasting happiness shall be at my disposal as reward. You must think of that, and be no longer sorry. The dust raised in the field of such battles is as highly esteemed by me, o sister, as the philosopher's stone was, in former times, by the alchemists; and the soil of Karbala is the sure remedy of my inward pains.

(5048)

Umm Kulsum:

May I be sacrificed for you. Since this occurrence is thus inevitable, I pray you describe to your poor sister Umm Kulsum her duty after your death. Tell me, where shall I go, or in what direction set my face? What am I to do? And which of your orphan children am I to caress most?

Hussein:

Show your utmost kindness, good sister, to Sakina, my darling girl, for the pain of being fatherless is most severely felt by children too much fondled by their parents, especially girls. I have regard for all my children, to be sure, but I love Sakina most.

An Old Female Slave of Hussein's Mother:

Dignified master, I am sick and weary in heart at the bare idea of separation from you. Have a kind regard for me, an old slave, much stricken with age! Master, by your soul do I swear that I am altogether weary of life. I have grown old in your service; pardon me, please, all the faults ever committed by me.

Hussein:

Yes, you have served us, indeed, for a very long time. You have shown much affection and love towards me and my children. O handmaid of my dear mother Fatima; you have truly suffered much in our house: how often did you grind corn with your own hand for my mother! You have also dandled Hussein most caressingly in your arms. You are black faced, that is true, but you have, I opine, a pure white heart, and are much esteemed by us. Today I am about to leave you, owing you, at the same time, innumerable thanks for the good services that you have performed; but I beg your pardon for all inconsiderate actions on my part.

(5049)

The Maid:

May I be a sacrifice for you, o royal ruler of the capital of faith! Do not turn my days black, like my face, o benevolent master. Truly I have had many troubles on your behalf. How many nights have I spent in watchfulness at your cradle! At one moment I would caress you in my arms, at another I would fondle you in my bosom. I became prematurely old by my diligent services, o Hussein! Is it proper now that you should put around my poor neck the heavy chain of your intolerable absence? Is this, dear master, the reward of the services I have done for you?

Hussein:

Though your body, o maid, is now broken down by age and infirmity, yet you have served us all the days of your life with sincerity and love; you must know, therefore, that your diligence and vigilance will never be disregarded by us. Excuse me today, when I am offering my body and soul in the cause of God, and cannot help you at all; but be sure that I will fully pay the reward of your services in the day of universal account.

The Maid:

Do you remember, good sir, how many troubles I have suffered with you for the dear sake of Ali Akbar,

the light of your eyes? Though I have not suckled him with my own breasts, to be sure, yet I labored hard for him till he reached the age of eighteen years and came here to Karbala. But, alas! Dear flourishing Ali Akbar has been this day cruelly killed - what a pity! And I strove so much for his sake, yet all, as it were, in vain. Yes, what a sad loss!

(5050)

Hussein:

Do not speak of my Ali Akbar any more, o maid, nor set fire to the granary of my patience and make it flame. (Turning to his sister.) Poor distressed Zainab, have the goodness to be kind always to my mother's old maid, for she has experienced many troubles in our family; she has labored hard in training Ali Akbar, my son.

Shahrbanu (the mother of Ali Akbar):

The elegant stature of my Ali Akbar fell to the ground; like as a beautiful cypress tree he was forcibly felled! Alas for the memory of your upright stature! Alas, o my youthful son of handsome form and appearance! Alas my troubles at night time for you! How often did I watch your bed, singing lullabies for you until the morning! How sweet is this memory of those times! Yes, how pleasant the very thought of those days! Alas! Where are you now, dear child? O you who are ever remembered by me, come and see your mother's wretched condition, come!

Hussein:

O Lord, why is this mournful voice so affecting? I think the the owner of it, the mourning person, has a flame in her heart. It resembles the doleful tone of a lapwing (Reference to Qur'an, Surah XXVII.) whose wings are burned! Like us when a miraculous lapwing, the

companion of Solomon the Wise, the king of God's holy people, received news suddenly about the death of its royal guardian!

Shahrbanu:

Again I am put in mind of my dear son! O my heart, melted into blood, pour yourself forth! Dear son, while you were alive, I had some honor and respect, everybody had some regard for me; but since you are gone, I am altogether abandoned. Woe unto me! Woe unto me! I am despised and rejected. Woe unto me! Woe unto me!

(5051)

Hussein:

Do not set fire to the harvest of my soul any further. Hussein is, before God, greatly ashamed of his shortcomings towards you. Come out from the tent, for it is the last meeting previous to separating from one another forever; your distress is an additional weight to the heavy burden of my grief.

Shahrbanu:

I humbly state it, o glory of all ages, that I did not expect from your saintship that you would disregard your handmaid in such a way. You know your kind regard and favor to all except me. Do you not remember my sincere services done for you? Am I not by birth a descendant of the glorious kings of Persia, brought as a captive to Arabia? When the former empire fell and gave place to the new born monarchy of the latter kingdom? The Judge, the living Creator, was pleased to grant me an offspring, whom we called Ali Akbar, this day lost to us forever. May I be offered for you! While Ali Akbar my son was alive, I had indeed a sort of esteem and credit with you; but now that my cypress, my newly sprung up cedar, is unjustly felled, I have fallen from credit too, and must therefore shed tears.

Hussein:

Let it be known to you, o violet of the flower garden of modesty, that you are altogether mistaken. I swear by the holy enlightened dust of my mother Zahra's

(Fatima's) grave, that you are more honorable and dearer now than ever. I well remember the affectionate recommendations of Ali Akbar, our son, concerning you. How much he was mindful of you at the moment of his parting! How tenderly he cared for you, and spoke concerning you to everyone of the family.

(5052)

Shahrbanu:

O gracious Lord, I adjure you, by the merit of my son Ali Akbar, never to lessen the shadow of Hussein from over my head. May no one ever be in my miserable condition - never be a desolate, homeless woman, like me!

Hussein:

O unfortunate Zainab, my sister, the hour of separation has come! The day of joy is gone forever! The night of affliction has drawn near! Drooping, withering sister, yet most blessed in your temper, I have a request from you which I fear to make known.

Zainab:

May I be a sacrifice for your heart, you moon faced, glorious sun! There is nobody here, if you have a private matter to disclose to your sister.

Hussein:

Dear unfortunate sister, who is already severely vexed in heart, if I tell you what my request is, what will your condition then? Though I cannot restrain myself from speaking, still I am in doubt as to which is better, to speak or to forbear.

Zainab:

My breast is pierced! My heart boils within me like a cauldron, owing to this your conversation. You soul of your sister, do not hold back from Zainab what you have in your mind.

(5053)

Hussein:

My poor sister, I am covered with shame before you, I cannot lift my head. Though the request is a trifle, yet I know it is grievous for you to grant it. It is this; bring me an old, dirty, ragged garment to put on. But do not ask me, I pray you, the reason why, until I myself think it proper to tell you.

Zainab:

I am now going to the tent to fetch you what you seek; but I am utterly astonished. Brother, as to why you want this loathsome thing. (Returning with a tattered shirt.) Take it, here is the ragged robe for which you asked. I wonder what you will do with it.

Hussein:

Do not remain here, dear sister. Go for awhile to your own tent; for if you see that which I am about to do, you will be grievously disturbed. Turn to your tent, poor miserable sister, listen to what I say, and leave me, I pray you, alone.

Zainab (going away):

I am gone, but I am sorry that I cannot tell what this enigma means? It is puzzling indeed! Remain with your mysterious coat, o Hussein! May all of us be offered as a ransom for you, dear brother! You are without any to assist or befriend you! You are

surrounded by the wicked enemy! Yes, your kind helpers have all been killed by the unbelieving nation!

(5054)

Hussein (Putting on the garment):

The term of life has no perpetual duration in itself. Who ever saw in a flower garden a rose without its thorn! I will put on this old robe close to my skin, and place over it my new apparel, though neither the old nor the new of this world can be depended upon. I hope that Zainab has not been observing what I have been doing, for, poor creature, she can scarcely bear the sight of any such thing.

Zainab:

Alas! I do not know what is the matter with Hussein, my brother. What has an old garment to do with being a king? Do you wish, o Hussein, that the enemy should come to know this thing and reproach your sister for it? Put off, I beg you, this old ragged garment, otherwise I shall pull off my head dress, and uncover my head for shame.

Hussein:

Do not tear your dress, modest sister, nor pull off your head covering. There is a mystery involved in my action. Know that what Hussein has done has a good meaning in it. His putting on an old garment is not without its significance.

Zainab:

What mystery can be in this work, o perfect high priest of faith? I will never admit any until you have fully explained the thing according to my capacity.

(5055)

The Imam:

Today, dear sister, Shimr will behave cruelly towards me. He will sever my head from my body. His dagger not cutting my throat, he will be obliged to sever my head from behind, After he has killed me, when he begins to strip me of my clothes, he may be ashamed to take off this ragged robe and thereby leave my body naked on the ground.

Zainab:

O Lord, have mercy on my distracted heart! You alone are aware of the state of my mind. Gracious Creator, preserve the soul of Hussein! Let not Heaven pull down my house over me!

Sakina:

Dear father, by our Lord it is a painful thing to be fatherless; a misery, a great calamity to be helpless, bleeding in the heart, and an outcast! Dismount from the saddle, and make me sit by your side. To pass over me or neglect me at such a time is very distressing. Let me put my head on your dear lap, o father. It is sad that you should not be aware of your dear child's condition.

Hussein:

Do not bend your neck on one side, my beloved child; nor weep so sadly, like an orphan. Neither moan

so melodiously, like a disconsolate nightingale. Come, lay your dear head on my knees once more, and do not so copiously shed a flood of tears from your eyes, o spirit of my life.

(5056)

Sakina:

Dear father, you whose lot is but grief, have mercy on me, mercy! O you my physician in every pain and trouble, have pity on me! Have pity on me! Alas, my heart, for the mention of the word separation! Alas, my grievance, for what is unbearable!

Hussein:

Do not groan, do not wail, my dear Sakina, my poor oppressed, distressed girl. Go to your tent and sleep soundly in your bed until your father gets you some water to drink.

Zainab:

Alas! Alas! Woe to me! My Hussein is gone from me! Alas! Alas! The arrow of my heart is shot away from the hand! Woe unto me, a thousand woes! I am to remain without Hussein! The worshipper of truth has gone to meet his destined fate with a blood stained shroud!

Hussein:

My disconsolate Zainab, do not be so impatient. My homeless sister, do not show yourself to be so fretful. Have patience, sister, the reward of the patient believers is the best of all. Render God thanks, the crown of intercession is fitted for our head only.

Zainab:

O my afflicted mother, o best of all women (Fatima; remember the Latin prayer **Ave Maria or Hail Mary: ...Benedicta tu in mulieribus...** Blessed art thou among women... referring, of course, to the Virgin Mary) pass a minute by those in Karbala! See your daughters prisoners of sorrow! Behold them among strangers and foreigners. Come out awhile from your pavilion in Paradise, o Fatima, and weep affectionately over the state of us, your children!

(5057)

Hussein:

I have become friendless and without any helper, in a most strange manner. I have lost my troop and army in a wonderful way. Where is Ali Akbar my son? Let him come to me and hold the bridle of my horse, that I may mount. Where is Kasim, my nephew? Will he not help me and get ready my stirrup to make me cheerful? Why should I not shed much blood from my eyes, seeing that I cannot behold Abbas my standard bearer? A brother is for the day of misfortune and calamity! A brother is the essence of life in the world! He who has a brother, though he be old, yet is young. Who is there to bring my horse for me? There is none, There is none even to weep for me in this state of misery!

Umm Kulsum:

Because there is no Ali Akbar, dear brother, to help you, Zainab, your sister, will hold the horse for you; and seeing that Abbas, your brother, is no longer to be found, I myself will bear the standard before your winged steed instead of him.

Zainab:

Let Zainab mourn bitterly for her brother's desolation. Whoever saw a woman, a gentlewoman, doing the duty of a groom or servant? Who can know, o Lord, besides You, the sad state of Hussein in Karbala, where his people so deserted him that a woman like myself is obliged to act as a servant for him?

Umm Kulsum:

I am a standard bearer for Hussein, the martyr of Karbala, O Lord God. I am the sister of Abbas; yes, the miserable sister of both. O friends, it being the tenth day of Muharram, I am therefore assisting Hussein. I am bearing the ensign for him instead of Abbas, my brother, his standard bearer.

(5058)

Zainab:

Uncover your breasts a minute, o you tear shedding people, for it is time to beat the drum, seeing that the king is going to ride. O Solomon the Prophet, where is your glory? What has become of your pompous retinue? Where are your brothers, nephews and companions?

Hussein:

There are none left to help me. My sister Zainab holds the bridle of the horse, and wals before me. Who eve saw a lady acting like that?

Zainab:

You are going all alone! And may yur departure make souls quit their bodies! A resurrection will be produced in your tent by the cry of orphans and widows.

Hussein:

Sister, though it grieves me to go, yet I do it; perhaps I may see the face of Asghar and the countenance of Ali Akbra, those cypresses, those roses of Paradise.

Zainab:

I wish to God that Zainab had died this very minute before your facem in your sightm and that she might not behold such elegant bodies, such beautiful forms rolling in their own blood!

Hussein:

O poor sister, if you die here in this land in that sudden way that you desire, then who will ride in your stead, in the city of Kufa, on the camel's back?

(5059)

Zainab:

Do not slight my pain, dear brother, for Zainab is somewhat alarmed as to the meaning of your speech. What shall I do with your family with the poor widows and young children?

Hussein:

O afflicted one, it is decreed that I should be killed by means of daggers and swords; hence forth, dear sister, you shall not see me. Behold, this is separation between you and me!

The Nephew of Hussein:

Dear uncle, you have resolved to take a journey. You are going once again to make me an orphan. To whom else will you entrust us? Who is expected to care for us? You were, dear uncle, instead of my father Hasan, a defense to this helpless exiled creature.

Hussein:

Do not sorrow, faithful child, you shall be killed too in this battle plain. Return now to your tent in peace, without grieving my soul any further, poor orphan!

The Dervish from Kabul:

O Lord God, why is the outward appearance of a man of God usually without decoration or ornament? And why is the lap of the man of this world generally full of gold and jewels? On what account is the pillow of this great person the black dust of the road? And for what reason are the bed and cushion of the rebellious made of

velvet, and stuffed with down? Either Islam, the religion of peace and charity, has no true foundation in the world, or this young man, who is so wounded and suffers from thirst, is still an infidel.

(5060)

Hussein:

Why are your eyes pouring down tears, young dervish? Have you also lost an Ali Akbar in the prime of this youth? You are immersed, like a water fowl, in your tears. Has your Abbas been slain, thirsting, on the bank of the Euphrates, you who weeps so piteously? But if you are sad only on account of my misfortune, then it does not matter. Let me know from where you come, and where are you going?

The Dervish:

It happened, young man, that last night I arrived in this valley, and made my lodging there. When one half of the night had passed, suddenly a great difficulty befell me, for I heard a child weeping and complaining of thirst, having given up altogether the idea of living any longer in this world. Sometimes she would beat her head and cry out for water; at other times she appeared to fall on the ground, fainting and motionless. I have, therefore, brought some water in this cup for that poor child, that she may drink and be refreshed a little. So I humbly beg of you, dear sir, to direct me to the place where this young child may be found, and tell me what is her name.

Hussein:

O God, let no man be ever in my pitiful condition, nor any family in this sad and deplorable state to which I am reduced, O young man, the child you mentioned is the peace of my troubled mind; it is my poor, miserable little girl.

The Dervish:

May I be offered for you, dear sir, and for your tearful eyes! Why should your daughter be so sadly

mourning and complaining? My heart is overwhelmed with grief for the abundance of tears running down your cheeks. Why should the daughter of one like you, a generous soul, suffer from thirst?

(5061)

Hussein:

Know, o young man, that we are never in need of the water of this life. You are quite mistaken if you have supposed us to be of this world. If I will, I can make the moon, or any other celestial orb, fall down on the earth; how much more can I get water for my children. Look at the hollow made in the ground with my spear; water would gush out of it if I so wished. I voluntarily die of thirst to obtain a crown of glory from God. I die parched, and offer myself as a sacrifice for the sins of my people, that they should be saved from the wrath to come.

The Dervish:

What is your name, sir? I perceive that you are one of the chief saints of the most beneficent God. It is evident to me that you are the brightness of the Lord's image, but I cannot tell to which sacred garden your holy rose belongs.

Hussein:

O dervish, you will soon be informed of the whole matter, for you shall be yourself a martyr; for your plans and their results have been revealed to me. Tell me, o dervish, what is the end that you have in view in this your hazardous enterprise? When you shall have told me that, then I will disclose to you who I am.

The Dervish:

I intend, noble sir, after I have known the mystery of your affairs, to set out, if God wills, from Karbala to Najaf, namely, to the place where Ali ibn Abi Talib, the highly exalted king of religion, the sovereign lord of the empire of existence. The supreme master of all the dervishes, is buried. Yes, I am going

to visit the tomb of Ali ibn Abi Talib, the successor of the chosen of God, the son-in-law of the Prophet, the lion of the true Lord, the prince of believers, Haidar (Haidar = "Lion", title of Ali ibn Abi Talib), the champion of faith.

(5062)

Hussein:

Be it known to your, o dervish, that I, who am so sad and sorrowful, am the rose of the garden of that prince. I am of the family of the believers that you have mentioned. I am Hussein, the intercessor on the Day of Resurrection, the rose of the garden of glory.

The Dervish:

May I be offered as a sacrifice for your blessed arrival! Pardon me my faults, and give me permission to fight the battle of faith, for I am weary of life. It is better for me to be killed, and delivered at once from so many vexations of spirit. Martyrdom is, in fact, one of the glories of my faith.

Hussein:

Go forth, o atom, which aspires to the glory of the sun; go forth, you have become at last worthy to know the hidden mysteries of faith. He who is slain for the sake of Hussein shall have an abundant reward from God; yes, he shall be raised to life with Ali Akbar the sweet son of Hussein.

The Dervish (addressing Hussein's antagonists):

You cruel people have no religion at all. You are idol worshippers, ignorant of God and His law. How long will you act unjustly towards the offspring of the priesthood? Is the account of the Day of Resurrection false?

Ibn Sa'd (the general of Yezid's army):

O you brave soldiers of Yezid, deprive this fellow of his fund of life. Make his friends to mourn for him.

(5063)

Hussein:

Is there anyone to help me? Is there any assistant to lend me his aid?

Ja'afar (the king of jinns, with his troops, coming Hussein's assistance):

O king of men and jinns, o Hussein, peace be upon you! O judge of corporeal and spiritual beings, peace be upon you!

Hussein:

On you be peace, o handsome youth! Who are you, that salutes us at such a time? Though your affairs are not hidden from me at all, still it is advisable to ask your name.

Ja'afar:

O lord of men and jinns, I am the least of your servants, and my name is Ja'afar, the chief ruler of all the tribes of jinns. Today, while I was sitting on the glorious throne of my majesty, easy in mind, without any sad idea or thought, I suddenly heard your voice, and you did beg assistance; and on hearing you I lost my patience and senses. And, behold, I have come out with troops of jinns, of various abilities and qualifications, to lend you help if necessary.

Hussein:

In the old abbey of this perishable kingdom, none can ever, o Ja'afar, attain to immortality. What can I do with the empire of the world, or its tempting glories, after my dear ones have all died and gone? Is it proper that I, an old man, should live, and Ali Akbar, a blooming youth, die in the prime of life? Return, o Ja'afar, to your home, and weep for me as much as you can.

(5064)

Ja'afar (returning):

Alas for Hussein's exile and helplessness? Alas for his continual groans and sighs!

Hussein, (coming back from the field, dismounts his horse, and making a heap of dust, lays his head on it):

O earth of Karbala, assist me, I beg of you! Since I have no mother, may you serve in her place.

Ibn Sa'd orders his army to stone Hussein:

O men of valor, Hussein the sone of Ali ibn Abi Talib has tumbled down from the wigned horse; I am am not mistaken, Heaven has fallen to earth! It is better for you to stone him most cruelly. Dispatch him soon, with stones, to his slain companions.

Hussein:

Ah, woe is me! My forehead is broken; blood runs down, my luminous face.

Ibn Sa'd:

Who is that brave soldier, who, in order to show his gratitude to Yezaid his sovereign lord, will step forward and, with a blow of his scimitar, slay Hussein the son of Ali ibn Abi Talib?

(5065)

Shimr:

I am he whose dagger is famous for bloodshed. My mother has borne me for this work alone. I care not about the conflict of the Day of Judgement; I am a worshipper of Yezid, and have no fear of God. I can make the great throne of the Lord to shake and tremble. I alone can sever the head of Hussein the son of Ali ibn Abi Talib from his body. I am he who has no share in Islam. I will strike the chest of Hussein, the ark of God's knowledge, with my boots, without any fear of punishment.

Hussein:

Oh, how wounds caused by arrows and daggers do smart! O God, have mercy on the Day of Judgement on my people for my sake. The time of death has arrived, but I have not my Ali Akbar with me. I wish to God that my grandfather the Prophet were now here to see me?

The Prophet (appearing):

Dear Hussein, your grandfather the Prophet of God has come to see you. I am here to behold the mortal wounds of your delicate body. Dear child, you have at length suffered martyrdom by the cruel hand of my own people! This was the reward I expected from them; thanks be to God! Open your eyes, dear son, and behold your granbfather with dishelled hair. If you have any desire in your heart, tell me of it.

Hussein:

Dear grandfather, I abhor life; I would rather go and visit my dear ones in the next world. I earnestly desire to see my companions and friends above all, my dearly beloved son Ali Akbar.

(5066)

The Prophet:

Do not grieve because Ali Akbar your son was killed, since it tends to the good of my sinful people on the day of universal gathering.

Hussein:

Seeing Ali Akbar's martyrdom contributes to the happiness of your people, seeing that my own sufferings give validity to your office of mediation, and seeing that your rest consists in my being troubled in this way, I would offer my soul, not once or twice, but a thousand times, for the salvation of your people!

The Prophet:

Do not sorrow, dear grandchild; you shall be a mediator, too, on the day. At present you are thirsty, but tomorrow you shall be the distributor of the water of al-Kausar.

Hussein:

O Lord God, besides Hussein, who has happened to be thus situated? Every one when he dies has at least a mother at his head. But my mother is not here to rend her garments for me; she is not alive. That she might close my eyes when I die.

Fatima, his mother (appearing):

I have come to see you, my child, my child! May I die another time, my child, my child! How shall I see you slain, my son, my son! Rolling in your own blood, my child, my child!

Hussein:

Come, dear mother, I am anxiously waiting for you. Come, come! I have something to complain of you. How is that you have altogether forsaken your son? How is it that you came so late to visit me?

Fatima:

May I be offered for your wounded, defaced body! Tell me, what do you wish your mother to do for you?

Hussein:

I am now, dear mother, at the point of death. The ark of life is going to be cast on shore, mother. It is time that my soul should leave my body. Come, mother, close my eyes with your kind hand.

Fatima:

O Lord, how difficult for a mother to see her dear child dying! I am Zahra who is making this sad noise, because I have to close the eyes of my son Hussein, who is on the point of death. Oh, tell me if you have any desire long cherished in your heart, for I am distressed in mind owing to your sad sighs! (another example of **Mater Dolorosa**)

Hussein:

Oh, mother, my soul has come to my throat; go, I had no other desire except one, with which I must rise on the Day of Resurrection, namely, to see Ali Kabar's wedding.

Shimr:

Make your confession, for I want to sever your head, and cause a perpetual separation between it and your body.

Zainab:

O Shimr, do not go beyond your limit; let me bind something on my brother's eyes.

Hussein:

Go to your tent, sister, I am already undone. Go away; Zahra my mother has already closed my eyes. Always show to Sakina my daughter the tenderness of a mother. Be very kind to my child after. Me.

Shimr (addressing Hussein):

Stretch your feet towards the holy Kibla, the sacred temple of Mecca. See how my dagger waves over you! It is time to cut your throat.

Hussein:

O Lord, for my merit, the dear child of your Prophet; O Lord, for ths sad groaning of my miserable sister; O Lord. For the sake of young Abbas rolling in his blood, even that young brother of mine who was equal to me soul, I beg of you, on the Day of judgement, forgive, o merciful Lord, the sins of my grandfather's people, and grant me, bountifully, the key of the treasure of intercession. (Dies.) (101)

(5069)

SCENE XXIV

THE CAMP AT KARBALA AFTER THE DEATH OF HUSSEIN.

Imam Zain al-Abidin (son of Imam Hussein and Sharhbanu):

Tonight is the night succeeding the day on which Hussein was made a martyr, and went from Karbala to rest in the meadows of Paradise. Tonight is the night when, by the injustice of Shimr, small children were deprived of seeing the dear face of their parent. Tonight is the night on which Fatima the virgin reddened her face with the blood of different martyrs. The spheres have rendered our fortune and our day both dark. May your faces, o white faced heavens, be altogether black!

Zainab:

Tonight is a night on the morning in which Ali's head was spilt in two, and the moon Hussein was made a martyr by the daggers of injustice. Tonight is the night when, through the wicked behavior of the inhabitants of Kufa, the wolf of death tore my Joseph's coat to pieces. Tonight is the night in which Heaven humbled me. May your days, o bright faced spheres, be altogether dark!

Umm Kulsum:

Tonight is the night when I am perplexed in my affairs because of the calamity that has befallen us destitute ones. Tonight is the night in which the child brought up in my mother's bosom was plunged in blood. Tonight is the night in which my head dress was turned black. May your faces, o white face spheres, be altogether black!

(5070)

Sakina:

To night is the night when the story of her father's death was, for the first time, whispered in Sakina's ear by the Zephyr. Tonight is the night when

Sakina has been made an orphan. May your faces, of white faced spheres, be altogether black!

Rukayyah:

Tonight is the night following the day on which Sinan's cruelly, without cause, pierced the side of my father with his spear. Tonight is the night when, some hours ago, Harmalah cruelly made the blood of Asghar's delicate throat drop on the ground. Tonight is the night when Rukayyah must give up the ghost. May your faces, o white faced spheres, be altogether black!

Zain al-Abidin:

Come, o Zainab, my hand is unable to work; the habitation looks solitary because the beloved occupant is gone. Hussein has departed while his green pavilion is still standing in its place. The mirror has withdrawn itself from among the rust. The children have remained, but the father is killed; the widows are left behind, while the protector is gone.

Zainab:

Yes, dear nephew, the rose has quit the meadow of time; the mirror holder having departed, the world looks gloomy. Abbas is gone to one side, Ali Akbar to another, your excellent father to the third, and Sakina, my child, the unfortunate girl, has become fatherless, and the lustrous pearl is missed.

(5071)

Zain al-Abidin:

My father, may my soul be a sacrifice for him! Was made a martyr; our hearts are sorrowful, for he is missed. Tonight who will keep watch over the family? Hussein's palace door has no guard. What can I, a sick

person, do, dear aunt, seeing that so many enemies are standing behind the tents. He has entrusted his children to the care of me and you; arise then, o aunt, and guard the poor things from harm.

Zainab:

Our children are all in trouble, they have all become sickly; the poor children, being hungry and thirsty for bread and water, have all fainted away in the tents. Should Sakina demand water from me, what shall I do for her? Or what shall I answer her if the poor broken hearted little creature were to inquire about her father?

Zain al-Abidin:

If the poor heart burned orphans thirst for water, they have all got bags of it in their eyes, owing to their dire oppression, dear aunt. Go and tell them the story of our Karbala, and rehearse it in their ears. Perhaps in this way you may make them sleep.

Sakina:

Sakina will perish because of the absence of her father; her cry is ascending from earth to Heaven. O father! By your dear life do I swear that I did not know that your resting place must be under the earth.

Zainab:

Do not weep so much, poor Sakina, lest you should die! Are you weary of your own life, dear child? Do not mourn, for what can you gain by lamenting? You being yet a child, you should have a thousand hopes in your heart.

(5072)

Sakina:

What can an orphan do but mourn? It is difficult to console miserable, desolate children with mere words; an exile is sorry because he is far removed

from his home, and poor orphans weep always for the sad remembrance of their parents!

Zainab:

Oh, do not say so! My Sakina shall never become fatherless! Her mourning cries shall not be fruitless.

Sakina:

The fruit in the garden of this life tastes bitter to the palate; a nightingale entertains no more pleasant idea than that of the rose. If the light of our life is not already put out, how is that there is no lamp burning in Hussein's tent tonight?

Zainab:

The breath of life is going to leave my nostrils through what you say. No, the cypress like beloved is not killed, but gone from the garden. I have told them not to light the lamp, because your father, the shining gem, is away tonight.

Sakina:

It that be so, why do they not let me come in as usual? I being so thirsty, why does nobody give me water? If I am not an orphan, what is the reason the people do not answer me when I salute them?

(5073)

Zainab:

Listen to your aunt, darling, cease lamenting so sadly, and do not mourn so dolefully from the bottom of your heart. Shed no tears because of what I say; your father is certainly not dead. Why should you

suspect my truthfulness, or doubt the truth of my assertion?

Sakina:

If my father were alive I would not weep; and I would not have been so distressed, so distracted in mind, had Hussein been living, dear aunt. I, the poor ant, would have been now with Solomon.

Zainab:

O God, look at my weakness! I am not able to prevail over even a little girl, to make her quiet. Sleep, dear niece, sleep. As soon as the day dawns, I shall take you to the bank of the river, and seat you on your father's lap.

Sakina:

Let me alone, dear aunt. Me mourn, that I may soften some hearts; let me groan vainly for the absence of my beloved ones. Without ny father I cannot close my eyes to sleep. I will not rest excep in the bosom of my parent.

Zainab:

Sleep, dear niece, that you may have some rest, and forget for a while yur misery and your thirst. You are drowned in your own tears, poor thing; you are not, girl, a water fowl to escape such a deluge.

(5074)

Sakina:

I will weep so much, that I shall be borne away by the steam of tears, and cry so loudly as to be deprived of all strength. I shall go to bed, dear aunt, in obedience to your orders; but as I cannot

sleep, I shall lie moaning in bed, perhaps I may fall asleep.

Rukayyah:

O God, I am the most unfortunate creature of this age. I am the only one who is destitute of all friendly comforts. If Sakina's father is dead, she has an aunt like Zainab to sympathize with her. I am the most miserable of all the children of the family.

Zainab (addressing Umm Kulsum):

Come, o oppressed sister, o sorrowful creature who has not seen much pleasure in your life, and comfort Rukayyah, because I know that she is not pleased with the unfortunate Zainab.

Umm Kulsum (to Rukayyah):

O fatherless orphan, how long will you continue weeping? How long will you complain against Heaven's cruelty? Do not mourn and distress the poor women of the family; do not put tears from your eyes, making the hearts of your companions bleed.

Rukayyah:

Oh, do not leave me alone! It is the custom of wretched exiles to weep; do not interfere with me, it is a habit with afflicted creatures to weep. I do not wish any comforter in you, aunt; go, put Sakina to bed and make her sleep; go, comb her hair and form it into ringlets for her.

(5075)

Umm Kulsum:

You are the pupils of my tearful eyes, o niece! By Hussein's soul, you are as dear to me as Sakina, your sister. I have always had a tender regard for

you, my dear; no, I love you above all the children of our family.

Rukayyah:

Oh, why are you troubliong me, aunt? What kind of affection is this that you show to me? No candle can give light in two different places, aunt; to be sure, nobody's heart will burn for the orphans of other men.

Umm Kulsum:

My dear Rukayyah, do not vex me needlessly; do not melt my soul with your pungent, soul consuming words. Do not burn my heart with this fire; do not distress yourself, there is no occaision that you should complain of your miserable aunt, o swee child.

Rukayyah:

If, o aunt, you have any regard for my miserable state, show me my father just now as a proof of yur consideration. It is night, aunt, and the atmosphere looks quite dark; remove then the veil that hides the sun from my view.

Umm Kulsum:

Sleep, dear niece, and dream of the presence of yur father. Put your head on my lap, and rest, o destitute, fatherless exile.

(5076)

Rukayyah:

Well, I will go to sleep, but I do not think that I can find my father, or receive any information

about my beloved, who is lost. A father has no regard for his orphans, nor, in truth, have my midnight prayers any effect.

Zainab:

O destitute solitary aunt that I am! What about me? I am dying with grief. Oh! Think of some plan to relieve me. Thw children are without any guard tonight, while the enemy lies in wait for us, and we have none to keep the camp.

Zainab:

Umm Kulsum, sister, beat your head and shed tears! Go and call Kasim's mother from the tent, that we may set out, each to a particular spot, and cry aloud. Let us guard the cmap and the furniture tonight!

Kasim's mother:

O Kasim, may I be a sacrifice for this your unoccupied chamber! May I be a ransom for yur sweet mouth and lips! O God, I cannot forget Kasim for a moment! I wonder where Kasim my bridegroom is tonight.

Umm Kulsum:

Do not moan tonight, o mother of Kasim, nor lament, but come that we may go to my sister Zainab. Do not pour tears from your eyes, but go forth, because my melancholy sister Zainab wants to see you.

Kasim's mother:

Where is my troubled and sorrowful sister Zainab? Where is my sad and brotherless sister?

(5077)

Umm Kulsum:

She has gone out of the camp in a distracted manner, continually making mention of the martyrs of Karbala. She is pouring tears, and casting dust on her head, being much confused, but I cannot say why she has called you.

Zainab:

Come, o mother of Kasim, I am here; come and see, I am like a plaintive bird as regards my voice. Come and behold how my straight cypress like stature is bent by the weight of my beloved one's absence.

Kasim's mother:

What service can Kasim's mother, your obedient hand maiden, render you, o sorrowful and afflicted soul?

Zainab:

There is not one solitary being now throughout the world to sympathize with me: there is no one left in our camp besides a few widows. The merciless enemy has shut us in on all sides, and the poor children start from their sleep, being frightened by the noise of the army. Tonight we must do our best to take care of the children; we widows, instead of men, must keep watch tonight.

Umm Kulsum:

No heart has ever been burned like mine; no house was at any time destroyed like ours. During the day we sigh, moan and weep, and at night we lament and mourn. Well sister Zainab, let us know what we ought to do.

(5078)

Zainab:

Take the spear, o Umm Kulsum, and, heaving sighs from your heart, go out, instead of my dear Abbas, to patrol the camp.

Umm Kulsum:

The cruel heavens have made the king of Hijaz wallow in his own blood; Shimr the wicked is glorying because he has killed Hussein.

Zainab (to Kasim's mother):

O mother of the bridegroom, you broken hearted, soul distressed woman! Take the sword and spear of Kasim, and, keeping to this side of the camp, call on Hasan your husband; cry to me in the event if you see anyone approaching.

Kasim's Mother:

Come out, o Hasan, from the graveyard of Bakia and visit your wife; flutter, o heavenly bird, in the atmosphere of Karbala! Kasim's mother is in distress, come and save her; listen to her complaint, o Hasan, and deliver her.

Zainab:

O Ali Akbar, may I be a ransom for your sword like eye brows! O deer, may I be sacrificed for your curling locks! Oh, may the souls of the woman of this camp be offered for your lips! Tonight Zainab your aunt is keeping guard over your ownerless tent.

Umm Kulsum:

O God, where is the commander of this army tonight? Wher is Abbas, the lion like warrior?

(5079)

Kasim's Mother:

*Where is Kasim, our bridegroom, that moon faced,
sun like youth, that rose bodied lad, that soul
pierced creature?*

Zainab:

*I do not know, o Lord, where to find Ali Akbar
tonight. Where is the youth who offered rest to the
afflicted Zainab's soul?*

Umm Kulsum:

*Abbas, o friends, was here last night; he kept
watch over me from evening until the dawn of day.*

Kasim's Mother:

*Last night Kasim's hand was in the bosom of the
bride, he was with her all the evening until dawn.*

Umm Kulsum:

*Last night Ali Akbar was here guarding his
father from evening until morning.*

Rukayyah (going out):

*She whose father has died, and who is destitute
of a protector, in vain attempts to sleep. I will
arise and go out of my tent, in the hope of seeing my
father; perhaps I may behold the full moon in this
dark night.
O honorable father, do not separate me from yourself,
but let me sleep by your side.*

(5080)

Hussein's Body (speaking):

My poor Rukayyah is moaning tonight, my dear family is in a wandering condition. Exile has produced nothing but distraction. To be an orphan is little better than to be a vagrant. Nobody cares for another man's orphan! You, o Lord, are both beneficent and merciful to all.

Rukayyah:

It being a dark night, I cannot see the beloved of my soul. I cannot tell where my rose cheeked, cypress bodied love is sleeping. Give me an intimate knowledge of yourself, dear father, for I am distracted tonight. O sojourner of Karbala, pour forth your notes as a nightingale, and refresh my brain with the fragrant scent of spring. O father, the spheres do not treat me kindly, nothing can be agreeable but your company.

The Body of Hussein:

My distressed one, turn your face to this side. Come to me, o solace of my restless soul. O you who are scarred with grief at my absence, come, here is he whom your soul seeks. Give light at my pillow, like candle, for I have no lamp burning on my tomb.

Rukayyah:

A murmur struck my ears, o friends. I caught a familiar sound just now. It is your voice, o father, that I hear, but I can hardly say where you are. Tell me where to find you, that I may come, for I can no more bear to be separated from you.

The Body of Hussein:

Poor Rukayyah is looking here and there for her father. Yes, of necessity a planet seeks the sun. Come among the slain, o child, for in desiring to see your face the wounded mouths of the martyrs are refreshed.

(5081)

Rukayyah:

This voice melts my heart within me; it destroys the foundation of my patience. I wish to God That this nightingale were to sing again, and show that my midnight prayers have been heard!

The Body of Hussein:

Hear the true sound of my voice; let the ravishing air of my singing enchant you. Come to me, that you may dye your hands with the blood of my body, and make them red like the feet of the partridge, o my royal hawk.

Rukayyah (in the field):

With many difficulties, o father, I have come here to your dwelling place in this spot of ground. I have been successful in detecting your scent, but I cannot distinguish your body among the many slain lying around here. I beg you, father, lift up your hand, that I may be able to recognize your elegant stature.

The Body of Hussein:

I shall lift up my hand for your sake, dear child. Ah, you see it! Come, then, and sit down by my side; I have no head, child, that I may ask you to put it on your lap. As for the voice, it proceeds from my throat only.

Rukayyah:

May my soul be a sacrifice for your body, which is drenched with its own blood! May your daughter be a ransom for your severed head! Who has beheaded you, and made me, at such an age, a fatherless wanderer?

(5082)

The Body of Hussein:

The cruel Shimr, child, severed my head from my body. He cut it from behind with the edge of his dagger. He has not only cut off my head, but has done the same to Kasim and Abbas.

Rukayyah:

There fell a fire, at last, among the chattels of your life, dear father; the burning bush of the blessed valley has been at length hewn down. I fear, dear father, lest Shimr should come and hurt me; I beg you, therefore, to hide your poor daughter under your garments.

The Body of Hussein:

O my soft hearted girl, o light of my bright eyes, I have no garments with which I might hide you under their skirts. Do you not see, child, that, in spite of so many wounds, my body is thrown naked in the sun?

Rukayyah:

I shall cover your body with my head dress, dear father. Put your hand round my neck, as you have no bosom for me to clasp.

The Body of Hussein:

Sleep, darling, in this very place in my bosom; between my arms you will find your usual resting place; sleep on, then.

(5083)

Rukayyah (lying down to sleep by the body):

There is no place more suitable to me than by the side of my father. I can nowhere else rest but in his dear bosom. I will sleep tonight in your sacred arms, father. I wish that the sun would not rise from the east and make it day.

Zainab:

O Ali, prince of believers, remember your Zainab tonight. Draw your sword from its sheath, and ride on your swift steed.

Umm Kulsum:

O lady Zainab, behold our sad condition in Karbala, where there is nothing but affliction and sorrow. These poor, desolate, scarred hearted creatures have gathered no rose of pleasure since coming to the rose garden of Karbala.

Zainab:

O black spectre, why do you come toward us? Do not thus step forward, but remain in your place. Do not make Fatima's daughter dishevel her hair, and do not molest the poor orphans.

Ali's Ghost:

Fear not, Zainab, o sorrowful, desolate creature. Be not dismayed, o distressed and miserable daughter. Do not go far from me, Zainab, because I am not a stranger. Do not be disquieted on my account, Zainab, but take rest.

(5084)

Zainab:

Unless you tell me what is your name, you must stay where you are, without moving a step towards the ladies of the apartment. Have regard for Ali, the prince of believers, o young man, and give up the intention of troubling us tonight.

Ali's Ghost:

I am an acquaintance, o Zainab; why do you timidly avoid me? I am the prince of believers. What prevents you from recognizing me child? I heard in Najaf that tonight the women would keep watch, and have come, o Zainab, to take that responsibility upon myself.

Zainab:

O Ali, they have maliciously put out your burning candle; so long as I am alive I will not withdraw my hand from your skirt. Hussein's children are trembling because of fear like weeping willows, because of the frequent blows which Shimr the profane has given them.

Ali's Ghost:

Have patience, my poor Zainab; do not weary yourself of life. Have recourse to frequent prayers during the night, in order that my Shi'as may drink the sweet water of Paradise.

Zainab:

If my assembly breaks up for the sake of the Shi'as; if I be consumed before the fire of injustice, like a fowl; since it tends to the salvation of God's elect, I am not in the least degree sorry. Even, indeed, were they to make me ride on a she camel without litters.

Ali's Ghost:

Do not heave sighs from your breast, miserable Zainab, but retire behind the curtain. Return to your tenet, my daughter; I am a prisoner of sorrow like yourself. Retire to your home; I am the guardian of this family, and will keep watch tonight.

Hasan's Ghost (appearing):

The transaction of Karbala has vexed Hasan grievously; the poison of sorrow has again begun to work out destruction in me. I thought Kasim the bridegroom, the light of my eyes, my son, would sit in my place after me, little dreaming that the enemy would cut his throat. O Lord, have mercy on my dear son's miserable mother.

Kasim's Mother:

Who are you, o dark spectre? Do not attempt to hurt those who are oppressed with trouble. Fear God, and abstain from breaking the heart of this afflicted company in our camp. O spirit, there is not a solitary individual to be found. You shall not meet anyone save fatherless children and pain hearted widows in this place.

Hasan's Ghost:

Do not be afraid, o mother of Kasim, I am a friend to you and a comforter; have no fear at all, I am your faithful companion. I have come to make your sorrowful heart rejoice, and to congratulate you on the occasion of Kasim's late marriage.

Kasim's Mother:

If, o spectre, you are our confidential friend, tell me, then, your name; deliver your message from afar if you are not an enemy.

Hasan's Ghost:

Do not be distressed, o mother of Kasim, I am one of this assembly; I am Hasan the many petaled rose of the garden of prophecy. I am that sugar lipped parrot whose body was rendered green through the effect of poison.

Kasim's Mother:

Oh! You were not here, o Hasan, to see Kasim's nuptial feast and his merry banquet. I saw nothing of poor Kasim's marriage ceremony, which was rather an occasion for mourning. You were not here, o Hasan, to behold sorrow and mirth in one and the same place, at one and the same time.

Hasan's Ghost:

Yes, I observed that the bridegroom was broken hearted in Karbala, and that the bride had become brotherless at the time that they were decorating her chamber. I was sweeping the floor of the bridal chamber like the wind, and expressed my good wishes, while you were singing.

Kasim's Mother:

O Hasan, for God's sake pity my condition! I am a widow bereaved of her children, and surrounded by her enemies, who are round about. Pray to God that He may take my soul tonight, for, after Kasim's death, I do not wish to live.

Hasan's Ghost:

Enter into your tent, and mourn for my brother Hussein, and meanwhile endeavor to take care of the fatherless children of the family. Never mind if Kasim has gone from you; remember the awful Day of Resurrection, and do not grieve that your Kasim has been made a sacrifice for the sinful sould of God's people. Go and rest quietly in your tent, disregarding the enemy, for I am keeping watch in your place tonight.

Fatima's Ghost (appearing to Umm Kulsum):

My lost child Hussein, my son, my son! My cruelly curved tree, my son, my son! (Once again, **Mater Dolorosa**) Your wives are crying dolefully, my son, my son! Your family is made contampible and desolate, my child, my child!

Umm Kulsum:

O black phantom, what do you want from us? Leave these destitute, eandering creatures alone to themselves.

Fatima's Ghost:

The nightingale of the garden of affliction is flapping its wings, my singing bird is complaining of the effect of the autumnal wind. I did not know that my Hussein would arrive at Karbala joyfully, but would pass his life most miserably therein. Do not be frightened by this dark apparition, child, because you shall find the spectre very kind and affectionate to you after all.

(5088)

Umm Kulsum:

O black spectre, do not fear our efficacious and potent sighs; do not be secure against our arrow like sobs. My sword is the scimitar like eye brow of Ali Akbar. Beware, o apparition, of such a pair of swords as these.

Fatima's Ghost:

Umm Kulsum, dear daughter, may I be a sacrifice for your sorrow nourishing heart! May my soul be a ransom for your Ali Akbar! Why should you be afraid, and consider me to be your enemy? I am the best of all women (remember the Latin prayer **Ave Maria** or **Hail Mary: "Benedicta tu in mulieribus"** "Blessed art thou among women"), your virgin mother, darling.

Umm Kulsum:

O mother, you who found no rest in your life, listen to me, that I may explain to you the truth of my condition. I saw Ali Akbar's face become red with the blood which trickled from his head. I shall grieve for him until the Day of Resurrection, even for that handsome youth. I saw that Hussein, being thirsty, was stabbed with daggers until he died. I saw, o dear mother, that this beautiful rose was ill used as though he had been a thorn.

Fatima's Ghost:

Alas! They have put out the light of my heart, the lamp of my banquet is quenched through grief. O my sorrowful child, tell me, how do you feel in your mind? For your sobsm o anguished soul, have already set my heart in flames.

(5089)

Umm Kulsum:

O mother, tonight we are in a destitute state, and we are miserably perplexed; at one time we moan, and at another time set up a loud lamentation. Your fatherless children are much disturbed tonight in their minds. We are all in a distracted condition, disorderly, like the disheveled locks of your Hussein.

Fatima's Ghost:

O my soul pierced daughter, you afflicted creature, retire to your tent, and sit there with the poor orphans. Be still for a moment, and let me, instead of you, sing elegies; rest quietly, and permit me to watch the tents tonight.

Ali's Ghost:

Ali is tonight on patrol in this camp; he is a guardian of these poor afflicted women.

Hussein's Ghost:

Sakina is lamenting, and Zainab is sobbing sadly. Hussein, therefore, must guard the destitute wanderers in Karbala.

Fatima's Ghost:

Zainab will surely die from excess of sorrow and grief, for tonight her mother, the best among women, is keeping watch round her tent.

Zainab:

O women, the melancholy nightingale is not seen in the garden. Sakina is sleeping in her bed, but Rukayyah is not to be found. Beat upon your heads, and endeavor to afflict your souls with grief; make a sad noise, for the nightingale is gone from the garden.

(5090)

Sakina (awakening):

Why are you deploring so, my broken hearted aunt? The sound of your lamentation has awakened me from my sleep.

Zainab:

Know that your sister Rukayyah, she whose father has been slain, is missing, to your great misfortune.

Sakina:

O Heaven, do not let me again be lightly esteemed. I am amazed, not knowing where my poor sister has gone. Come, o sorrow stricken Umm Kulsum, and begin to lament; Rukayyah my sister is lost, be kind enough to find her.

Umm Kulsum:

Do not render my day as dark as night, o Heaven. Tell me, Zainab, where did my Rukayyah sleep?

Zainab (pointing to the place):

O sister, it was here that the fatherless orphan retired to rest. She was asleep, but she made continual mention of her father's name in her dreams.

Umm Kulsum:

Oh, what a miserable life poor orphans have to lead! My prayer to God is that none should ever happen to be in our desolate state. What family ever became such fugitives as we? Whose house was destroyed with such an utter destruction as ours?

(5091)

Zainab:

Rukayyah has departed, and Zainab is extremely distressed. Go, Sakina, and see if she is not with Zain al-Abidin her brother.

Sakina:

Help o Zain al-Abidin, our sister Rukayyah I lost; arise from your place, rend my garments, and give vent to grief.

Zain al-Abidin:

Every child, having no father, is spurned by all men, and is at length overwhelmed with destruction from want of one to care for it.

Sakina:

I have been to Zain al-Abidin's tent, dear aunt, but my sister is not there; I beg you to devise some means to find her.

Zainab:

Run, dear niece, to the tent of Kasim's mother, perhaps the poor fatherless child has gone there to sleep.

Sakina:

O mother of Kasim, my sister Rukayyah, for whom I am troubled, is not to be seen. Tell me, o withered hearted lady, if you have any news of my beloved sister.

(5092)

Kasim's Mother:

How good it would be if a fatherless child's life were soon to come to an end! Had Rukayyah been a fortunate girl, she would not have become fatherless.

Sakina:

Aunt, I cannot find a trace of my sister anywhere; help me, aunt, may the dust of the two worlds be heaped upon my head!

Zain al-Abidin:

I have every hour a new fetter with which to be bound; every joint of mine gives a mournful sound like the flute. Where has my sister, my unhappy, sore hearted sister, gone, o Zainab? Oh, I do not know where my ill luck will, after all, carry me!

Zainab:

I do not know, dear nephew, where that afflicted creature has gone, I cannot tell to what spot that precious pearl has taken herself. Father, uncle, and the girl herself, all are gone; what can I do, nephew, after my fortune has thus turned adverse?

Zain al-Abidin:

O my sister Rukayyah, you have gone to the mountains at last. You have died a stranger's death in the wilderness of this country. Had Rukayyah not lost her father, she would have been still alive, she would not have perished in this desert in such a dark night.

(5093)

Zainab:

It is the beginning of Zainab's trials. Rukayyah is lost, to the shame and confusion of Zainab. Hasan confided the affairs of his family to my care. Come, now, o brother, behold how well Zainab has discharged her duty!

Ali's Ghost:

O my sorrowful Zainab! Do not groan so much tonight, dear child, and be comforted. For what do you lament, o nightingale of my rose garden? Put an end to your plaintive notes, my melancholy bird.

Zainab:

O Ali, our scar is irritated into a new sore, for the nightingale is lost. O father, it is for her sake that I am so distressed.

Ali:

The fire of the orphan's sighs has kindled a flame in my heart, o child; I can tell where that featherless nightingale is. Rukayyah is in Hussein's bosom; hasten there, and take her from off his lap.

Zainab (entering the field):

O women, I have found out where Hussein's child is; I have discovered the source of a fresh lake of water, o thirsty ones; Hussein's child is lying down in the field of battle; the planet that had been lost sight of is rediscovered in the vicinity of the moon. Come, o Rukayyah, lay your head in my lap; your absence has, dear niece, deprived me of patience, of intellect, of sense!

(5094)

Umm Kulsum:

Why did you go out of the camp at such a time, my niece? What a girl you are, to be my darling after all! O Zainab, it is now time to gather flowers from the garden of sorrow; it is time, O melancholy nightingale, to pour forth your notes.

Zainab:

Sleep on, my miserable girl, sleep on; sleep on, my soul stricken child, sleep on. You are rending your clothes through grief, you must be ready to be buffeted by Shimr. You have had time enough for mourning, dear child; sleep on now, and take your rest.

Umm Kulsum:

Oh my restless, thirsty creature, go to sleep, go to sleep! O my fatherless girl, go to sleep, go to sleep! O miserable, desolate girl, O heart rent damsel, you shall dream about your father; go the sleep, go to sleep! (102)

(5095)

SCENE XXV

THE FIELD OF KARBALA AFTER THE DEATH OF HUSSEIN.

Zainab:

Heaven has at last consumed us with thirst. Our precious pearl has perished for lack of water. The hands of Abbas the brave man were chopped off in the battlefield, so that he could not undertake any work for us. But Zain al-Abidin, though is is sick, yet he has some hope of life; as for us, the skirt of mystery or secrecy is gone gone out of our hands.

Umm Kulsum:

Heaven has made a poisonous autumnal blast to blow over our rose garden; the spheres have blotted out our trace from the surface of time! O Heaven, it was not a light weight that we had in our hearts! Why should you add to our load of grief, and make additional burdens for us?

Zain al-Abidin:

Why did you, o Heaven, extinguish the light of our dark nights? You grieved our dear friend in order to please our most cruel enemy. You have torn, oh Heaven, the veil of the Prophet's reputation. You have disclosed all our secrets.

Fatima, the bride:

I do not know how our affairs will end, Heaven is continually seeking our hurt. I have, as it were, no head and no pillow, since Kasim, our beloved. Has become a martyr by the sword of malice.

(5096)

Sakina:

Blood drops continually flow down my rosy cheeks from my streaming eyes, owing to the death of our beloved. O Lord, may he who is the cause of our burning sighs be consumed by the same.

Zainab:

Dear Sakina, you have a troubled mind, you are in great distress, poor thing. Do not put the heart of the miserable family in such a flaming state, nor let the foundation of patience be subverted by your sighing and moaning.

Sakina:

I have become, dear aun, like a wingless and featherless bird. How can I forbear to groan, seeing that I know nothing about my beloved companion? Since you are bewailing, why should I not do the same? You have lost a son, as I have been deprived of a father.

Zainab:

O dear niece, do not let torrents of blood stained tears flow from your eyes. It makes my soul restless, as well as it makes my heart impatient. O thirsty lipped creature, do not let me be deprived of peace through your weeping: your thirst does indeed draw water from my eyes and makes me weep!

Sakina:

My pain increases if I do not weep. My complaint is entirely against this inverted sphere. If my head dress is dyed blue or black, it is made so by the indigo-colored skies.

(5097)

Zainab:

Why do you let torrents of blood run from your eyes? Why do you pour rose water on your colorless cheeks? Do not complain, dear girl, of the unkindness of Heaven, for you have, as yet, a beloved father by your side.

Sakina:

Do not speak so, dear aunt, it is utterly impossible. I know that the candle of my dark nights has gone out. I have become without a father, without Kasim, without Ali Akbar, without Abbas, all four are gone from me at once.

Zainab:

Do not grieve, your father has gone home; your red gem has gone back to its mine in the territory of Arabia Felix (Yemen, where red and liver-colored agate is mined). Your father has charged me in all respects concerning you, for the few days of his absence.

Sakina:

If this saying is true, why are you yourself mourning? Why, dear aunt, are you crying against injustice, oppression and tyranny? No, my aunt, I doubt the truth of this assertion, owing to the black garments that you wear; you may be sure about it, but I have some suspicion.

Zainab:

Oh, let not your curling hair be disheveled, for your royal hawk, o Sakina, will soon fly back! My heart will also attain its object, and Zainab's face will beam with joy. Have patience, your prayers will not be without effect; deliverance or death will soon come to you.

(5098)

Sakina:

My spring, aunt, will no more be furnished with verdure, flowers or fruit. I know no deliverance will come to me but death. The cypress of my stature will henceforth bear no fruit, neither will my father come back: I shall never be fortunate.

Zainab:

No, do not think such sad things; the elegant cypress tree will grow upright again; the waters that have failed to flow shall once more take their usual course, Do not be sorry. Last night I dreamed such a dream, and so interpret it, that Joseph brought to Egypt shall be raised to a great degree of honor.

Sakina:

Speaking of your dream, you remind me of sleep. You did, o aunt, mention water in the ear of one suffering from thirst. I feel so tired, dear aunt, from keeping watch, but in whose lap shall I lie down, or in whose bosom shall I repose?

Zainab:

My dear niece, the bosom of your aunt is open like that of a full blown rose; children require a cradle in the form of the nightingale's nest. If you are inclined to sleep, lay your head upon my lap. O Sakina, your hair is truly a bouquet like the hyacinth!

Sakina:

I am going to sleep now; should my dear father return from his journey, or should you unexpectedly receive any letter from him, be pleased to awake me. If I am alive, I shall arise; but if I die while sleeping, I shall have been delivered from much sorrow.

(5099)

Zainab:

Behold, o Hussein, what a broken heart I have! I am not a little, but very greatly sorry for you. No, you have no trouble at all, but I have not one care but a hundred anxieties.

The Son of Sa'd:

Listen, o cursed Shimr, it is now time for injustice. It is the epoch of forgiveness for Nimrod and Shidad. I have contrived a new plan, o Shimr, to torment the female captives of the family of Hussein.

Shimr:

O son of Sa'd, please explain to me your fresh means of oppression; if you intend to be tyrannical, you must try to be so in the extreme. You must draw a dash at once through the chapter of faith, and let the volume of the bright law of God lose its leaf connecting seam.

Ibn Sa'd:

You must put Zain al-Abidin, the delicate son of Hussein, in chains; you must tie up Zainab and the children in bonds, and take them to the place where the carnage has occurred, where the mutilated bodies of their beloved martyrs lie, that Hussein's children may have full knowledge of the transaction. Arise, and go quickly! Inform Zainab, that the afflicted woman may awake Sakina from her sleep.

(5100)

Shimr:

O Zainab, sigh and lament from the bottom of your sorrowful heart. Cry out all your shrieks at once. If you wish that I should not do you any harm personally, then awaken her that is lying fast asleep in your lap. You must soon be led to Damascus, bare headed, and without any sheet to cover yourself; think for a moment what markets and streets that you will have to traverse!

Zainab:

O Sakina, you my thornless rose, awake! The accursed Shimr is troubling me - awake!

Sakina (awaking):

Has the sun risen from the east according to my hope? Has my father come back from his journey? Where is he? Point him out to me, and let me also have a glance at my handsome brother Ali Akbar.

Shimr (beating Sakina):

Come with me, Sakina, I will lead you to your father. Come, I will take you to a garden of roses, and a field of tulips. And all you women, walk out to the field of slaughter; yes, go forth towards the plain with lamentations and sighs.

Sakina:

The world is darkened to my sight, o black faced wretch! Tell me which way leads to the field of slaughter, that I may not lose the path, but walk straight to the spot. Yes, that we may go towards the plain with lamentations and sighs to the place where the martyrs were slain.

(5101)

Shimr:

Where you see the land sprinkled with blood, where you find the ground bedewed with red fluid, you may be certain that it leads to the scene where your father was murdered. All these stories point to the interpretation of your dream.

Zainab:

Dear Sakina, did I not tell you that you should soon be made glad? Did I not say to you, dear Sakina, that you should go to the presence of your father? Come here, now, behold the dear face of your parent. Come and see how your father is lying in the sun, stripped and naked.

Sakina (to the battle field):

Aunt, may I be a sacrifice for you! Whose is this elegant body drenched in blood? To whom do these disheveled locks belong? From head to foot, there is no soundness in all this body. Declare to me, aunt, who can this unblown rose be?

Zainab:

It is your Hussein, niece, who is thus cruelly treated. Yes, whoever comes to this spot, must be, in some way or other, ill used. Look, if you are able, at his arched eye brows, for it is a niche of prayer where all desire to attain their object.

Sakina:

If this mutilated body, wallowing in blood, belongs to my father, if my brilliant sun be buried in this twilight, then the period of my life has come to its final point, my last hour has arrived.

(5102)

Zainab:

Yes, the person slain in this plain is your Hussein. This game that has struggled in blood and dust is your father. This fish that is sunken in the sea of blood, whose wounds are more numerous than the stars, is your Hussein.

Sakina:

No, this withered rose bush cannot be my Hussein. O aunt, why should you be trembling so? My father has a mark on his face.

Zainab:

What is the mark, o Sakina? Declare it to me. May I be a ransom for you! Explain it well, what is the mark?

Sakina:

My father had four locks of hair when alive. He had soft black eyes like those of a gazelle. Dear aunt, every morning when I looked upon the face of Hussein, I noted a black mole under his eye brows.

Zainab:

Dear niece, behold the four locks of Hussein in a disheveled state! You may detect in these locks the scent of your father. Open you eyes well, dear thing, and observe carefully, the black moles under Hussein's eye brows is still to be seen beneath the clots of blood.

Sakina:

O aunt, my father used, day and night, to raise the Qur'an and he served God continually all his life.

(5103)

The Body of Hussein (reading some parts of the Qur'an):

O desolate orphan, I am Hussein your father. I am the same who came to you in your dreams. I am Joseph whose coat of many colors has been torn by wolf like death, o you burning candle of my tomb.

Ibn Sa'd:

Another thing has happened to flash across my mind. I have thought of a new plan of oppression. I have been reminded of a new fashion of torment. Call to me at once Yunus the clerk.

Yunus:

O you whom Nimrod cannot equal in tyranny, I am Yunus the clerk, tell me why I have been summoned.

Umar the Son of Sa'd:

You, o Yunus, must be well acquainted with this trying business, you must have registered the names of the murderers and the murdered of Karbala. Refer to the list in your hand, and tell us with precision who has been killed and by whom.

Yunus:

Yes, o chief, I have by your order inscribed in a book the account of all the martyrs, and am therefore able to answer you according to the tenor of your questions in a most appropriate manner.

The Son of Sa'd:

Tell me by whose sword the elegant stature of Kasim the unhappy youth fell to the ground.

(5104)

Yunus:

Amir, when Kasim the bridegroom rushed into the field, the accursed Umir made him a martyr, with a malicious sword.

The Son of Sa'd:

Tell me, again, which stone hearted man from among this army made Ali Akbar, the darling son of Hussein, a martyr?

Yunus:

O Amir, it is Nankish the son of Marah who killed him, and deprived the helpless Zainab of all hope.

The Son of Sa'd:

Tell me, who brought cruelly a blast on the blossom of mankind by chopping off the two hands of Abbas, the brother of Hussein?

Yunus:

Know, o Amir, that it was the son of Tifi who cut off the hands of Abbas the brave.

The Son of Sa'd:

Tell me, who killed the sons of the mighty Ja'afar, and who murdered Hussein, the laudable one among the chosen?

(5105)

Yunus:

Know, o Amir, that when the armies began to fight desperately, I could not determine who killed the rest of those that were slain. It would sometimes happen that a thousand men attacked one single soul, or four thousand archers shot with their arrows at once, or that one body received a thousand wounds from different daggers in the hands of different men, and in this way I could hardly tell by whose stroke each died.

Ibn Sa'd:

Be prepared, o army, to take your vengeance, for the time has come that every affair should be perfectly decided. Go and sever the heads of the slain from their bodies, and thus raise a cry of grief among the women of Hussein.

Sinan (to Umm Kulsum):

Come, o sorrowful and scarred Umm Kulsum, sit down kindly by the side of your Abbas, and see how, with my sharp edged dagger, I will sever the head of Abbas your brother from his elegant body.

Umm Kulsum:

O base man, do not cut the head of my poor brother, none ever in the world does injury to the dead. It is enough that you have chopped off the hands from his body, at least let his head remain untouched.

Shimr:

Come, Sakina, throw the dust of this field of slaughter on your head, groan and heave fiery sighs from your heart. Observe how, with the point of my steel dagger, I will sever the luminous head of Ali Akbar your handsome brother.

(5106)

Sakina:

I beseech you not to sever the head of my dear Ali Akbar from his body. Yes, do not cut his throat with your sharp dagger. Why you not strike off my head with your cruel sword, instead of this dear skull, already cleft asunder by the blow of a scimitar?

Umir:

O bride of Kasim. Commence weeping; come forward and decorate the bed chamber of the bridegroom. Rend your garments, and behold how I will cut off the head of Kasim the unhappy.

The Bride:

Oh! Do not cut off the head that could not rest on the pillow of joy and delight. Do not strike off the head of one just returning from the marriage-feast. Do not wound the head that has fallen from the couch of rest, Do not cut the throat of the bridegroom of the plain of Karbala.

Shimr:

Come, sorrowful Zainab, your day has become quite dark. Send up to Heaven the arrow of your soul bruning sighs. See how I will cut the throat of your Hussein.

I
am severing the head of your world adorning sun with my sword.

Zainab:

O cursed wretch, you must not sever with your dagger the head which Zahra, the Prophet's daughter, nourished in her bosom. He has already received one thousand nine hundred and fifty wounds in his body; what further need do you have to cut his throat?

(5107)

Shimr:

Know, o Amir, that we have performed the service that you ordered. We have cut off and brought away the heads of all the martyrs. Look! There are plenty of severed skulls here. Order us, if there is any further service to be done.

Ibn Sa'd:

Well done, good soldiers; you have truly performed your duty in cutting off the heads of the slain. Now, o Yunus the clerk, look in your register, and see if the heads are according to the account kept in your book.

Shimr:

O Amir, of the children of the chosen Prophet we have seventeen heads cut off in this plain of trial. Of the family of Ali there is one head missing, I wonder whose it can be?

Yunus:

Besides these heads, there is another head mentioned in my book, that of Ali Asghar.

The Son of Sa'd:

I am not free from care for one single hour. Tell me, why have you not cut that head too? You army of Kufa, and men of Damascus, if a thing ought to be done at all, it ought to be done in a most perfect manner.

Shimr:

O impudent son of Sa'd, you resentful, malicious creature, we could not find any other slain in the fields besides these. We have been looking about all over the plain, and cut off every head we could see.

Ibn Sa'd:

O warriors, return again to the field of battle, and seek on every side and in every corner for Ali Asghar's body.

Sinan:

O prince, to be sure Ali Asghar could not go away from among the dead. I can tell you where the tender child of Hussein is to be found.

The Son of Sa'd:

Where is the body of that suckling? Tell me, where is the corpse of that thousand trilled nightingale? Tell me, where is it, that I may sever the head, and raise a great disturbance in the universe by my tyranny.

Sinan:

Know, o prince, that when Ali Asghar was made a martyr with an arrow, Hussein took his infant boy in his bosom, and went in the direction of the field of slaughter, towards his own camp. He buried his little Ali Asghar by the side of his tent.

The Son of Sa'd:

O army, that which was hidden is now revealed. The Joseph of Canaan, who was lost is now found. You who boast the service of Yezid, go now and excavate all the floor of the tent; discover the body of Ali Asghar, the sweet tongued child, in order to bring down, with your tyranny, the indigo colored dome of Heaven.

(5109)

Shimr:

I do not know where Haidar's son hid his child's swaddling wrapper. I must dig the whole floor of the tent now to discover this hidden treasure.

Zainab:

O son of Sa'd, do you not fear God? Do you not care about the sighs and groans of Fatima the Prophet's daughter? Be not so proud for the few days of this life. Be ashamed before God, o accursed, wicked wretch.

Sakina:

Do not, o son of Sa'd, pull down our house. Do not grieve the souls of the poor ladies of Hussein's family. I beseech you not to dig up cruelly the tomb of Ali Asghar, but let the poor little child sleep for a while.

Umm Kulsum:

Do not go to this extent in your oppression, o impudent nation! I beg you not to hurt us so much.

Shimr:

I am sure that this is the spot where Ali Asghar is buried, here is the wretched babe cut into a hundred pieces. O Amir, take Ali Asghar, and do with him as seems good to you, but spare these destitute ones.

Ibn Sa'd:

It is my wish that the head of this child should be cut off; let one of you sever it from the body for me.

(5110)

Zainab:

Do not do this, o Umar the son of Sa'd; what cruel conduct is this? How can it be lawful to mutilate a dead suckling?

The Son of Sa'd:

Cut his throat, and grieve the heart of his aunt. Hasten, I say, to sever the head of Hussein's child. O ladies of Hussein's household, you may torment me or punish me on the Day of Resurrection, Judgement and Account if you can. Go and tell Ali and God's Messenger also everything that I have doen towards you.

Umm Kulsum:

O Lord, look upon us in the abundance of Your grace. Cure the painful disease of the heart of Hussein's family. We are a company of women wandering in mind, distressed in heart; have mercy upon the destitute women belong ing to the king of the saints. They have killed all our men unjustly. Oh, pity these slain ones whose heads are severed from their bodies! Send Gabriel, o Lord, with a band of angels, and order them to guard these Your martyrs.

The Son of Sa'd:

You ought, o Sinan, to sever the head of this suckling from his body with your glittering sword.

Sinan:

How can I make the heart of the family of Hussein bleed? I boast that I am a rational being; how can I do this brutal act? I shall never wound this babe with my dagger; if Shimr wishes, let him do it, but I will not.

Shimr:

Although of all the inhabitants of Kufa I am the most hard hearted and cruel, still I would not do this thing though I were to be killed. Why should I hurt this darling little throat? Why should I show malice and hatred to the dead?

The Son of Sa'd (to Sinan):

O Sinan, make no excuses to me at all; you must at once cut off the head of Ali Asghar.

Sinan:

May God make my sword break into pieces, may points of daggers be thrust into my breast, may my body be hewn to pieces with daggers and scimitars, if I ever attempt to cut the throat of this suckling child!

The Son of Sa'd (to Khauli):

Come forward, o Khauli, and take this dagger from me; sever the head of this little child from his body.

Khauli:

If you should order me, o Amir, to be beheaded, I could not even touch this throat with the tip of my dagger. Sinan must cut the throat of this suckling child. I should never slay game already killed.

Sakina:

Oh! Do not bring the sword into contact with my Ali Asghar's throat. Do not maliciously sever the head of my little brother from his body. May I be a ransom, o Ali Asghar, for your pallid face! May I be a sacrifice for your arrow sucking lips! Sakina is alive, while you have died by the point of an arrow. I do not know what you have done to these man that they should wish to cut your throat.

Umar the Son of Sa'd:

Know, o Sakina, that I have no fear of God before me. I myself will sever the head of the child from his body.

Sakina:

Since you are determined to sever the head of this poor, innocent child, and seeing that this little one has been killed while thirsty, and cruelly deprived of his life in this plain, give me time, o black faced wretch, that I may pour a few drops of water down his parched throat to slake, if possible, his thirst. Mh, may your sister be a sacrifice for your throat! Drink, dear Ali Asghar, drink. Come, let me clasp you warmly to my bosom! Drink water, poor thing! You are fainting from excessive thirst. Drink waterm darling brother; though your father was made a martyr while thirsty. What shall I do, brother?

Ibn Sa'd:

See, o Zainab, how I have cut the throat of Ali Asghar. I will put his blood in a bowl, and drink it.

Shimr:

O army of Kufa and Syria, lead the family of Ali ibn Abi Talib captive to Damascus.(103)

SCENE XXVI

FLIGHT OF SHAHRBANU FROM THE PLAIN OF KARBALA.

Zainab:

You, o Heaven, continually excite seditions, you deal with Zahra's posterity most maliciously, you perversely hurt the feelings of the generous for the pleasure of the men of the world. It is your custom to separate brothers from sisters, to make Zainab a melancholy bird, owing to her Hussein's death. Have patience until Zu'l Janah returns from the field of battle, if you intend to send Zainab into captivity.

Sakina:

My father, who went to the field of battle, has not yet returned. My heart is melting by reason of his absence, my soul is bleeding. I wish to God that my sighs would return to me with some effect! I wish that I could hear something about my father.

Umm Kulsum:

O spheres, you have broken my wings with a cruel stone, you have made mountains and plain become seas owing to the abundance of my tears. Thanks be to you, o Heaven, I wish you joy and prosperity; you have seven times dyed my head dress indigo.

Shahrbanu:

I am, o Heaven, Shahrbanu, the wife of Hussein. I am a daughter-in-law of the Prophet's daughter, but am now a widow. My husband is slain, and my fortune has departed. Where shall I turn my face, being thus perplexed and distressed?

(5116)

Zainab:

Dear Hussein having been killed, I am rendered altogether helpless. My fir tree being hewn down, I have made a fruitless tree. Mourning is become a never ending task for me; I can do nothing but complain against my fate, o Heaven.

Sakina:

Alas! I cannot say what has become of my father Hussein; he has neither arrived himself, nor has a messenger come from him. Does one who goes on a journey never return? The evening of those who sojourn has no morning after it.

Shahrbanu:

I have lost all patience, o my God, being bereaved of my dear son Ali Akbar. I am humbled, and brought very low in the land of Karbala. You know, o God, that I am the descendant of Khusrau Parviz (a Sassanian Emperor), King of Persia.

Sakina:

O women of the harem, have pity on my tearful eyes, for I suffer painfully from the absence of my father. Where shall I go, and what shall I do, this long night of separation? I am so grieved, so overwhelmed now with sorrow, that I cannot express it. (The women are silent.) It is not proper to disregard poor orphans' words. How is it, my aunt, that you do not answer my questions? Since nobody has any affectionate regard for me, I will retire to the mountains, and live there a secluded life.

Zainab:

Alas! Fortitude has left my heart. My rose being gone from the garden, the nightingale has also departed. I mean that Hussein's child Sakina, being disturbed in her mind, has gone from my absence.

(5117)

Sakina:

O zephyr, bid my father return and behold my wretched condition. You do not know, o father how sad is my state; sorrow has made me as slender as a new moon. Zainab my aunt does not deign to answer me, though every word of mine must reach her ears.

Zainab:

O child who has prepared yourself to die, o bird which is caught in a snare be not offended by your aunt, darling. Return to the camp, return; vex me no more.

Sakina:

O aunt, do not increase my pains; I will in no wise return to the camp. Let me alone, that I may die in misery; persuade me not to go back with you to the tent.

Zainab:

O child who has not experienced any of the delights of this world, have patience; do not rend your garments sorrowfully, and do not go alone in this wilderness.

Sakina:

I do not love anyone else except my father, nor do I wish to see anyone besides him. I have no friend but God, and have nothing to do with you, o aunt. I shall pass my time with the wild beasts of the desert and birds of the air, and will not henceforth see any human face.

(5118)

Zainab:

O light of my two eyes, o bird that is going away from the garden, do not heave warm sighs from your heart. Return to the camp, return; I will wash your face with rose water, and answer your every word. Come back, that I may disclose a secret to you, and inform you as to your father.

Sakina:

I will come to the camp, aunt, but I feel extremely sad. Oh, may my soul be a ransom for you! Show me my father.

Zainab:

Do not beat your head, girl, nor trouble yourself so much. May I be a sacrifice for your heart! Come and sit in my lap.

Sakina:

O my dear aunt, I cannot live a moment without my father; show him to me, I beseech you.

Zainab:

O Shahrbanu, how long will you remain in the tent? Come out. Think of Zainab, whose life has become a burden to her. Oh! Deliver me from the hand of Sakina your daughter, for I am badly vexed by her; either help me to get my skirt from her hand, or pray to God to take my soul from me.

Shahrbanu:

O oppressed child, why are you thusly moaning and sighing? Why have you scratched your rosy cheeks, my girl? Sit in my lap, and see my sad condition. Do not put me to shame before my companions, darling daughter.

(5119)

Sakina:

Have compassion on my tender age, mother; make me hear of the adventures of my father. Where is my worthy sire, that conqueror of armies, that vanquisher of troops? Where is that dear soul of mine, that spirit of my life?

Shahrbanu:

O God, how long must I be consumed with anguish of heart? How long shall I conceal the secret? Your father will soon return to you, my pretty little child; he will come to you in a manner like the moon in the heavens.

Sakina:

I beg of you, o my sorrowful and impatient mother (**Mater Dolorosa**), when you see the dear face of my beloved father, ask him the reason for his delay; and if he is thirsty, if my precious pearl wants water, please to lead him to the source of the Euphrates. May you be a Khizr to lead Alexander to the fountain of life.

Shahrbanu:

Go to the tent, dear child; do not wait for your father. If you wish to speak of water first fill your eyes with tears, because they do not allow your father to drink water; they have broken our hearts through denying us a few drops of liquid.

Sakina:

Why should the heavens continue their revolutions if my father is not going to return from the field? I trust my mother Shahrbanu will not return from the field alone and empty handed.

(5120)

Shahrbanu:

I have become like a flute, possessing various notes. I have a thousand complaints against the transactions done in Karbala. Where have you gone, o Hussein? Please let me know of it. Come back, come back, for all my hopes are centred in you.

Sakina:

I am one who, having once had many faithful friends, am now deprived of all, and have no companion except God. You alone, o father, was the cure of my diseased heart. Come now, and see how irremediable my case has become.

Shahrbanu:

If you are made a martyr, send, then, your horse to me, for I have, o Hussein, many strange things to do today. Do not permit, dear husband, that I should become a captive in the hands of the wicked Shimr, for I terribly fear that impudent man.

Hussein's Body (addressing his horse):

O Zu'l Janah, behold the queen of all ladies standing there with distressed face towards the fields, waiting for you. Stain, therefore, your face with my blood, and go to her that she may perceive that the rider has fallen from your back. Seat her on the saddle, and, taking her out of the field, carry her where God has permitted you to go. (Zu'l Janah comes towards Shahrbanu.)

Shahrbanu:

O Zu'l Janah, why is your mane and hair all stained with blood? Your face looks like a wild tulip of Mount Demavand; tell me, where has your fair rider gone? O Sakina, Sakina, march out of the tent, and see your father's easy paced Zu'l Janah coming to you.

(5121)

Sakina (seeing Zu'l Janah coming towards her):

O Zu'l Janah, what have you done with my good natured father? Where have you thrown my heavenly looking parent. Oh! Since your face is dyed with Hussein's blood, let me kiss your hair, and rub my face on yours.

Zainab:

O Hussein's charger, why did you trot to the field of battle? Why did you make my brother fall from your back? Where has your rider, the equestrian hero, gone? Oh! Let me put my head on your saddle cloth, and be somewhat relieved.

Sakina:

What have you done with Hussein, that shining moon? What have you done with my Solomon, o lapwing?

Shahrbanu:

Return to your tent, o you two singing birds of the meadow, and be silent, leaving Zu'l Janah to me. The time has come for me to make a sad noise like the flute, and, getting on the back of the charger, to go from Kufa to Ray. (Ray is a city in Persia near Kazwin and not far from present day Tehran.) (Shahrbanu mounts the horse.)

Sakina:

O my worthy good tempered, but sorrowful mother (**Mater Dolorosa**), tell me where you intend to ride. Do not go away as my affectionate father did; do not let the nest of this poor bird be more and more disturbed.

(5122)

Shahrbanu:

May I be an offering fro your beautiful stature,
o child! May I be a sacrifice for the curl of your
ringlets, o daughter! Return to the tent; I am not
going anywhere. I will not depart, my darling, since
you do not wish it.

Sakina:

If, o mother, you have not resolved to go
anywhere, why do I see you so thoughtful? How is it
that, if you do not mean anything, you do not dismount
from Hussein's horse?

Shahrbanu:

Wait a bit, my child, my destitute orphan
darling, that I may go to the place of slaughter of my
beloved ones to see if Ali Asghar is well nursed and
at rest; to see if there is anyone to take care of the
cruelly murdered infant.

Sakina:

Oh, do not talk thus to me! I am not so stupid as not
to know somewhat; my experience comprehends all things
that are in Heaven and earth. Your Ali Asghar has not
fed on milk, loving mother, but on sharp arrows; he is
no longer fit to come to your bosom, kind mother.

Shahrbanu:

Have patience, then, dear child, until I go to
the field of battle and bury Ali Asghar, in the earth,
with my own hands.

(5123)

Sakina:

Dismount, Shahrbanu, and trouble me no more, for now that my father is gone I have but a sad and sorrowful heart. It is not proper that my Ali Asghar should be interred in the earth; let the poor creature be transported at once to the garden of Paradise.

Shahrbanu (dismounting):

Alas! I shall be debased in this generation. Though I am a rose, it seems that I am about to become a thorn in this plain; very good, child, I will do just what you have said, I will alight, and be cut to the quick.

Sakina:

May I be a ransom for your beautiful stature draped in black! I wish that you may sit down for a little while, in order that I may place my head on the top of your shoulder, but I fear lest you should leave me alone and forsake me as soon as I have fallen asleep.

Shahrbanu:

Sleep in my lap, o nightingale of the rose garden of my soul; come into my bosom, my pretty delicate bud. Do not be so uneasy as to my departure. I will not go anywhere while you are asleep, dear Sakina.

Sakina:

I am going to sleep, but I know that this sleep will render me despicable, I shall not see Shahrbanu when I awake. My father has left me, my mother is also going away. I shall be led a captive to Syria and be made miserable there.

(5124)

Shahrbanu:

My abode, now that Ali Akbar is dead, shall be in a cave in the mountains of Ray. My dear Sakina shall go to Damascus and be put to shame in that city. She shall pass bare headed in the streets and bazaars, to the aggravation of Zainab's sorrow.

Zainab:

Sakina, after an hour, will awake from her sleep, and not finding her mother with her, will set up a doleful lamentation, such as to make Zain al-Abidin forget his fever; owing to the absence of Shahrbanu, Sakina is in distress, and Zainab is once again afflicted.

Shahrbanu:

Oh! Who will help me in this my miserable plight? Oh! Who will sympathize with me in my calamity? I wish that someone would come and hold Sakina's head in her lap when I am gone. O Zainab, the time has come for me to set out on my journey. Give my love, dear sister to Ali Akbar and Ali Asghar when I have departed.

Zainab:

O my respected and faithful sister, contrive some plan for me to do after you are gone; when your daughter awakens and calls me, what shall I answer her?

Shahrbanu:

Sakina being a child, you can easily beguile her with some fantastic story; in this way the girl may be pacified and your heart be relieved from its irremedial pain.

Zainab:

Heaven, instead of helping Zainab, has poured contempt on her; Heaven surely is mistaken in this wrong dealing with me. I cannot get my pain mitigated by patience. I think, therefore, that whoever endures meekly in this assembly will be the loser.

Shahrbanu:

O desolate Zainab, I cannot forget you even for a minute; you have been kind to me, both in Medina and in this place. I, being a stranger, have received much honor and respect from you. Now, my soul being extremely sorrowful, I have but one request to ask of you.

Zainab:

Oh, I am much obliged to you for your kind words; better make no mention of those things to my shame and confusion. Poor creature! What did you experience in our house except vexation and grief? And in Karbala what but oppression and cruelty? I adjure you, by the lustrous curls of Ali Akbar, pardon my faults and overlook my evil doings. What is your request? Let your servant hear it, for I am but a slave of your dear Ali Akbar.

Shahrbanu:

Oh! Make no mention of Ali Akbar to kindle a fire within me. Ah! May I die for him, grief is going to burn the very marrow of my bones. My request, o my sore hearted one, is that you should kindly accompany me to the field of slaughter, where I intend to seek the body of my dear Ali Akbar, to smell his scented locks, and to give him some farewell kisses.

(5126)

Zainab:

Come, let us go, that we may fetch salt and sprinkle it on our bleeding wounds! Come, let us visit our beloved companions, and have a walk in the rose garden of Karbala. Come, and behold where the tulips have grown, even under the body of your youthful son.

Shahrbanu (addressing the body):

O beloved of my heartm why has your body fallen naked in the sun? O second Joseph, tell me what became of your coat of many colors?

Zainab (to the body):

All your body is reddened with the blood of your head, dear nephew. Your meadows are all green, but you have not yet sat in the bride chamber.

Shahrbanu:

Come, Ali Akbar, and see how I am journeying. Alas, may I die for you! I could not stay to have you properly wrapped in winding sheets.

Zainab:

Speak out, dear nephew, for sweet are your words! Open your eyes, darling, may I be a sacrifice for your sweet eye lids.

Ibn Sa'd:

My fortune is at all times good and agreeable; all the hidden things of the world are plainly known to me. O army of Kufa, that poor Shahrbanu intends to flee away through fear; set out at once, all of you, and lie in ambush for her on her way to whatever place or country she may be going. Pursue her hard until you make a captive of her, and put her in great consternation. (The army searches on all sides.)

(5127)

Zainab:

Do not beat on your head so much, Shahrbanu;
Arise from your place, o nightingale, cease lamenting
for your rose. Mount Zu'l Janah, and carry yourself
away from this wilderness; get on shore from this
blood stained sea of trial.

Shahrbanu (riding):

O prisoner of Karbala, o poor despised Zainab, I
go, dear sister, but you shall be made a captive. If
it be agreeable to you, sing a song over Ali Akbar,
and keep, if possible, the ceremony of mourning for
him. Should it happen that you should go to his tomb
by way of affection, I beg you to perfume his hair
with musk and ambergris. Seeing that my Ali Asghar,
at the time of his departure, was thirsty and had not
been nursed, I beg you to pour some milk and water
over the dust of my infant's tomb. Adieu, sister
Zainab, I am going away now; Shahrbanu came to Arabia
a light hearted girl, and returns to Persia a sad old
woman.

Zainab:

I am burning, from head to foot, with the fire
of my sighs. O daughter-in-law of Fatima, are you
going away? Depart in peace, Your Ali Akbar and Ali
Asghar have remained here while you are going away;
you may depart, o star, leaving your sun and moon
behind.

Imam Zain al-Abidin:

O Shahrbanu, why did you not come and caress
your son Zain al-Abidin? You have completely forsaken
your invalid child. You have visited the dead and
living except for me; you have seen all, dear mother,
except your son Zain al-Abidin. You have no regard for
poor me, of sweet faced lady; you thought that I must
have gone from the world by this time.

(5128)

Shahrbanu:

May I be a ransom for your dull and troubled spirit! May my soul be a sacrifice for your soft eyes! So long as I am alive, you shall not be forgotten by me. I am much abashed before you, my poor invalid Zain al-Abidin. I am going away, child, pardon if you have experienced any unkindness at my hands, and be so good as to think of your mother now and then.

Zain al-Abidin:

May I be a ransom for you, o beautiful mother! I have many complaints against you, dear parent. Although I am obliged to you for the care that you have taken of me, still your Zain al-Abidin must have been dead or alive; in either case it was necessary that you should pay him an affectionate visit.

Shahrbanu:

May I be a ransom for your ruby like, delicate sweet lips! May God enable you to recover from your illness, that you may have strength enough to endure the sorrow of the time, and receive blows from the hand of the profligate Shimr.

Zain al-Abidin:

O my faithful mother, after you are gone, who will attend to me?

Shahrbanu:

Do not worry about that, o Zain al-Abidin, Zainab will take care of you. My invalid son, your aunt will be good enough to nurse you in your illness.

(5129)

Zain al-Abidin:

Do not grieve me with your departure, dear mother; do not go, do not go! Do not leave me behind, a companion of sorrow; do not go, dear parent, do not go! The violence of the fever, good mother, has brought my soul to the tips of my lips; have me first buried, dear mother, and then depart.

Shahrbanu:

Go from behind me, child; do not come, do not come! O you our solace and companion night and day, do not come, do not come! I am going from your sight; you can no longer see me with your eyes; in vain you are endeavoring to follow me; do not come, do not come!

Zain al-Abidin:

O Shahrbanu, you have gone, leaving your invalid son Zain al-Abidin behind in Karbala. Oh! I am left here destitute of all friendly help, woe be to me! Come and save me, my mother!

(5130)

Shahrbanu (departing in a certain direction, with the wicked party shooting arrows at her):

Do not throw me into the hands of the antagonist, o Heaven! I am the consort of Ali ibn Abi Talib's son, rub your eyes that you may see better. The enemy is lying in wait to make a captive of me; eher is my Ali Akbar, that he may save me from the hands of the enemy? (Turning in another direction and being also shot at.) Alas! Where is the tranquilizer of my agitated heart? I am without a companion or friend; where has my dear companion gone? Where is Kasim? What has become of Abbas? Where is my general, the commander of the army? (Turning in a third direction and receiving the same treatment.) In whatever direction I turn, the enemy does not allow me to pass; I fear lest I should unfortunately be put to shame. I am but a single weak body, and the foe is in every corner; there is no friend, no kind companion, to defend me. Where shall I go, o merciful Creator, or what shall I do? I am terribly perplexed in my mind, hardly knowing how to escape. (Moving in another direction and hearing the sound of troops, she lays her head on the saddle.) I will now deliver myself from sorrow, and turning my face to Karbala, cry aloud, saying, "O Hussein, behold my condition, and come out to my help; o Hussein, I am in a destitute state, make haste to save me."

Hussein (appearing as a horseman and putting the army to flight)

O you whose son was lately killed, have no fear at all of this multitude, for this numerous army is but as dust before me.

Shahrbanu:

If you are the guide of my path, I shall have no fear of the enemy. May the Prophet Khizr direct you in all your ways, o young man!

Hussein:

I see that you are shedding hot tears, and heaving cold sighs.

(5131)

Shahrbanu:

My moaning and weeping are for the death of my
unfortunate son Ali Akbar.

Hussein:

I ask you a question for which I expect from you
a sincere answer. Is Ali Akbar better than the
Prophet's elect, or are the elect people more precious
than your beloved?

Shahrbanu:

Of course the elect people are better, inasmuch
as they are the people of Muhammad the Prophet.

Hussein:

Then do not complain that your Ali Akbar is made
a ransom for the salvation of this people, who in
reality are better than many Ali Akbars and Ali
Asghars.

Shahrbanu:

I do not complain, but yield assent;
nevertheless, the smarting pain of these scars will
remain in my heart and breast until the Day of
Resurrection.

Hussein:

Why is your hair disheveled and your face
scratched? O unfortunate woman, what has made you
throw ashes on your head?

(5132)

Shahrbanu:

It is a custom with women deprived of their children and husbands, to cut their hair, to scratch their faces, and to beat upon their heads.

Hussein:

You are right, o woman; moan as much as you like. How can a bird rendered wingless and featherless do otherwise than cry from oppression?

Shahrbanu:

Who are you, o young man, whose voice is so familiar to my ears? I think that you are the angel Gabriel, for I see wings on your body.

Hussein:

O Shahrbanu, I am Hussein, your husband Hussein; the wounds that you see are the effects of arrows and daggers.

Shahrbanu:

I wish that I had become blind rather than see you in this condition. How could such a delicate body receive the wounds of spears and lances?

Hussein:

The pain of these wounds shall in time be made easy and tolerable, but I have another calamity which is still worse than this.

(5133)

Shahrbanu:

May my soul be an offering to avert calamities from your soul! Declare to me what is that painful affliction which is yet more unendurable than these heavy woes.

Hussein:

The heaviest of all my afflictions is this, that you are going away, leaving my Sakina fatherless and motherless.

Shahrbanu:

I am going, dear husband, but my motto shall, until the Day of Judgement, be, Ali Asghar, Ali Asghar! Ali Akbar, Ali Akbar!

Hussein:

Why are you pouring tears so copiously, and what prevents you from remaining in Hussein's Karbala? O my matchless companion, who will affectionately stroke Sakina's hair after your departure?

Shahrbanu:

Your Sakina, whom Heaven has made so miserable, has one in the person of Zainab to take care of her instead of me her mother.

Hussein:

Oh! You grieve me painfully with what you say. How well did you keep the ceremony of Ali Akbar's marriage at Karbala! How strangely did you dye your dear hands with henna!

(5134)

Shahrbanu:

If I do not die, but live, and safely arrive at the mountain of Raym I shall there decorate a wedding room for Ali Akbar, ornamenting it, provided that I live, with beautiful flowers, even the flowers which Heaven has lately thrown in the river Euphrates!

Hussein:

Tell me, how was Zainab when fate snatched Ali Akbar from the midst of the family?

Shahrbanu:

After your death, Zainab's abode was a house of mourning. She has been like a moth, fluttering around your children, your orphan children.

Hussein:

Oh! My troubles are more than those of any sufferer; tell me, in what condition is Zain al-Abidin my poor son?

Shahrbanu:

Zain al-Abidin is like a flaming candle, burning with fever, and it is difficult to say whether he will recover his health again.

Hussein:

O Shahrbanu, I am plunged in fire and water because of you. I am distressed owing to the troubles that you have suffered while with me; after losing Ali Akbar, your unfortunate son, you had the misfortune to see my death; you have never gathered any flower of rest out of my garden. Your palm tree of hope has become suddenly fruitless in Karbala. Well, o my horse Zu'l Janah, carry my wife where she chooses.

(5135)

Shahrbanu:

Adieu then o Hussein; be Ali Akbar's companion,
and visit him every day after I am gone. Wipe off the
dust of the battle field which has settled on his rosy
cheeks, and, digging a tomb for him, have that
treasure buried under the earth.

Hussein:

God knows, o Shahrbanu, that I feel very sorry
for you! O daughter-in-law of Fatima Zahra, you are
gone, God be with you!(104)

(5136)

SCENE XXVIII

RELEASE OF FATIMA, OWING TO THE INTERVENTION OF THE PERSIANS.

Malik Kazi:

The revolution of the spheres has stripped my gem of its dazzling luster; Heaven has thrown my heart into great perturbation. It being a long time since Hussein went to Karbala, I wonder why no letter has been addressed to me by his blessed pen. I fear lest the king of Hijaz may not achieve his object in the country of Iraq. I fear lest the heavens should give the crown of Kai Kobad

[founder of the Kayanian dynasty of Persia; the Sassanian dynasty, of which Shahrbanu was a member, claimed to be descendants of the Kayanian dynasty; in any case, the expression "crown of Kai Kobad" refers to the imperial crown of Persia]

to the wind; lest the family of Abu Turab be tyrannically brought low. I fear lest the skies, like Afrasiyab the Turk

(principal villain of the Shah Namah of Firdausi, the Persian national epic),

should destroy the structure of the kingdom of Persia and raze it to the ground. Oh, that a messenger would come from that quarter! Oh that someone would bring me news from Imam Hussein!

The Vizir:

O Prince, you have, thank God, the Kayanian crown placed on your head. Your diadem is shining brilliantly in the sun, and the Kayanian flag is, besides hoisted up in your name; having all these blessings around you, there is no occasion for you to complain of care and anxiety.

(5137)

Malik Kazi:

O Vizir, although I have on my head a crown set with precious stones, although God has bestowed on me many jeweled ornaments, still I feel very sad, and am much troubled in heart, because I fear lest the Arabs should lead my sister captive another time.

The Vizir:

You are so great today, that even the blue vault of Heaven gives you tribute; the kingdom of Persia is lifted up by the elevation of your crown. Therefore, do not set your heart on such trifles as those which you just mentioned! I believe that you have your temper formed of melancholy itself.

Malik Kazi:

Though, o Vizir, I am a king and the absolute monarch of the country of Persia, yet what does this crown or this ring avail me, if my dear nephew, Prince Ali Akbar, should fall from the saddle to the ground?

The Vizir:

O offspring of Kai Kobad, and descendant of Kai Khusrau (third monarch of the Kayanian dynasty of Persia), you are the possessor of the crown and throne of your royal ancestors; why should you talk of sad things, and not rather quaff wine from the wonderful cup of Jamshid (another character from the Shah Namah)? Do not let sorrow overcome you, happen what may.

The King:

Know, o Vizir, that should I lose the Kayanian crown and the famous cup of Jamshid (We have spoken of the cup of Jamshid in connection with the Holy Grail.), together with the throne of Kai Kobad, it would not grieve me so much as if one from the Arab multitude should chance to untie the veil worn by my sister, the lady of ladies.

(5138)

The Vizir:

Today you are the ruler of all the provinces of Persia; you wear the crown, other kings pay you tribute and homage: you must rejoice rather than be sorry. Why should you throw yourself from such an exalted throne?

The King:

It is true, I am the great ruler of the empire of Persia; I can crown many heads, and deprive others of their kingdoms when I choose; yet I would resign my sovereignty and no longer reign, rather than that a camel driving Arab should make my sister a prisoner.

The Vizir:

O son of Yazdigird (last Sassanian Emperor, father of Shahrbanu), do not breathe hot sighs nor be sorry any more, For I am suree that Hussein the king of religion is now ruling in Iraq. Keep your heart glad concerning your sister, his wife; for she must certainly be now the greatest of all the ladies in his family, and, in fact, his queen. I hope that a messenger will come soon, with some news or letter from your sister.

The King:

Oh! At what time will there come some news from our Solomon? When will the lapwing of the city of Sheba arrive? From whom shall I be enabled to hear news from my dear sister? At what time will a messenger come from Karbala?

The Messenger:

The days of affliction and perpetual grief have come to an end; here am I a messenger with letters and good news. I am coming from the country of Arabia to Persia, bringing news concerning the reign of Hussein the king of religion.

(5139)

The King:

O friends, there is information for us from the Sultan of Karbala. Here is a lapwing come from the Solomon of that plain. Welcome, welcome! Sing out loudly and pleasantly. I will offer you my heart and soul as presents. I detect on you the odor of the King of Medina: the landscapes of Persia have become all radiant through your blessed arrival.

The Messenger:

First of all, I must place my head at the sole of the foot of the monarch, for everyone must have a respectful regard for the majesty of kings, especially when the sovereign considers himself a slave of the threshold of Ali ibn Abi Talib, and when he has the high privilege of being called the friend of Imam Hussein.

The King:

Lift up your head, amn, for though I am called a king, yet, among those who venerate Ali ibn Abi Talib, I am, as it were, a dog of the street; though I be like Kai Khusrau as regards power, still I am but a servant and no more. Tell me, what news do you have about Hussein the king of kings (Persian: **Shahanshah**)? Declare to us if you possess any information with regard to his companions or others.

(5140)

The Messenger:

Know, o sovereign of Persia, that Moses has ascended to the summit of Mount Sinai, that the Antichrist

(**Masih al-Dajjal**, literally "False Christ", or simply "**Dajjal**")

has died, and that Mahdi, the true prince of the world, has appeared; that is to say, Mu'awiyah, (founder of the Ummayya dynasty), the Caliph of Syria, has departed from this world, and Hussein the king of the age has succeeded to his crown and throne. He took a great army with him and went to Iraq with pomp and glory and much display. This letter, o Amir, is from Hussein the king of the world, and this one is from the great lady, your sister, his queen.

The Prince (kissing the letter):

When that royal personage set out for Iraq, whom did he take with him, and how great was his army? Which of the ladies of the family accompanied him? Which were left behind in Medina?

The Messenger:

Know, o king that when Hussein started for Iraq he had about thirty-thousand men with him, over whom, after he had summoned all and was ready to depart, he appointed Ali Akbar, his son, to be commander-in-chief, consignin, at the same time, the flag and the drum of war to Abbas, his own brother. He also took Kasim, his nephew, with him, intending to marry him to Fatima his daughter as soon as he had been settled on the throne of the government of Iraq. In a word, he was accompanied to Karbala by all his family except his youngest daughter, who alone, on account of ill health, was left behind in Medina.

(5141)

The King (opening the letter and reading it):

Hussein the king of Medina, has, with his gen scattering pen, written to me asking me to take with me Persian troops, and set out to assist him whom Gabriel glories to serve. He says that I must hasten to his defence, because Yezid son of Mu'awiyah) the cursed wretch, is a formidable enemy, and that it is a good opportunity for me to prove my friendship.

The Minister:

Take off the seal of the second letter and read it; let us know what the lady of ladies writes.

The King (opening the second letter):

Thus does my sister write in this letter, saying, "Dear brother, there is a great disturbance around us. Hussein is, as it were, in a whirlpool; come to Karbala and save me, o brother. I fear, God forbid, lest I should be a prisoner again, a captive in the hands of some cruel Arab. God has studded my crown with two precious jewels, one is named Ali Akbar and the other Ali Asghar."

The Messenger:

O prince, the lady of ladies has delivered to me a verbal message also, which says thus: "O brother, come, for the wind has swept the way of the desert. Hasten and set out without making any excuse whatever; come to Karbala for the sake of dear Ali Akbar."

The King (mounting):

O Persian champions, o Kayanian heroes, all of your gird up your loins; let the Kayanian flag show forth, let the standard be set on high. Give lusty shouts, o warriors, for the blood of Siyavush is bubbling. Set out all of you, that we may be able to give assistance to Hussein before it is too late.

(5142)

Shahrbanu (riding out from Karbala):

O Lord, I have strayed in this wilderness that appears to be boundless. O my irremediable pain in the desert where I wander! I had two precious gems, both of which I lost in Karbala, and now I am wandering in this plain trying to find them. The throat of my suckling Ali Asghar became a mark for an arrow. As long as I am alive, I must not associate with any human being. I am left alone in the desert, there is nobody to assist me in my trouble.

Fatima, the bride (in Medina):

Did you not promise, o Ali Akbar, to come back and take me? Dear brother, my eyes are turned white from long expectation for you. O Ali Akbar, be sure that your grief will soon cause me to die. O my elegant bodied brother, let me not be afflicted any longer by separation from you.

Shahrbanu (tying Zu'l Jamah to a tree, and sitting there to rest)

O Lord, the tediousness of the road has made my soul reach the tips of my lips. Where is a resting place for this sufferer of pain and sorrow, o Lord? The weather is so overpowering, that the heat well nigh burns up my heart, and I know no other water but the tears that flow down my cheeks. I see the dark aspect of some trees in this desert, let me sit under one of them and be somewhat refreshed and sheltered from the rays of the sun.

Fatima (in Medina):

Oh! Had my brother been with me today, I would have been as cheerful as one that wears a head dress of gold. I would never be heard to groan. Oh, if the shade of an umbrella would but fall on my head!

(5143)

Shahrbanu:

Alas! Poor Fatima was not in Karbala to behold the delicate throat of Ali Asghar cut to pieces! Alas! Woe be to me! I was not able to carry away with me the pretty cradle of Ali Asghar.

Fatima:

How happy Sakina must be in beholding now the rosy cheeks of Ali Asghar, whose mother must certainly have spread a gold cloth on his cradle in that country!

Shahrbanu:

My son, my son, my youthful son is gone from me! Oh, may never a woman be deprived of her children at any time! The revolutions of the heavens have left two scars on my heart. Only they who have suffered in like manner can know what I feel.

Malik Kazi:

The sound of a doleful noise strikes my ear now and then; the sad voice, o friends, well nigh deprives me of my senses. There is nobody to be seen wherever I may look. Why is the author of this groan invisible from my view? O Persian army, listen all of you, for this sad voice has terribly upset me.

Shahrbanu:

I will no more smell flowers after my pretty blossoms are gone from me. Yes, after the death of Ali Akbar my son, I will have nothing to do with roses. Since my dear ones are dead, I will spend all my life in this mountain of Ray. I will not associate with anyone, nor see a human face.

(5144)

Malik Kazi (turning his horse aside):

I hear the voice of one that sings elegies; it resembles the groan of one deprived of her child. Wherever I turn, I hear a voice of weeping, lamentation and sighing; but it is very strange, the author of the sound is quite invisible.

Shahrbanu:

The death of my faithful companion has made my heart bleed, and caused the petals of my rose to be scattered on the ground. I have become like a bird stripped of its wings and feathers. I saw the soft body of Hussein scorched in the sun. I will therefore leave the shade of the tree, and sit myself in the hot glare.

The King:

There is no God but God! I wonder what this phenomenon means! Is that a spirit that moans, or a fairy who thus laments? The voice is clearly heard, but the owner of it is not to be seen either in the earth or in the air. Bring me my telescope, perhaps by that instrument I shall be enabled to find outt whence this sad voice proceeds.

(5145)

The Vizir (bringing the telescope):

O great prince of the kingdom of Persia, look through the telescope on all sides, and see who is the person who is weeping, and whence is this great moaning and lamentation that we hear.
Shahrbanu:

After the death of blooming youths no rose or flower must grow; and if they should spring up, none must be so unfeeling as to smell their scent. After my royal husband's dethronement, and his princes' fall, I must always wear black garments. Oh! The death of Ali Akbar has rendered me quite insensible. Certainly the blood of Siyavush must begin to boil up. My famous lion like Abbas died after all, and my Isfandiyar

(character from the Shah Namah of Firdausi, loyal companion of Rustam)

was made blind by an arrow, Since my fortune is reversed, I will go all the days of my life from one wilderness to another, from one plain to a similar one.

The King (looking through the telescope):

O Vizir, I am looking at that tree yonder, Fix your eyes, there is some black object sitting down there. It looks like a woman who has scratched her face, and is continually making a noise, Her dress is jet black like the ringlets of Ali Akbar.

The Vizir (looking in the same direction):

She is a tall lady, but her stature is somewhat bent, perhaps through adversities. She is a ravisher of hearts, though she seems to have lost her own.

The King:

She mourns like a nightingale ('bulbul' in Persian). She is a drooping rose ('gul' in Persian); her clothes are all rent. I think that some dear one belonging to her must have died,

(5146)

The Minister:

Her countenance seems familiar to me. In size and stature she resembles the Lady of Ladies.

The King:

She seems to be in confusion like Ali Asghar's disheveled locks. She looks like a woman who has lost the beloved object of her heart.

The Minister:

I cannot precisely tell who is the sweet natured lady, but I know that I must have seen her often.

The King:

She is groaning sadly, and lays her head on her knee. You may be sure that she has lost some precious gem. Keep the army here waiting for me, while I turn and ride where the woman is sitting, and see who she can be.

Shahrbanu (rising from her place in alarm):

Alas! Woe is me! I have become a prisoner; caught in the snare of affliction. The troops of Karbala have pursued me even here. I was bereaved of my sons by the cruel son of Sa'd, and being destitute, I took refuge in mountains and plains. I do not know what these troops want with me, or why they do not withdraw their hands from this weak woman.

The King:

My heart is distressed within me by reason of these sad sighs and groans. This thrilling voice has put me in a great consternation. The mournful strain of this woman has removed rest from my breast. May God make this transaction end in good!

(5147)

Shahrbanu (in great agitation):

There is the warlike army set in array against me. I cannot fight with them not oppose them, neither can I run away. O spheres, do not scar my heart again; do not let the daughter of Parviz (Khusrau Parviz, a Sassanian emperor, protagonist of the romance Khusrau and Shirin by Nizami of Ganja) be made a captive by the Arabs a second time. O zephyr, turn to Karbala, for God's sake, and inform dear noble Ali Asghar, saying, "Do not sleep, for your mother is made a captive; you, being the general of the army of Hussein, must arise and release her." I spring from the noblest family in Persia; do not allow that the honorable of the land should be of no reputation.

The King:

There is no power nor strength but in God! Who are you, o woman? And why do you lament so mournfully? Who has thus embittered your life, and rendered you so distracted in mind?

Shahrbanu:

Go farther, o young man; for God's sake do not approach me! Do not let my day be turned into dark night. Do not come near, but fear my groans and complaints, for henceforth I detest the society of all human beings.

The King:

You are grieving in this valley apart from all; certainly you are not of the children of Adam, nor can you be a human being. You must be either an angel, or one of the nymphs of Paradise; but, in either case, I wonder why you should be in this trouble.

(5148)

Shahrbanu (to Malik Kazi):

Do not approach, for God's sake! But rather move farther away. I am not an angel, nor am I a nymph of Paradise. I am a sorrowful creature bereaved of my sons. I am an exile far removed from my home.

Malik Kazi:

Why do you not mention your name, o lady? I am assured now that you are not a nymph; but may you not be a fairy (Persian: **Peri**). Tell me plainly, o moonfaced matron, owing to whose death you you are rending your garments?

Shahrbanu:

Do not ask me, o young mn, for whom I am complaioning. I am not a fairy, but am descended from them. Let me know what you want with the fairies or why you are concerned with them? Tell me first, for God's sake, who are you, and why you have come here.

Malik Kazi:

You must know that I am the son of Yazdigird, King of Persia, and am leading my army to Karbala. I intend to render some service to the Sultan of Karbala. Hussein's wife, Ali Akbar's mother, has written me a letter asking me to set up my canopy as soon as possible at Karbala; for she says that she intends to seat Ali Akbar her son on the connubial throne in that valley.

Shahrbanu:

Alas! The rose has died ere the nightingale has reached the garden. Now it is time to wail and rend one's garments. Woe is me! I have disheveled my hair, and cut my locls from grief. Woe is me! That of which I was afraid has come upon me.

(5149)

The Prince:

Who are you, o woman dressed in black? And why, as soon as you heard my name, did you commence your lamentable cry?

Shahrbanu:

Oh! How is it that you do not recognize me? May the dust of the world be upon my head! O brother, I am Shahrbanu your sister. Behold her wandering in the desert. My fortune has gone, brother; my luck is reversed.

The Prince:

Why do you talk thusly, o woman? I shall never believe you to be my sister. Yes, it is impossible that you should be my sister; I cannot credit this story at all.

Shahrbanu:

If you cannot, o brother, believe my story, I have with me the musky hair of Ali Akbar as a token. Here are his curling locks, as well as Kasim's ringlets, and Ali Asghar's hair. See also the blood stained shirt of my beloved husband Hussein.

The Prince:

For whose sake, o sister, are you mourning so sadly? And why are you wandering distractedly in this wilderness? Where is Hussein? Where has the crown of your head fallen? To whose care have you delivered your daughters and sons? Where is Ali Akbar? What has become of your prince Asghar? Where are your bracelets, anklets and other gold ornaments?

(5150)

Shahrbanu:

Know that Heaven has pulled down my house; my Ali Akbar was killed thirsty on the edge of the water; my Ali Asghar sucked milk from the point of an arrow; my daughter was made captive by the son of Sa'd, and all my royal furniture and chattels were pillaged by the enemy. In short, my royal diadem has fallen, o brother, from my head.

The Prince (beating on his head):

Alas! Do you see what Heaven has done? How a veil of clouds has dimmed the bright disc of our moon? The spheres have cast me down from a great height. The Kayanian throne is brought very low; the world has lost its real sovereign; the crown has fallen from our heads. O king of high pedigree, why did you leave Medina for Iraq and Arabia? You should at once have come from Medina to Persia, o king of religion, and sat here on the throne of Jamshid to reign forever.

Shahrbanu:

You were not there to see how Ali Akbar was submerged in waves of blood. You were not present to observe how the palm of my youthful son cast its fruits in the battle field.

Malik Kazi:

I do not wish to retain the kingdom of Ray any more, nor will I have the Kayanian crown henceforth on my head, for the beloved of God is lying down in the dust and gore. Alas! How have I come here, wading in waves of blood up to my breast.

Shahrbanu:

You were not there, o beloved brother, to see how Abbas of lofty stature died. They thrust the point of the arrow into his eye, in the manner that they did in former times to the brave Isfandiyar.

(5151)

The Prince:

I am much grieved and distressed to hear this story; but what shall I do? A stone has already struck on my glass. Oh that the grave would soon become my throne! For my Abbas has been blinded by an arrow. The kingdom of Persia is good for nothing after the eye of Isfandiyar has been deprived of sight with a cruel shaft.

Shahrbanu:

O brother, you were not there to behold how they cruelly pierced the throat of little Ali Asghar with the points of their arrows. My poor child, owing to the pain he had in his throat, could not suck milk at the breast, but groaned and groaned until he died.

Malik Kazi:

What shall I do, o avenging Lord and Judge? May Ali Asghar has been innocently killed. Oh! The elegant cypresses have all been felled! Faridun (another king of Persia, character of the Shah Namah) has fallen down from his stately throne. Tell me, o sister, how did you come here to this valley unnoticed by the ignoble enemy?

Shahrbanu:

The Imam of the empire of faith told me that when I should see Zu'l Janah, his horse, come back from the field of battle, that I must mount on the saddle, and at once leave Karbala. He told me that I must not stay there, lest I should become a captive among the Arabs; nor must I seek enjoyment in this world after his death. So I rode Hussein's horse, and nobody saw me up to the time I met you.

(5152)

The Prince:

Where did you carry your lord, o Zu'l Janah? Why did you not bring him back after you took him to the battle field? The hour when the gold belted king fell to the ground, when the throne of God tumbled to the earth, why did you not trample the enemy under foot with your hooves? How can you bear the reproach of men, and not be ashamed?

The Vizir:

Why are you weeping, o wise king? Why does your majesty's face grow red with rage? Why is your crown, which is ornamented with jewels, full of dust? Why is your coat, which is studded with precious stones, torn into pieces?

The Prince:

Oh! Know that the throne is vacated, and he who sheds light on the throne is gone. Imam Hussein the son of Ali ibn Abi Talib the chosen has been killed, and his companions have all been smeared with dust and blood. Deplore you all, and sigh with lamentations for him, putting on black garments at the same time, to show your sorrow at his death.

Shahrbanu:

O my brother, go with all your troops and regiments, and pursue that cruel party until you overtake them. Fight against them hard, and snatch from them at least the poor bride, my afflicted daughter, the spouse of Kasim.

The Prince:

Ride your horses, o men of valor, and endeavor to fight zealously. Let us intercept Shimr on his way to Syria, and lay an ambush for him. Let us raise a disturbance like that of the Day of Resurrection, both with flying arrows and sharp swords.

(5153)

The Vizir (to the army):

Mount your horses, o Persian troops, and march forth eagerly to the field of battle. Gird up your loins for war, and hasten to intercept the people of Kufa on their retreat.

Zainab (on the back of a camel):

Days have darkly passed on, and behold, the night is at hand. Zainab, the tree of mourning, the essence of sorrow, is arriving at a village. O women of the country, we are the posterity of the king of the righteous, and are expatriated from our own land, and made strangers here.

Umm Kulsum:

O women, Umm Kulsum is coming as a captive; whoever wishes to hear sighs and cries, let her receive her in her house. O women, they have tied our arms with our hair, and our limbs are galled with cruel cords, o friends.

Zainab:

Heaven has prepared for me distress and woe; is this the entertainment after which my heart sought? Though I have no litter now, still, o camel driver, do not drive the camel so fast; but tell me, what has become of Zainab's litter, and her companions and helpers?

The Spouse of Kasim:

I have lost my beloved husband, be witnesses, o friends; I am the spouse of Kasim, sing merrily at the feast. No, sing me some mournful dirge, while I sorrow for my husband; for jovial songs and convivial mirth belong to nuptial feasts.

(5154)

Sakina:

Every woman in her time leads a more or less happy life; and if she has no father, she may rejoice that she is not without a brother. But is ever a girl were, like me, to be a witness of the death of her brother, you would soon discover what kind of existence she would spend.

A Messenger:

Know, o son of Sa'd, commander of the army of infidels, that numerous troops are pursuing you from the country of Persia, with the design of delivering the captives from their sad confinement, and taking vengeance in retaliation for the blood of Hussein. Let Shimr march about the road and see what passes, and draw up the troops in battle array.

The Son of Sa'd:

What do I care about the vast number of the enemy's army? Still, you had better carry the captive women to the foot of the mountain. Put the lines in order; and, o Shimr, you had better look about the road. Today I will eradicate the posterity of the Persians from the earth. I will set fire to the camp of the Kayanians, that the Persians should no longer be impudent to the Arabs.

Shimr (ascending to a height and looking around):

O general, a great army, as numerous as ants and snakes, is coming towards us, bearing Kayanian standards. Know that though we are not able to stand before them in war, yet we must try not to display any symptoms of alarm in the matter.

(5155)

Malik Kazi (arriving with drums and flags):

O men of valor, expert in use of daggers, set your lines in order for battle; o valiant and brave soldiers, fasten your belts and fight for the honor of the Kayanian crown. Today I intend to make a great overthorough with the edge of the sword; such that it will seem as though it were the Day of Resurrection. I am not afraid of the army of the enemy; go on beating drums, o warriors.

Ibn Sa'd (to his army):

O warlike champions and heroes, do not alarm yourselves owing to this confused noise, Persia will not be able to stand against us, for we are like fire, and they as wax. We shall have no cause to regret this battle; let us fight on, and beat the drums with all our might.

Malik Kazi:

Come forward, you cursed son of Sa'd, do not use these vaunting expressions any more. I am of the seed of Bahman (a hero of the Shah Namah), and a prince of the Kayanian dynasty; come and combat with me, you empty pated coxcomb. I am an elephant, or a mighty lion! I am the offspring of King Bahram Gur (another hero of the Shah Namah). Leave your line and come out for a minuet, that I may throw you headlong to the ground.

Ibn Sa'd:

You are proud of your strength, o young man. Why do you boast of the great pomp of the Kayanians, not knowing that I am one who, when I hoist my flag, cast the crown of Jamshid to the ground? Your head is filled with the pride of youth, forgetting how, a little while ago, your kingdom of Persia was sacked by the Arabs who carried off the crown and ring of Persia, leading the women into captivity, and pulling down the diadem from the crown of the head of your Jamshid.

(5156)

Malik Kazi:

You have severed from the body the head of a youth, the standard of whose father overshadowed the sacred places among you. In so doing, all of you, now, deserve wrath and condemnation. The time when the Arabs can reproach the Persians has gone away.

Ibn Sa'd:

Know, o young man, that I have no dread of you at all, yet it is not necessary that you should talk so foolishly or act wantonly. You must make no mention of war; declare to me what is your real object in this pursuit?

Malik Kazi:

Let it be known to you that if you wish that no blood should be shed, you must deliver to me all the female captives of Hussein's family, that we may take the daughters of Ali to Persia, and not allow the house of God's Prophet to go to ruin.

Ibn Sa'd:

I shall never release those whom I have kept in the bonds of sorrow; these women are Arab and not Persian captives. I will never give the daughters of the Prince of Arabia to the Persians. If this is your request, it cannot be granted.

Malik Kazi:

You have deviated from the right way, o base son of Sa'd, seeing that the wife of Kasim the bridegroom is from our family. She is the daughter of Shahrbanu, whose father was our Parviz. My sister, the lady of ladies, is shedding tears of blood for her dear daughter.

(5157)

Ibn Sa'd:

Very well, I shall release Fatima from her bonds for your sake, to make you glad and cheerful. O my friends, let Fatima be set free from her chains. I have a thousand captives, never mind if by one the number be diminished.

Sakina (to Zainab):

Dear aunt, if they are going to release my sister from her bonds, why does no one care about me? He who put the heavy chain on the neck of both of us, why does he not attempt to make us two free at the same time?

Zainab:

Dear Sakina, I cannot tell why, but I know that the noose must remain around your neck, while your sister Fatima is to be set free.

Sakina:

I see, dear aunt, that I have none to care for me, that my luck is lying hidden in the corner of a cage. Surely one who becomes destitute is despicable too, and must bear a perpetual chain of misery around the neck.

Fatima (to Zainab):

Come, dear aunt, let us sit a while together affectionately, for hereafter we shall not see one another again. After my father met his death, dear aunt, you have been much troubled about me. I shall never forget your kindness so long as I live. If I have used any improper word that has wounded your feelings, I beg of you to efface the effect from your heart. Come, let me kiss your feet, and apologise for all my faults.

(5158)

Zainab:

No word of yours has left a sad effect on my heart, dear niece; on the contrary, I am ashamed how little I have been able to do for you. I am sorry, after the death of my brother, that I had so few opportunities of performing some service for his poor orphans. I did not wipe off the dust from your moon like faces, nor had I time to comb your black hair.

The Bride (to Umm Kulsum):

Come, afflicted Umm Kulsum, my aunt! Come, you who has seen the death of six brothers! Come, let me kiss your sacred feet; see how very sorry I feel on leaving you, aunt.

Umm Kulsum:

Come, let me kiss your face, my disappointed bride; you are going to Ray while I am led to Syria. Come, o my delicate blossom, unhappily you have withered; your fortune being reversed, you have suddenly become a widow.

Zainab:

O you sorrowful, newly married spouse, now that you are going away, tell your mother Shahrbanu, in my name, saying, "Sister, before taking up the remains of your husband, you went away, leaving me in trouble and captivity."

Malik Kazi (to Fatima):

Do not fling dust on your head, o mourning bride, come and ride the horse of your maternal uncle. Beat no more upon your head, nor sigh so sadly. I will soon take you to your mother, the lady of ladies.

(5159)

Zainab:

O ladies, stop your wailings, and come along with me; bring Hussein's daughter on her way; come, all of you.

Fatima, the Bride:

Adieu, Sakina; forgive me sister.

Sakina:

God be with you, melancholy sister.

Fatima the Bride:

I am going, dear Sakina, but I have no heart. I am sorry that I am obliged to leave you.

Sakina:

You are going away from me, sister, but there is something that I must tell you before you go. I do not know whether you are aware of it or not. Come, and see how my throat and neck are sore because of rough rope.

Fatima:

Yes, dearm you wear a rope instead of a necklace; I see, dear Sakina, that your neck is quite sore from the cord. Come, let me kiss the rose of your face, since I cannot afford to get you any ointment for your neck.

Fatima the Bride (riding away):

Adieu to all of you; I have escaped from among you. Give my compliments to Ali Akbar.

(5160)

Zainab:

*When you arrive at Ray, o sweet natured damsel,
call to mind the wretched captives that you have left
behind.(105)*

(5161)

SCENE XXIX

DESPATCH OF HUSSEIN'S FAMILY AS CAPTIVES TO SYRIA.

Zain al-Abidin:

I am Zain al-Abidin, o God! I have no helper, o my Lord! I am one acquainted with grief. Oh! Why is this cruelty done to us?

Zainab:

I am the helpless Zainab wandering from home, having no remedy for my pains; oh, spare us this cruelty!

Sakina:

We sorrowful children have become destitute of all help, now that the good Hussein is gone. Oh, we are undone!

Zain al-Abidin:

These accursed ones who lead us thus into this wilderness, resemble those who carry the water of life to the regions of darkness. They are taking me to Syria as a prisoner. My body is feverish, my constitution delicate, and my condition altogether wretched.

Sakina:

Sakina, o father, is subject to an incurable disease; she is consumed with lamentation and moaning. Now that you are gone, what can a fatherless child like me do, who, since the deaths of Ali Akbar and Ali Asghar, has had to submit to an irreligious fellow such as Shimr, the treacherous wretch?

(5162)

Umm Kulsum:

Where is poor Abbas, that he may relieve us destitute women, that he may in this calamity attend to us helpless creatures? Oh! Shimr's cruelty has not let any companion remain for us to behold.

Sakina:

O father behold Sakina in the hands of the people of Kufa; have a regard for this sore hearted, ailing orphan of yours! O my father, pity me, and, by way of assistance, look upon this homeless miserable wanderer.

Zainab:

O Hussein, they are carrying Zainab your sister naked on a she camel; they are bearing us, the women, by way of the wilderness! O zephyr, say to the people of Sheba, they are carrying me like Bilqis (Queen of Sheba), away from Solomon.

Umar ibn Sa'd:

O commander of this army, I say to you, especially to you, o irreligious Khauli, and to you, o black hearted Shimr, my advice is that we must endeavor to reach the yellow hill (Sanjar, near Mosul), that we may put up there for the night, and rest from the fatigues of our journey. At the dawn of the day we shall start for Syria.

Shimr (addressing the army):

Listen to me, o defenders of the cause of Yezid, thus has Ibn Sa'd commanded. You must carry Ali ibn Abi Talib's family, no matter how great the trouble and pain, to the yellow hill (Sanjar), that being the station for the night.

(5163)

Khauli:

I wonder where is the commander of the army?
Where is he who is ruined in both worlds, the ill
starred Shimr? Where can I find him, o my friends?
Where is that enemy of God and adversary of the
Prophet?

Shimr:

O companions, I see a horseman coming; the poor
young is everywhere searching for Shimr. What can be
his objective, or why should he want me? I must ask
him, that I may be acquainted with the matter.

Khauli:

Know, o Shimr, you armor clad warrior, that a
countless army, all Shi'as and friends of Ali ibn Abi
Talib, is lying in wait for you to intercept you on
the way and take these desolate women from you.

Shimr:

I am speaking to you, o chief of this perfidious
army, commander of our troops, the intrepid Ibn Sa'd.
Be it known to you, o general, that a band of Arabs is
pursuing us, with haste indescribable, in order to
overtake us, and, if possible, to rescue from our
hands the prisoners belonging to the family of
Muhammad the Prophet.

Ibn Sa'd:

Carry the family of Ali ibn Abi Talib, with
great hatred by that trackless road which is full of
thorns and briars; there is a byeway there filled with
sharp prickles, the piercing points of which will turn
the day of the captives into dark night. You must
endeavor to prevent them from moaning aloud; yes, even
the fatherless band and the mournful women must be
prohibited from lamenting.

(5164)

Shimr:

I shall carry away these miserable prisoners and lead them by a trackless road in this wilderness. I shall drag Zain al-Abidin over thorny paths, so that the poor delicate youth's feet may be hurt with scratches and wounds.

Sukina:

The caravan, o aunt, having set its face to the city of Canaan, I wonder why my Joseph hangs down his head on his bosom. My sun, I want Hussein! I want Hussein! Tell me, I beg you, where is he? I have become blind in my two eyes, tell me where has the light of the world gone? You, o thousand noted nightingale, brought Hussein to Karbala. You must tell me now where have you sent him.

Zainab:

O Sakina, you distressed and wretched orphan, that, owing to the oppression of the malignant party, rides on a naked camel, should we return alive once more to Karbala, I will put your father's hand in yours, poor sorrowful niece.

Sakina:

Flowers and thorns are alike to me, aunt, so long as I want my pretty rose. My heart is gone from me; where is the restorer of it, o my aunt? I was always tenderly caressed in the bosom of my father; my day is now turned into night by his absence. Oh! Tell me, where has the candle of my banquet gone?

Zainab:

O rose (Persian: 'gul') of the garden (Persian: 'gulistan', 'rose garden') of Hussein, do not make me unhappy; dear thing, do not grievously hurt me in this thorny place. Your pain cannot be remedied in this wilderness, dear niece, the cure for your disease is in Karbala, you need not mourn here, poor thing.

(5165)

Sakina:

Why, then, did you not leave me in Karbala, o aunt? Notwithstanding all my pain, it is strange why you have not let me remain where I could find medicine. Why have you removed me from my father? Why am I taken away from Karbala?

Zainab:

When did I separate you from the society of your friends, dear niece? I have not brought you to this wilderness, my love. At what time did I cause you to leave the lap of your father? I do not remember having removed you from your relations.

Sakina:

Who, then, has brought us to this state of desolation, with so much ignominy? Who has removed me from the presence of my dear father? What fowler has snatched me away from my rose and garden? What enemy has rendered me so miserable in this thorny wilderness?

Zainab:

Do not ask me this question any more, my lovely niece; ask it of Khaulī and the ill-starred Shimr. Be quiet, o my melodious nightingale, for a while; have pity on yourself and on my weeping eyes.

Shimr:

Make no noise, o Zainab, for if you utter the least sound, I shall surely cut your head off with this sharp dagger, as in the case of your son. By the order of the accursed, reckless son of Sa'd, I will turn your back black with this whip. (Beats Zainab.)

(5166)

Zainab:

May the Lord ruin your house for this your injustice! Do not whip me so severely and cruelly. I shall remain quiet, though I have a thousand things to say. I shall keep silence, and will never groan again.

Shimr:

I am a guard over you in the midst of this caravan, and will not let you cry aloud, or make the least noise. You know very well what a fury I am; I shall surely strike your souls with the lightning of my temper.

Sakina:

Woe is me for the many thorns that have pricked my feet! Behold! They are bleeding from every vein. The hand of my power has become motionless, and the fetters gall my delicate legs.

Shimr:

O sweet rose (**gul**) of Hussein's meadow, you poor orphan, put an end to your lamentation and weeping, for should my ears catch the voice of your mourning, I shall surely cut off your head with this my glittering sword. No, I will root out your tongue in a most cruel manner if I hear you lamenting and pouring forth notes like a nightingale (**bulbul**).

Sakina:

Help me, aunt! I am greatly afraid of this treacherous infidel. I am, o aunt, in dread of this wicked chief. This tyrant will kill me at length; pity my condition, and kindly remedy my inward vexations and pain.

(5167)

Zainab:

Have regard for the burning sighs of the child, o tyrant! Have compassion, and grant the heart wished request of this poor creature. She is a little girl without any friend or supporter in her adversity; smite no more on her dear face with such cruel slaps.

Shimr:

O Zainab, do not complain of the child's hard treatment, for the molestation of the little girl is a good omen to me. I will continually trouble this distressed child, ever making her pains more grievous than before.

Sakina:

I beseech you, o tyrannical Shimr, not to hurt this poor maid so much. Do not ill use us, lest your own dear ones be in return similarly treated by some malicious party.

Shimr:

Your lamentation and weeping are of no avail to you, child. What do you gain by this noise and uproar? Cease to weep for the absence of your father and companions, otherwise I will cut your head off in an ignominious manner.

Sakina:

Dear father Hussein, where are you? Do you not see me in this misery? O the cruelty of Shimr, beloved father! O the hardships and anguish of we poor orphans!

Shimr:

Do not talk, o disheveled haired girl; do not complain to your father of my cruelty, or I will make your body blue with this whip.

(5168)

Sakina:

Cease for a moment this injustice of yours, o tyrant! Endeavor to make the heart of these unfortunate wretches to rejoice for a while. Grant this sad hearted, fatherless child permission to weep over her misery; let this wing tied bird be set at liberty from the cage of wretchedness.

Shimr:

From where have you gotten so many trickes, o Sakina? What enmity is this that you bear towards your own soul? A thousand times I have told you, o orphan prisoner, not to groan for the absence of your father, or lament that he is gone. I will now at once sever this head of yours from your body in a most cruel manner, for there is a proverb that "a severed head has no voice."

Sakima:

If you have in view to murder me, I beg of you give up the intention, you impudent fellow. What wrong have I committed besides mourning for my father? What else can I do if I do not rend my garments?

Shimr:

Do you again make a noise, you miserable wretch? I must now make you taste some new pains, and acquaint you with fresh sorrows. I shall break your head with this stick in a shameful manner, and cause you to forget your weeping and lamentation.

Sakina:

Do not hurt me, you merciless fellow, for I will no more speak. Do not put me in chains of cruelty by reason of my fault in speaking. See how the thorns have piteously wounded my feet in this wilderness! Let this ignominy and shame, o tyrant, be sufficient for you.

(5169)

Shimr:

Come, it is time to bring a sudden autumn on your spring. Come, for death is the most suitable thing for you. You being like Joseph, I will, as it were a wolf, tear you to pieces; come near. I know to where I must carry you.

Sakina:

How happy is the girl who always sees the face of her father, who lays her head, now on his shoulder, now on his bosom! Since you intend, o Shimr, to kill me, please do it here, that Zainab my aunt may be able to have my body buried.

Shimr:

I do not intend to kill you, but to carry you to a far place that Zainab may not be able to see a trace of you, or even hear your name. I shall take you by this trackless path into the wilderness, and cast you somewhere from where you cannot find your way to Zainab at all.

Zainab:

My Sakina has ceased her groans, and become silent. I am sure that she has fainted, wherever she is. O Sakina, you nightingale of my soul, why are you silent? Where have you fallen? Are you in a swoon, my love?

Khauli (bearing Hussein's head on a spear):

O Shimr, behold how the head of this great personage is fixed in its place like the point of a compass! I cannot understand this strange occurrence at all, for in whatsoever direction I pull my head, it is motionless.

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Shimr (moving the spear):

My dear friends, I cannot tell you what this head has in view, I only know some wonderful mystery is comprised therein. For behold! It cast a glance, now in one direction, now in another. O son of Sa'd, it is a puzzling thing, a most strange phenomenon, which I observe; for why should this blood stained, severed head refuse to go with us?

Ibn Sa'd:

Your nonsensical speech cannot in any way enter into my understanding, o Shimr. The head, being fixed on the tip of a spear, nothing in the world can prevent it from being carried along with the army wherever they should wish to turn it. Again, why should it disregard the family whose head it has once been? Give me the spear, you chief of the tyrannical army, that the mystery of this blood stained head may be known to me. (The head does not move when shaken.) There is no strength and power but in God! My heart is overwhelmed with horror at this incident. I am amazed at the doings of this dissevered head. What a miraculous thing is manifested in this land by the head of the Sultan of Medina, the King of Karbala! No one on the earth being able to solve this enigma, I must have recourse to the uplifted head itself for the solution. (Turns to the head of Hussein.) O flower of the lap of Zahra, you illustrious chief, the guide of all God's creatures, I beseech you not to suffer that Yezid should come to know of this occurrence. As you are a mine of generosity, I beg you to untie this knot in my heart.

Hussein's Head:

O sister Zainab, Sakina has been stricken in this wilderness; my girl has fallen among thorns, and is in distress. Shimr having thrown her in a dreary place, my pleasant noted nightingale (**bulbul**) is in this way shut out of the garden. I will not move from this spot until my dear child comes; for why should that fatherless orphan remain in such a wilderness?

(5171)

Zainab:

May I be a ransom for your oppressed and sorrowful child! I know nothing as to how Sakina was led away into the wilderness. I beg your pardon, dear brother; forgive Zainab her fault, for I am quite unacquainted with what has befallen that unfortunate child. Mourn on, women, all of you, and rend your garments. Alight all, and cast dust on your heads. Inquire after Hussein's poor daughter, whose absence has thus made his heart restless.

Umm Kulsum:

As my Sakina is neither heaving sighs nor yet moaning in sorrow fro her father, if she is not dead, the poor thinmg must be asleep. O spheres, why should this immense cruelty be done to us? May God bring it to pass that Hussein's orphan is merely asleep.

Zain al-Abidin:

Sakina, my unhappy sister, where are you? And why, poor exile, are you, without cause, separated from us? What has made you silent, so that you neither sigh, mmoan nor cry? O light of my eyes, I wish that I knew where you have fallen, and are to be found.

Zainab:

O companions, what has become of my Hussein's dear girl, for whose absence I am thus lamenting? Set your face, o Umm Kulsum, towards the wilderness, perhaps you will be able to find that weeping damsel.

Umm Kulsum:

O Lord, I do not see that matchless girl. I wonder where my child Sakina has gone!

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Zainab:

O Zain al-Abidin, you must take the other direction, and seek out Hussein's child. As for myself, I will follow this road, and inquire after that helpless creature.

Zain al-Abidin:

O Lord, cause that weeping child to be found by me in this desert. O gracious Being, enable me to see her.

Zainab:

Sakina, dear niece, where can you be? Why, my darling, are you far from Zainab?

Sakina:

Being separated from my beloved companions, I am wandering in this wilderness.

Zainab:

Alas for Zainab's fortune, alas! My day is converted into dark night.

Umm Kulsum:

O sister, much as I looked in this wilderness, I could find no trace of that weeping girl.

Zainab:

O Zain al-Abidin, tell this sorrowful woman if you have any news about Sakina.

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Zain al-Abidin:

No, aunt; much as with this feverish body I searched for the poor girl, I, too, was not fortunate enough to see her.

Zainab:

O, try, try! Make haste to every quarter, perhaps you will find that fatherless child.

Umm Kulsum:

I am sorely vexed in this wilderness, I fear that I shall die without the chance of seeing her, poor thing!

Zainab:

Woe is me! I think that Sakina has died in this desolate abode through the cruelty of the malicious enemy.

Sakina:

Woe is me! I shall die through vexation and anguish of heart. I fear that I shall be at last devoured by ravenous beasts.

Zainab:

Sakina, dear niece, let us not be disturbed any longer because of you.

Sakina:

Where is the poor sad Zainab? Will she not take notice of my miserable condition?

(5174)

Zainab:

Come, o women, all of you, for it is time to make a noise: Sakina, the dear Egyptian captive has been found. Sakina is lying down, hushed altogether into silence. O the cruel brambles that have pricked her feet! Now carry my poor child on your shoulders; I will most tenderly take out the thorns from her lovely feet.

Sakina:

Dear aunt, I desire nothing from the Lord but death now that my father's head is seen on the tip of a spear. It is the arrow of my father's absence that has pierced my heart. As for the thorns that have pricked my feet, I do not feel their painfulness at all.

Zainab:

The thorns that have hurt the soles of your feet seem to pierce my eyes when I behold you, o niece, Arise from your place now, o flower of Hussein's lap, for I desire nothing but your society in this frightful condition of mine.

Sakina:

Please tell me, dear aunt, even me the destitute little orphan, where do these unbelievers intend, by way of injury and hurt, to carry us poor prisoners?

Zainab:

May I be a sacrifice for you, poor sorrowful Sakina! Alas! What shall I say to you, o destitute little orphan? They will carry us, those oppressed by the cruelty of the foul son of Ziyad and the wicked Shimr, to the capital of the kingdom of Yezid, the base wretch!

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Sakina:

Tell me, dear aunt, how long will these heads remain on the tips of the spears of the cruel people of Kufa? How long must I behold the dear head of my father shining like the sun at the tip of a spear? Tell me how long the head of God's elect must thus suffer contempt.

Zainab:

Know that the bleeding head of the martyr king, Hussein, for whose sorrow the sun has uncovered its face, is about to be carried by the base wretch Ibn Sa'd to the accursed Yezid in Syria.

Sakina:

Come, o goodly faced aunt, and let us go to that tyrannical infidel, and entreat that black faced, faithless person to take down the head of my father from the spear, and deliver it for a minute to me, that I may wipe the dust off his sacred face affectionately, and wash off the dust of his locks with the water of my eyes.

Zainab:

Our poor little orphan, let us go to this merciless cur dog, even the wicked Ibn Sa'd. Let us both ask him ectreatingly, that perhaps that evil doer will pity us and comply with our request. (Addressing Umar Ibn Sa'd.) Come, o apostate unbeliever, have mercy on this sore hearted, poor child, and order the wicked Shimr to let the head of the Imam of the age be taken down for a minute, that Sakina, his weeping girl, may, with sighs and cries, wipe off the dust from his sacred face.

Ibn Sa'd:

Know, o sister of Hussein the martyr, that you shall not see his head in your lap any more. In shame, even with the dust and blood sticking to it, your brother's head must be brought to the foot of the throne of Yezid. Therefore, o sister of Hussein the martyr, be no more importunate.

Zainab:

Have some regard for the sighing of this young orphan, o you whose tyranny has been leveled against all the members of this sacred family. What harm will it do to you, o accursed wretch, if, to soothe this miserable orphan, you, even you, the malicious son of Sa'd, permits the girl to wipe off the dust from her father's face?

Sakina:

Come, o irreligious tyrant, pity this destitute, sorrowful orphan. I, the oppressed, have a desire in my heart to put my cheek on my father's cheek, and to wash my dear Hussein's head tenderly with the water of my eyes and the blood of my heart.

Ibn Sa'd:

Know assuredly, o desperate girl, that this is a matter to be accomplished only in your dreams. You shall no more put your lips on your father's cheeks, neither shall you wipe the dust off your father's handsome face.

Shimr:

Your heart touching speech, o poor, fatherless girl, has, by our Lord, burned my merciless heart. Take from me now your father's head, for whose sake you seem to have been drowned in the blood of distress.

Sakina (to the head):

Dear father Hussein, peace be upon you! O light of my two eyes, peace be upon you! Your body lies at Karbala, under the earth while your head is here with me the afflicted. Oh, how great is your affection towards me your child! What sympathy is this, o dear father!

Zainab (to the head):

Peace be upon you, o my dear Hussein! Peace be upon you, o light of my two eyes! O the cruelty of Shimr the accursed one! O the tyranny of that malicious infidel! The evil that he has done your family is beyond the pale of belief.

Sakina:

Arise from your place, o my aunt; behold! My father has come back from his journey. Fetch me some rose water and a comb, that, with a sorrowful heart, I may wash off the dust from his face, and smoothe his hair. If you have no rose water, poor aunt, I shall, instead, sprinkle him with my tears.

Zainab:

Do not mourn so much for your father, my niece Sakina; do not let my heart be inflamed with your fire scattering sobs. For my sake, be somewhat patient, for your lamentation will turn the world upside down.

Ibn Sa'd:

O Shimr, you apostate unbeliever, take that blood stained head from the hands of this girl, for she is creating a disturbance among beasts, birds and angels. She is making Heaven and earth groan by her mourning and sighing.

Shimr:

Give me your father's head, poor Sakina; do not groan so much, you miserable girl. The hearts of all God's creatures are consumed through your crying; all jinns and angels are weeping on your account, o Sakina.(106)

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SCENE XXX.

ARRIVAL OF HUSSEIN'S FAMILY AT DAMASCUS.

Shimr (to Yezid):

Good tidings, o king, I have brought you the descendants of Ali ibn Abi Talib, bound in chains, let it please your majesty to order them to be introduced to your presence. They are fastened with chains, and I shall presently bring them here as slaves for your majesty. Tell me in what way I must lead the family of the thirsty lipped king into your presence after they have entered Damascus. Must I place them with honor behind the curtain of respect, or must I pass them through every bazaar and street, to their shame and disgrace?

Yezid:

Well done, o Shimr, this is fidelity indeed! Such is true loyalty and service done to the household of Sufiyan (father of Mu'awiya, granbfather of Yezid). No subjects have ever so loyally served their king; people may have perfomed good service to their sovereign for the sake of money or worldly honors, but none has ever acted in a true and upright way like yu=ourself. Since you are the most esteemed at my court, I invest you, on that accouont, with this robe of honor, which I bestow on you. We will also honor you by asking you to sit down with us and drink a few glasses of tulip colored wine in our company.

Shimr (having drunk a few cups):

After all the ill usage, hatred and contempt which these prisoners will have to undergo in passing through the bazaars amd streets, let your majesty tell me where these afflicted creatures ought to be lodged.

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Yezid:

Go, and make them pass like other captives, bare headed in the streets and bazaars of Damascus. This being done, lead the holy family of Ali ibn Abi Talib to aruinous place behind the kitchen attached to our palace.

Shimr (to the keepers of the captives):

Thus, o miserable wretched creatures, has Yezid ordered, "Let the family of Hussein enter the city of Damascus."

The Holy Family (entering the city):

Poor unfortunate Zainab, captivity on the one hand and exile on the other.

Zainab (alone):

On the one hand they throw stones at my head, and on the other hand I see Hussein's beard dyed with his blood.

The Holy Family:

Poor unfortunate Zainab, captivity on the one hand and exile on the other.

Zainab:

O you whose head is lifted on the point of a spear before my eyes, see, my hair is full of dust, my brother.

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Zain al-Abidin:

O father, father, you who was sacrificed and stripped of your clothes, you do not know how I am troubled at your loss. I am caught in the hands of a tyrannical nation. I, being unwell, am brought as a captive to the capital of Syria; who will nurse me at Damascus, dear father? If I die while I am under chains and bonds, who, o father, will bury this feverish body of mine in the grave?

Sakina:

O my father, o chief of the mournful troops, o commander without an army or standard bearer, how can it be proper that I, who was brought up tenderly in your lap. Should be led bare headed by the enemy through the bazaars?

Rukayyah:

O father, you who was cruelly made a faithful martyr, behold me a captive in the hands of an unbelieving nation's army. I, the gem that had an appreciative possessor, such as yourself, have none at all in the bazaars of Damascus to care for me. Behold, father, how the women of the city speak reproachfully concerning us from the housetops and the walls.

Umm Kulsum (to Abbas' head):

O brother, beloved of your sister, o standard bearer of a king without an army or troops, my pained heart is bleeding for you, still you do not ask me how I feel. You do not inquire why my stature is bent why the color of my face has faded away? The death of our youths has rendered me old. Yokes and chains have bent my frame. I am in vain beating on my breast, the cry of dear Sakina well nigh kills me.

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Sakina (to Hussein's head):

Behold my tearful eyes, o father, and answer me the question which I put to you. Is it good that I should come after you in a broken litter, stage after stage, and you should not inquire after my condition nor care about my pains and aches? Is this the way that parents treat their beloved children? What religion is this, dear father? What faith is this, that I should be riding on a naked camel while a multitude of strangers are staring at me?

Zainab:

O Sakina, you desolate orphan, I beg you to cry more gently, because if you heave sighs from grief, your father will be put to shame, dear niece.

Shimr:

The wicked Yezid has ordered you to put up in this ruinous place, which is without roof and door.

Imam Zain al-Abidin:

Since, o aunt, we are strangers in this ruinous place, and are destitute and houseless in this city of Damascus, I beg you to chant us such a dirge in tones of exile that ever the nightingales will be tempted to sing around you and join in the harmony.

Zainab:

O impudent people of Damascus, o cruel apathetical men, turn aside for a moment, that, lamenting and weeping, we may seek a private place and form ourselves into a mourning circle.

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Shimr:

Know, o Yezid, that there has arrived an ambassador from Byzantium, in great pomp and glory, at the capital of your empire.

Yezid:

Order all the people of Damascus to hasten to meet the ambassador in question.

The Ambassador (entering):

What embers are seen in my breast again? What fire is visible in my heart? By this playful Damascus, by this false moon, by this flaming sphere, by this distressing earth, I am perplexed, I am afflicted; my mind is made very dull by these four moters, the elements, and by these seven fathersm the heavens. By the dagger of grief Saturn's back is bent, by the sword of sorrow Gemini's pate is cloven in two, By this sad Damascus, by this sweet palace of Shirin

[paramour of Khusrau Parviz, a Sassanian Emperor, character of the Shah Namah and protagonist of the romance Khusrau and Shirin by Nizami of Ganja: a Christian, there are several theories as to her nationality; Greek, Armenian, Georgian or Kurdish. As many Kurds were Christians at the time of Khusrau Parviz, I am inclined to think the Shirin was Kurdish. **Shirin** is most definitely an Iranian name, whether Persian or Kurdish; there is nothing even remotely neither Greek, nor Armenian nor Georgian about the name **Shirin**, and the place name **Qasr-i-Shirin**, i.e., 'Castle of Shirin' is definitely in **Kurdistan**, quite far from Armenia, Georgia or what was at that time Greek-speaking

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Byzantine territory. But this is a large topic, too large to deal with adequately here],

has the voice of mirth reached the region of the Pleiades. Curling hair, ornamented legs, painted eyes! O the damsels of Syria! I had heard of Damascus that, from its very dust, one can smell the perfume of delight. But alas, alas! Woe is me. How have the poor things come to be bound up with chains and fetters? This lady deserves a place in Paradise; as regards the other, Eve should be but a handmaid in her apartment. With respect to these two pretty girls, whose rosy cheeks have turned pale and dark from the scorching rays of an eastern sun, I wonder why the enemy has tied their locks together in such an unkind manner.

Sakina:

Where are you, o king of Medina, do you not see how the foreigners come and look at yur daughter Sakina?

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The Ambassador:

Woe to that unjust and cruel executioner who brought to the earth such honorable chiefs. Heaven has

leveled to the ground so many pretty sugar canes and elegant date trees. This young head which, on the tip of the spear, seems to be successively drinking the health of these two maidens, and smacking his ruby like lips, must, no doubt, be a brother to these two girls, the poor delicate creatures. From the moving glance of this other head, I am quite sure that he is in love with this moon faced damsel. This must be a bride and that a bridegroom. As for this luminous head which, from one end to the other, appears like a full moon in the highest horizon, it seems to be ashamed before these children; because, I think, he has not been able to get them some water to drink. This brilliant starm with fading body, that smiles with affection, before whose hair and face the sun and moon are but dim and pale, seems to be that monarch in whose glorious court kings appear as beggars; even this holy personage the flame of the burning bush has made fall in a swoon in valley of Sinai, as did moses. This little head which, through the oppression of the unbelievers, is deprived of the breast of its mother forever, is evidently the child of that other head, for there are many tokens of resemblance between the two. O holy and living God, you sole creator of all things, reveal the secret to me!

Yezid:

Welcome, o ambassador of the Empire of Byzantium, your various presents are all accepted by us. Come and sit down on our throne studded with precious stones, and see the whole glory, dignity and magnificence of my majesty.

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Zainab:

Give ear, o Heaven, to the vexations of Zainab!
Everything seemingly easy has become a difficulty for

this distressed creature. O Heaven, you have for a long time pursued us day and night and now at length you make Zainab dwell in a ruinous place. O Heaven, you have pulled her chains from Medina to Mecca, and thence to Kufa, Egypt and Aleppo. Why do you approve, o Heaven, that Christians and infidels should have the audacity to sit on a throne in front of Zainab?

Yezid:

Let one of the slaves or door keepers go to that ruinous place where the family of the Prophet lingers, and say that I wish all the heads brought here; then I will seat the fatherless ones before me on one side, that I may observe them.

Shimr:

I say to you, o sore hearted family, the ill starred Yezid has summoned you to his presence.

Zainab:

What has Zainab to do in the court of Yezid? How shall this unhappy wretched woman behave with the man of cruelty? Is Zainab to be brought before strangers? Behold the enormous iniquity, O God! For what reason shall the sun enter the sign of Scorpio?

Yezid:

Let one of the more trustworthy of my court, one of those who can confidentially be sent to my harem, go and bring my daughter, even my rose cheeked and silver bosomed child.

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Shimr (to the Princess):

O daughter of the king of the great kingdom of Syria, your father has been good enough to call you to his presence.

The Princess:

*Walk before me, o fortunate and blessed sir!
Walk forward, I am coming behind you.*

Shimr (addressing the family of Hussein):

*Turn to one side, for it is the queen of the
city of Damascus that comes! Behold that full moon
walking with perfect grace and glory.*

Yezid's Daughter:

*Good morning to you, my handsome and brilliant
faced father; may wealth, fortune, and success attend
you forever! Seat me like an unblown rose on your
glorious lap, or, to speak humbly, like an
insignificant atom by the side of the magnificent sun.*

Yezid:

*Come, take your seat, like a rose bud on my lap;
let my bosom be ornamented with your precious
presence.*

Sakina:

*O God, how is it that I have no father, and am
so despised? I receive no kind treatment from anyone.
O Muslims, where is Hussein my father, that he may
seat me in his lap.*

Yezid:

*Who is this little fatherless child, this bare
headed and bare footed wanderer?
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Shimr:

*It is Sakina, the daughter of the king of Hijaz,
the beloved child of the thirsty lipped king.*

Yezid:

Are you the daughter of the matchless king, are you the joy of Hussein's heart?

Sakina:

Yes, I am the daughter of the king of the East and West. May God defend me, I am Hussein's daughter.

Yezid:

O little one, you melancholy daughter of Hussein, you who is unable to bear any calamity, having none to take care of you, why should you heave flame scattering sighs, and weep and groan?

Sakina:

How can I do otherwise than weep or moan like a ringing bell? May no human being ever experience the things that I have undergone! I have suffered so many troubles, so many mental pains. I have seen my father killed and my brothers slain before my eyes.

Yezid:

Do not weep so much, poor desperate orphan.

Sakina:

How can I, being a mourner, refrain from tears, o Yezid?

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Yezid:

Blood gushes out of my eyes, owing to your sad cries.

Sakina:

Six brothers of mine have died in my sight.

Yezid:

Why has the color of your tulip ('laleh' in Persian) like face faded away?

Sakina:

Because of my sufferings from thirst.

Yezid:

Why are you covering your face with your hands?

Sakina:

Seeing that all these are strangers and I have no veil.

Yezid:

Have any of your brothers remained alive?

Sakina:

I have one brother left me, o tyrant.

Yezid:

Where is that boy, o young lady?

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Sakina:

He is here, the poor invalid, but a captive.

Yezid:

Tell me if you have any sister with you, o miserable girl.

Sakina:

I have one or two sisters left me by my father Hussein.

Yezid:

What are their names, tell me, o hapless creature?

Sakina:

One is called Rukayyah, and the name of the other is Zubaida, o Yezid.

Yezid:

You are right, to be an orphan is no light matter; and none is like you in such a distracted state, poor thing. Come to me then, o Sakina, I shall keep you as a maiden for my daughter.

Sakina (grasping Umm Kulsum's gown):

O aunt, I have not served as a maid, I have always been delicately nurtured, though I am now much despised.

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Umm Kulsum (addressing Yezid):

Who are you who thus, thinking too much of your self, wishes to enslave one of the sacred family of God's Prophet?

Yezid:

Who is this zealous woman that raises her voice on high from among the captives? When she is excited to anger, her voice closely resembles the voice of Ali ibn Abi Talib, the Lion of God.

Umm Kulsum:

I am the sister of the King of Karbala, I am the queeb of God's Paradise, Abbas the youth was my brother, he was the general of our army, a chief among thousands. I saw him with his hands cut off, rolling in dust and gore, Blood runs out of my eyes in sorrow for him. Yes, I am Umm Kulsum the sister of Hussein.

Yezid:

Declare to me, o Shimr, you the meanest of the two worlds, where is Zainab the sister of Hussein?

Shimr (pointing to Zainab):

This is her, whom you have brought low and made of no reputation. This is Zainab the sister of Hussein. She is void of patience and self control.

Yezid:

Is this she whose father conquered the world by dint of the scimitar Zu'l Fakar? Is this she whose glorious grandfather was carried by God to Heaven? A thousand thanks that I have seen her, with my own eyes, put to shame, condemned, and spitefully treated!

(5193)

Zainab:

I am the daughter of the begetter of seven and four. I am the sister of God's beloved Hussein. Though I am without a veil amongst men, yet the archangel Gabriel is no more than a porter at my chamber. I am the queen of the palace of chastity, the sacred damsel of the sanctuary of God. Behold! My sharp tongue is like the

famous sword of the champion Ali. I have inherited from my dignified father a bitter, cutting tongue for the abuse of the enemy, By our Lord, I am able, with a single sigh, to cause the smoke of the whole world to ascend. But as my object is to have the privilege of making intercession for men, I refrain from cursing you. When I went to Mecca and came to Karbala, I had seventy stirrup holders; though from Kufa until I arrived at Damascus, Shimr with kicks would make me mount and dismount. When I was in Hijaz, I had eighty self sacrificing maidens to attend to me day and night, but today I am myself standing like a maid servant before a person who is himself inferior to a slave. I, who am now like an African captive, am Zainab the sister of Hussein.

Yezid:

I have nothing to do with your father and the Day of judgement nor do I care about the fire of the abode of the lost, or its consuming flames. Bring me the heads of the martyrs, that I may entertain my new guest with the pleasing sight. (The heads are brought.)

Shimr:

These thirsty ones who have drunk water at the edge of the sword are the life givers of the world, though they have given up the ghost. I deserve much favor from you, and a splendid robe of honor, for the murder of the Imam of faith is not every person's work.

Yezid:

Say what are the names of these heads, o hard hearted man.

(5194)

Shimr:

I will tell you, one by one, without any addition or diminution.

Yezid:

To whom does this brilliant head belong?

Shimr:

It belongs to Hur, the brave warrior.

Yezid:

Whose head is this, o accursed Shimr?

Shimr:

It is the head of Barir, the son of Hisham.

Yezid:

Whose are those couple of heads?

Shimr:

One belongs to Abis and the other to Shauzab his slave.

Yezid:

I see a black man's head.

Shimr:

It belongs to the slave of Hussein the king of religion.

(5195)

Yezid:

Whose are those four heads that are so shining?

Shimr:

They belong to Abdullah, Fazl, Awn and Ja'far.

Yezid:

I see two heads much resembling one another.

Shimr:

Those are the heads of the sons of Zainab.

Yezid:

There is a head there with an extremely brilliant face.

Shimr:

It belongs to Abbas, the standard bearer of Hussein.

Yezid:

Tell me of the bravery of this valiant man.

Shimr:

Many a one he vanquished and overthrew.

Yezid:

Bravo to his powerful hand and strong arm!

(5196)

Shimr:

Yes, he was equal to Haidar his father.

Yezid:

Tell me, whose is this lustrous head?

Shimr:

It belongs to Hussein's unfortunate son, Prince Ali Akbar.

Yezid:

I hear that he had the happiness of being married.

Shimr:

No, he did not marry, it was Kasim his cousin who was thus fortunate.

Yezid:

To whom does this little head belong, o wicked Shimr?

Shimr:

To Ali Asghar, the sucking, deprived of its mother's breast.

Yezid:

I do not see the particular head which I seek.

(5197)

Shimr:

It is here, like a moon under a cloud of gore and blood.

Yezid:

Bring it near, I am anxious to see it.

Shimr:

This is Hussein! This is Hussein! This is Hussein!

Yezid (addressing the head):

O ornament of the divine shoulder of the Prophet, you are welcome! O successor of Haidar the warrior, you are welcome! You did not come with your feet when I invited you, yet you were forced to come to the general salutation with your head, eh? You did not wish to pay me your respects alone, you have chosen therefore to be accompanied with Awnm Kasim and Ali Akbar; anyhow, you are welcome. O Shimr, I have to ask you a few questions.

Shimr:

Ask on, I have cheering answers for your majesty.

Yezid:

Did you sever this head with a butcher's large knife?

Shimr:

What does your majesty mean by this question?

(5198)

Yezid:

Because the bones of his neck are chopped to pieces.

Shimr:

O, if I say, enemy and friend will both burn.

Yezid:

Tell me that the flame of my soul may subside.

Shimr:

May neither a Muslim hear it, nor an infidel see it!

Yezid:

Did you ever the head by simply cutting it off, or by giving it many hard blows?

Shimr:

I did it with repeated strokes, like a butcher when cutting of the head of an animal.

Yezid:

With how many strokes did you sever it from the body?

Shimr:

I cut it off, woe to me, with ten blows.

(5199)

Yezid:

What did he say when he received the first blow?

Shimr:

He said, "O Muhammad! O Muhammad!"

Yezid:

What did that destitute king say at the second blow?

Shimr:

He said "O Ali, come and save me!"

Yezid:

What did he say on receiving the third blow, poor thing?

Shimr:

He said, "Where are you, o Fatima my mother?"

Yezid:

Tell me what he said at the fourth blow.

Shimr:

He said, "O Hasan, behold your brother Hussein!"

Yezid:

Alas! What did he say on the fifth blow?

(5200)

Shimr:

He said, "Woe is me! Alas for Zainab's distress!"

Yezid:

I wonder what his words were at the sixth blow!

Shimr:

He said, "Alas my fatherless child Sakina!"

Yezid: What did the incomparable creature say when you gave him the seventh blow?

Shimr:

He said, "O the miserable condition of my wives after me!"

Yezid:

Tell me, o Shamir, what were his words at the eighth blow?

Shimr:

He said, "Why, there is no fidelity, no zeal in you, o Shimr!"

Yezid:

What did he say at the ninth blow? I am so grieved for him.

Shimr:

*He said, "O God, forgive my people!"
(5201)*

Yezid:

What did the poor man say at the tenth blow?

Shimr:

He said that he thirsted for a drop of water.

Yezid:

Did you quench his thirst with something to drink?

Shimr:

I gave him a kick in the mouth with my booted foot.

Yezid:

What did he say when he received the kick?

Shimr:

He fainted, and died in agonies of thirst.

Yezid:

Fill the moon like cup with wine such as to dazzle the eye like the solar orb. O cup bearer, make haste, for the revolution of the spheres has no pause. Remove the veil from the face of the lady of the jar (wine), and make the blood of the lover's heart bubble up with joy. O cup bearer, cast me like a drake in a great river of wine, where I may swim, and let the blood of ravens be shed forth from the throat of the ewer. Come, o sweet heart, uncover your locks, make a meadow of roses with your cheeks, burn ambergris, and fill the censor with pure musk. Take, o musician, your instrument, and lifting up your voice, play us some beautiful tunes in the best way that you can perform.

(5202)

Zainab:

O Ali, you the hand of God, place your foot in the stirrups. Zainab's house is ruined; make haste! Put forth your hand to the rings of the gates of Damascus, and pull the city down in the manner that you did, when alive, destroy the castle of Khaibar.

Yezid:

Get your harp ready, o musician, and make the hands of the ladies, and the fingers of the brides, red with the blood of their faces. Once more, o cup bearer, fill our glasses with wine. Let the heart of

the cup bearer of al-Kausar break from grief; and you, o Shimr, torment the turtle doves of the sanctuary of God by dint of kicks, sticks and spears. Make the women stand on their feet at this splendid banquet, that the place may be filled with suns and moons, to our great delight.

Zainab:

Come out of Paradise, o faithful messenger of God, and behold the beloved of your Fatima spitefully treated by the enemy. Hussein the thirstly, whom you addressed with the tenderest words, his head is in a wine banquetm and his body thrown on a heap of rubbish.

(5203)

Yezid (addressing Hussein's head):

O thirstly lipped king, it being a feast day, I bid you moisten your dry lips with some dregs of the wine. Oh, what a sun! What a criminal thought! O Yezid, have a reverential regard for the face of the intercessor on the Day of Account. What affinity is there between wine and the Qur'an? May dust be on your head! Come, o boy, fill the ewer with rose water. O royal personage, let me wash off the wine from your sacred face. Being a noble Sayyed, you must indeed avoid drinking wine; let me, wipe your face with the skirt of my garment, o holy saint. Do not curse me, dear sir, for the boldness; but rather bless me.

Although your vigilance must not be interrupted by making you sleep, yet you may take a nap in Yezid's lap.

Zainab:

O chosen Prophet, look from your sepulcher, and behold the head which rested in your bosom placed now in the lap of Yezid.

Yezid (to Hussein's head):

Ah me! I was reminded of the battle of Nahrawan; take your seat in this gold basin. O hand of God's hand, what became of the strength of your arms? Arise, and put your foot in the stirrup to ride. O unique of the age, since you do not choose to answer my words, be prepared to receive strokes on your ruby like lips from the cane in my hand.

(5204)

Imam Zain al-Abidin:

Do you strike the kissing place of the Prophet with your cane, tyrant? Strike! But may your hands perish! You are practiced at cruelty. Yes, go on beating, for you are an adept at infamy; you are not wanting when there is an inhuman and wicked deed to be performed. You impudent fool, the Prophet of God is here present! Do you beat the beloved in the sight of its lover? Where is the chief of religion Ali ibn Abi Talib, to see you beating his son on the lips with a cane? He being Jacob, and I his Joseph, in this Egypt of affliction, why should you do to the parent what is more befitting the son?

Yezid:

Who are you, o miserable wretched prisoner, suffering in mind and body, and firmly fastened with chains? With such dignity, glory and pomp, if I am not mistaken, you must be the sone of Hussein.

Zain al-Abidin:

O Yezid, you loser of both worlds, may your punishment ever increase! If you are so blind as not to recognize me, listen, that I may introduce myself to you. The throne of the Most High is but a pavement to our court; the nine spheres are but a ball to our club. I am the heir of the Sultan of faith, though now a prisoner in the army of the infidels. I can tell you in a plainer way what my real name is. I am the lord of the worshippers, Zain al-Abidin.

Yezid:

Do you see God's justice, how Hussein was killed at last with a dagger?

(5205)

Zain al-Abidin:

Do you think that you have killed only Hussein, and stained only his body with blood? It is not so. You have slain the seven fathers and four brothers, the three daughters and six brothers. You have murdered both the Prophet and his successor; You have massacred both Muhammad and Ali at once. According to the outward appearance you have not slain above one soul, but in reality you have killed the inhabitants both of this world and the next. You have wiped away both entity and non-entity, both eternity and time. You have killed all creation with one blow, o infidel; you have shed the blood of God, o impudent wretch.

Yezid:

O Zain al-Abidin, according to this assertion and claim of yours, he is no way inferior to God Himself. Open your eyes and shut your mouth; there is no good in such vain assertions. Listen to me and deliberately confirm what I say. Is it good for you to be brought to my presence with yokes and chains?

Zain al-Abidin:

We do not complain of God's decrees at all. A lion is not ashamed to be bound in chains. But you are foolishly vaunting before this thirsty lipped martyr, o uncivil man. You must not boast in the presence of this chief, who, as regards glory, is above all, God alone being excepted. He is such a one that his father is greater than the parent of Muhammad, and his mother is the Prophet's own daughter. If you have also a mind to boast, speak of your ancestry. You are, generation after generation, an adulterer, the son of adulterers and adulteresses.

Yezid:

Executioner! Executioner!

(5206)

Shimr:

May I be a sacrifice for you, o Amir of the age, for the spring of whose life the autumn has come!

Yezid:

Strike off the head of Zain al-Abidin, the miserable wretch, that he may not speak thusly in the presence of the bystanders.

Shimr:

Make your confession of faith, that I may strike off your head, and cause eternal separation between it and your body.

Zain al-Abidin:

Adieu, my helpless aunts! Adieu, my broken hearted sisters!

Zainab:

O Zain al-Abidin, may your aunt die for you! I see you every now and then casting a glance at me; but I cannot help it, dear nephew. What shall I do? Full submission is rendered to God alone.

Sakina:

O my suffering and afflicted aunt, my brother has stretched forth his neck to the executioner, being seated opposite to the Kiblah. Now the impudent Shimr will sever poor Zain al-Abidin's head through malice. I beseech you to try some means of delivery.

(5207)

Zainab:

O multitude who are here present, interfere and intercede if your are Muslims. Is there not one Muslim among all of you? Surely there may be; but the thing is unavoidable. I shall therefore beat my head with stones out of zeal, and putting a veil on my face, I shall go to the ambassador from Byzantium and submit my case. O my well wishing friend, I am about to make a statement that will bring every listener to tears. O sirs, for God's sake save us!

The Ambassador:

O Lord, what is this that I now see, which the eyes of the ancient times never beheld? I wonder how the king of the Muslims can have become an enemy to the faithful ones! Since the beginning of the world

none has done this cruelty to his own fellow believers. Yes, where there is much injustice it is right to make intercession for those improperly treated. O you who are present in this assembly, let one of you intercede for these poor captives, who have no one else except this youth to take care of them. Come, o executioner, let me kiss your hands and feet, and beg you not to kill him. Do not slay him, I beg you, until I go to the treacherous Yezid, and pour my supplications before that mangy cur dog; perhaps I may be able to obtain release for this poor youth. O Yezid, have pity on these children, or make me a sacrifice for them!

Yezid:

O noble sir, this delicate youth, thus brought low by means of fetters and bonds, is a lion's whelp fastened with chains; the sword is an honorable punishment for lions.

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Zainab (to Yezid):

Withdraw your hands from the family of God's Messenger, or, by our Lord, I shall dishevel my hair, and carry my complaint before the court of divine justice. I will appeal to the Almighty Avenger against your tyranny, and beg Him not to let any creature remain on the surface of the earth. But now I shall turn my face towards Najaf, and, placing my hands on the sepulcher of the royal person buried there, shall utter grievous things against you, that his zeal as a Lion of God may be stirred up in a manner to make even the inhabitants of Heaven tremble. O father Ali, Ali, come!

Ali (appearing with a veil on his face and a sword in his hands):

Do not slay, do not slay! For Hussein's daughters are orphans, Do not slay, do not slay! For Hussein's daughters are in pain.

Zain al-Abidin:

Behold my broken head, o grandfather! Behold how they have tied up my hands behind my back!

Ali:

I myself wished that your head might be broken in this world, that I might be able to intercede for sinners on the Day of Judgement.(107)

(5209)

SCENE XXXI

CONVERSION AND MURDER OF THE AMBASSADOR FROM EUROPE

On the arrival of (Imam) Hussein's family in Syria, sad in heart, they raise to heaven cries of distress and complain bitterly of their cruel fate. An envoy from Europe (Byzantium), who happens to be at Damascus at this time, hearing the sounds, sends one of his retinue to inquire (concerning) the cause of the trouble. He had no sooner learned (of) the misfortunes which has befallen the wretched captives than Yezid invites him to a royal banquet. Dull and listless, he is unable to throw off the

melancholy which overpowers him. Noticing this, his host thinks to drown his guest's care with wine and music, but 'the sound of the harp had become like a death knell'. Failing in his efforts to enliven the envoy, the inhuman monster sends for his captives, and directs his attendants to ill-treat them, thinking thereby to

afford amusement to his companion. Again the attempt is unsuccessful. Yezid thereupon orders the mutilated head of (Imam) Hussein to be brought in and made the sport of the assembled company. The ambassador, however, happened to have seen the Imam himself at Medina, and the cruelty of the Syrian chief so rouses his indignation that he commences to abuse the wretch that could commit so foul a murder. As a consequence he is himself put to death, a martyr to the cause of the faith of the Prophet (Muhammad).

(5210)

Zainab, the sister of Imam Hussein:

O God, where shall I go from the torments of fate, and what shall I do? My banquet-candle is cruelly put out by time, and I am left to utter darkness. I am moaning in Syria like a mourning nightingale (**Persian: bulbul**), while my rose-bush is left behind in the plain of Karbala. O Heaven, it is not proper that a solitary place in Damascus should be my lodging. What have I done to you that you should punish me with banishment? Seeing my soul will not leave the body through hardships and distresses, better to wrap me in shrouds while yet alive.

Kulsum, a sister of Hussein:

I am the daughter of Ali (ibn Abi Talib), the Prince of Arabia, the glory of the world. I am Kulsum, at present an exile, a woman well acquainted with grief. I live among gazing strangers, without any veil To cover my head. Woe to me! All my confidants are gone from me. Alas! **Where [Persian: 'ku' or 'coo'; Welsh: 'cw', pronounced 'coo'] is Hussein my brother? Where [Persian: 'ku' or 'coo'; Welsh: 'cw', pronounced 'coo'] Where [Persian: 'ku' or 'coo'; Welsh: 'cw', pronounced 'coo'] is Ali Akbar my nephew? I have lost both my Solomon and his ring.**

Sakina, the daughter of Imam Hussein (addressing Zainab):

Dear aunt, how long shall I be desolate - how long? For what length of time shall I suffer contempt, and wander about a miserable orphan? **Till when must I coo [Welsh: 'cw', pronounced 'coo'] like a dove [Persian: ek qomree or ek fakhteh], or moan sadly like a cuckoo [Persian: ku-ku or 'coo-coo']? How long is this moaning bird [Persian: 'parandeh'] to pour forth its melancholy notes?**

(5211)

Zainab:

Dear niece, how can I alleviate this pain, or mitigate this sorrow? By our Lord, there is no termination or end to this painful evil. So long as the breath of life is in your nostrils you must continue to sigh and moan, even until the Day of Resurrection comes.

Sakina:

O Lord God, mercifully take you my soul away, or heal graciously this irremedial disease. Either refresh my brain with the perfume of Hussein's rose-

like cheeks, or let me be in the presence of my thousand-songed nightingale (Persian: **bulbul**).

Zainab and Kulsum:

What shall we do with Sakina, our poor niece, O heaven, Heaven! Except that we bleed in heart for her, what else can we do, O Heaven, Heaven!

Sakina and her sister, Fatima Kubra, the bride of Qasim:

We two girls are sorely afflicted, O heaven, Heaven!

Zainab and Kulsum:

O cruel fate, why do you aggravate Sakina's case? Solve this difficulty and remove this trouble, O Heaven, Heaven!

Sakina and Fatima Kubra:

We have no companions, no sociable or familiar friends. Oh! We are so sad in heart that we cannot describe it, O Heaven, Heaven!

(5212)

'Abd-ush-Shams, the Byzantine Emperor's envoy:

Ah! What a piteous cry! How impressively this child moans! I think that she is lamenting the death of her father. I wish very much that somebody would inform me of her melancholy case. Do any of you know anything about these miserable creatures? If so, tell me.

A Privy Counsellor:

We know nothing about these poor souls except that we see them sighing and wailing. They appear to be a few captive widows, caught in the hands of the

inhabitants of Damascus. They are in a wretched condition, continually shedding tears. I believe that they belong to some respectable family.

The Envoy:

Certainly, these captives cannot belong to any Muslim country, seeing that the Muslims do not make captives of themselves; there is, I believe, perfect love and harmony among them. I think that they are Jews or Pagans. But God forbid that they should belong to any country in the West (i.e., Christendom). I trust that they are not members of any Christian sect at all.

The Privy Counsellor:

How long will you grieve your soul with unnecessary sorrow? Have no care at all; these are neither Armenians nor Franks. I think that they are either from China or Mongolia(!!!); for so great an outrage could not possibly be perpetrated against an Armenian or any other Christian.

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The Envoy:

I am much distracted in mind by their sad complaints and groans. Go you to the town, and see what is the reason of all this uproar. Ask them why they are so deploring and bewailing; and inquire after the cause of their trouble and sorrow. Ascertain who is that woman who continually says, ' Brother, brother!', and why she mourns so bitterly.

The Privy Counsellor:

O ye captive prisoners, why do you pour down such a flood of tears? For whom are you distressed, like Narcissus, in this flower-garden? To what party do you belong? We cannot understand about you. Is your religion atheism, Islam, or any other foolish creed?

Zain-al-Abid-din:

O noble sir, we captive prisoners, whom you see so miserably Afflicted, are not from Europe; we are of the household of the Prophet of God. O sir, I am an orphan; my poor father has lately been killed I am the afflicted sufferer named Zain-al-Abid-din, whose protector has cruelly been murdered. Yezid has made the Children of God's chosen Prophet fatherless. He has caused the daughters of Fatima (Zahra) to be vagrants, and has made my dear aunts a sport for gazers. No cruel European ever committed such an outrage against his fellow countrymen.

The Privy Counsellor (to Zainab and Kulsum):

O you two women, why do you trouble yourselves so much? **O you pair of nightingales (Persian: bulbulha), why do you sing such sad notes?** O you afflicted creatures, for whom have you set up lamentation? O you two unlucky beings, why are you weeping and groaning to such an extent?

(5214)

Zainab and Kulsum:

O respected sir, we are two poor afflicted souls, two sisters, daughters of Muhammad the Prophet of God. We are destitute, and deprived of our home and family, like two birds that have lost their nests. We never expected such days. We two sisters once had six brothers, the most renowned of whom fell in the battle of Karbala. It is for him that we are so bitterly lamenting.

The Privy Counsellor:

But who are these fair damsels who look like moons and stars? And whose death are they bewailing so deplorably? Oh, tell me, tell me, who are these precious gems, these lustrous pearls? To what tribe or nation do they belong?

Sakina and Fatima Kubra, the bride of Qasim:

We two gems belong to one and the same mine. **We two birds [Persian: do parandehan or do fakhtehan] are both of one dovecote [Persian: ek kabootar khan or ek kaftar khan].** Oh! We are worn out with excessive toil and labor. What shall we do, we poor orphans? Sir, we are the offspring of this people's holy Prophet. **We two doves [Persian: do gomreean or do fakhtehan] are cooing [Persian: 'ku' pronounced 'coo', means 'where'; Welsh: 'cw', pronounced 'coo' also means 'where'] for one and the same thing.** By Heaven's tyranny we are made thus despicable. We are daughters of the king of the righteous.

[Sakina and Fatima Kubra when they are "cooing" are saying "where?" in Persian, as the Persian word for "where" is "ku", pronounced "coo". Note the echo of the medieval French poet Francois Villon: "Where is the bold Charlemagne? Where are the snows of bygone years?" This is the poetic element called by the Latin name "**ubi sunt**", literally "Where are?". In an

(5215)

earlier chapter we noted that in Welsh, the cuckoo, in other countries known as a harbinger of Spring, in Welsh it is the messenger of nostalgia and melancholy, because in Welsh the word for "where" is '**cw**', pronounced "coo", so to a Welshman the cuckoo is saying "where?", as the Eurasian ringdove also says "coo", i.e., "where?". The commonest member of the dove family in North America is known as the "mourning dove"; its call is

"coo". No doubt the name "mourning dove" was given to it by a Welshman.]

The Privy Counsellor (returning):

I think that mercy is taken away from the breasts of men. They have no sense of justice, no humanity. Who has ever done such a cruel deed, such an outrageous action? Neither Nimrod the hunter, nor any other tyrant. Ever showed such inclemency. We do not read of such cruelties as these in Pharaoh's history. Surely not even an infidel allows such merciless persecutions against another.

The Envoy:

Your notes, o musician, are too grave and deep. You bemoan effectively; is there any painful or sad news? Well do you mourn; have you met with trouble? You seem distracted in a melancholy manner; has anything offended you?

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The Privy Counsellor:

Hear from me the story of the captives, o most excellent ambassador. I saw there some orphans and several widows. I beheld also a sick youth bound with chains; although he was handsome, good-looking young man. A girl was beating continually on her head, and saying, "O the memory of Hussein!". Another would cry, and say, "Alas Hasan's son!". They belong to some noble family from among the Muslims; but, thank God, they are neither Armenians nor Franks, so that you need not be troubled about them at all.

The Envoy:

Praise be to God that these captives are not from Christian bations! I am glad to hear that they are not our fellow believers. O Lord, vouchsafe to set every prisoner at liberty; especially, O god, cheer the sorrowful souls of these wretched creatures.

Sakina:

Dear father, my spring is turned into autumn. Your absence has made tears run down my cheeks. Though you are an exalted king, still you may condescend sometimes to look on your dear child. Your beloved little girl, o father, has, in a contemptable manner, been removed to this ruined place. I do not know why Heaven has brought this misery upon me; my luck truly is unfortunate.

Zainab:

O dear niece, how long will you groan so sadly and complain of Heaven? Wailing and lamenting will not do you any good; fate has decreed this, Heaven has ordained it.

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Sakina:

The thought of being patient never flits across my mind. How can it be proper that I should dwell in such a ruined and miserable place? Oh! My heart is burning within me for want of a father. Where is my dear parent, that I may lie down in his tender lap?

Zainab:

Come to me, poor thing, and lie down in your aunt's lap to sleep, beat no more on your breast. O you women, bereaved of your sons, I adjure you, by Hussein's soul,, be quiet awhile, and give up wailing;

perhaps poor Sakina, the dear daughter of Hussein, may slumber in my lap.

Yezid coming out of his apartment to sit on his throne, an officer walking before him says:

My majesty the Caliph is coming forth with pomp and glory; have a care! O you military men and generals of the army, stand in your proper posts. His majesty is coming out of his palace, intending to sit on the throne of his kingdom in splendor and magnificence; let both nobles and plebians give way, and stand in awe.

Two officers (saluting Yezid):

God save your majesty and prosper your empire! May He make you to rule over the whole universe.

Two other officers:

Hussein, your enemy, was killed at Karbala, thank God! May this late victory be ever blessed to you!

The former two officers:

Hussein is deprived of his life today. It is a festival day for the Sufiyanites (banu Umayya).
 (5218)

Yezid (to his page):

Go forth oh youth, without any delay, to the envoy who has lately arrived from Byzantium. Tell him that the Caliph is seated with pomp on his royal throne, anxious to see his guest.

The Page (to the Envoy):

Arise, o ambassador, and hasten to the court, for the monarch of the age has summoned you to his presence.

The Envoy:

O musician, play us some nice airs on the flute. Let our souls be touched by your able fingers. You cup bearer, away with your dull thoughts, and stretch your hand to the neck of the decanter. And you, o musician, take the glass of wine and quaff it, and then instantly apply your beath to the flute or pipe. Let us in this way march forth, and betake ourselves to the royal entertainment.

Two persons by his side (singing):

Alas! The spreading carpet of time is to be rolled up. Medina has been destroyed by the ambitious desire to possess the country of Ray (Ray, a town in the neighborhood of Kaswin, was in former days a place of much repute in Persia, and a hot-bed of Shi'a militance).

The Envoy:

The pleasures of life and the delights thereof are forbidden us, seeing that we have not beheld the sacred city of Medina.

(5219)

The Two Persons:

All the joy and gladness under Heaven have been defiled at once with foul grief. Since the spheres existed, such a horrible crime was never committed.

The Envoy:

The sweet sound of the flute is the dull ringing of the funeral knell to my ears; for the vernal season of the florid field of religion is attacked by dark autumnal days.

Yezid:

O excellent envoy, do not shun so much the society of Yezid. Are you for nothing avoiding my company? Come, sit down awhile; let us drink wine together. In vernal seasons it is not wise to abstain from drink. I give you advice, listen to my saying, and never forget it: "Never turn aside from a banquet, for all employments in this world are without any solid benefit; therefore, never give full attention to anything in this life, but always allow yourself to drink wine."

The Envoy:

I wish you happy enjoyment and pleasure today and ever! May all your enemies be vanquished before you! May joy and delight always accompany your person! May victory and conquest ever attend your army!

Yezid:

O cup bearer, help us to solve all our difficulties with a glass of wine. Remove from our hearts all sorts of besetting cares with your tempting liquor. Praise be to God, I have been so fortunate as to witness the heads of my chief enemies hanging by their locks on the tips of spears. Come on, o cup bearer, pass the bowl 'round another time, and make our friends quite mirthful and gay.

(5220)

The Cup Bearer:

O you experienced drinkers, know that in this revolutionary time nothing can do the soul such an amount of good as wine. Welcome wine, the vernal season, and the society of the beloved! Oh, how happy if all three could always be easily obtained!

Yezid:

Not everyone who does not shave his head can boast of the mysterious knowledge of Qalandarism

[The Qalandars are an order of Dervishes who shave their heads and beards and abandon everything, wife, friends, possessions, and retire from the world." Platt's "Translation of the Gulistan' [of Saadi], p. 320, edition 1873. In reality, the mention of the Qalandars at the time of Yezid is a gross anachronism, since said order was founded by Yusuf Qalandar al-Andalusi, as the name indicates, an Hispano-Muslim, whom we have mentioned before in this work. In the time of Yezid, Spain was still a possession of the Visigoths. In fact, Yusuf Qalandar al-Andalusi lived in the 16th century.];

neither are all who can make mirrors considered to be Alexander theGreat. Not every pretender to the Imamate has the privilege of being called an apostle; in the same way, not everyone attempting to speak is termed a rhetorician. Thus does the flute proclaim on the day of Hussein's slaughter! Enemies of Hussein, rejoice on this your feast day.

(5221)

The Envoy:

Know, o Yezid, no lute nor harp can have any effect on me; musical notes make me sadder and sadder every minute; I feel so melancholy. Is theevent of Karbala mentioned in our entertainment? For the sound of the harp has become like a solemn knell. The trill of the songster, or even his melodious voice itself, cannot cheer my mind one whit. Has any oppressed creatures wished us evil? Or any widow bereaved of her youthful son denounced something against us? I wonder why merriment has suddenly quitted the banquet; for without any apparent cause, my light heart has become gloomy and sad.

Yezid:

Seeing you has frankly apprised me of the dullness of your spirits, I shall manage this very minute to relieve you from the burden of grief. O Shimr, go, please, to the ruined place which you know, and fetch me from there, in a contemptuous way, all the captive prisoners. Bring here all the daughters of the Prophet, bound fast with chains, that his excellency may amuse himself with the sight, and, through joy, forget his sorrow.

Shimr:

Give notice to Zainab that it is time to bewail, for behold! Shimr is coming to the captives with his bottle and glass in his hand. O Sakina, behold! Shimr is approaching. Behold him angry with a whip in his hand.

Zainab:

Where is death, to relieve Zainab from her troubles? For I hear the voice of Shimr behind the wall. I am a weak woman, unable to do anything; there is none to help me except my sad groans. Certainly, if Sakina but sees Shimr again, she will die through fear. O Lord, who will mourn here for Hussein's orphan?

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Shimr (addressing Zainab):

Wake Hussein's orphan lying there in the dust on the road, otherwise I shall make her body black and blue with this whip.

Zainab:

Whip me as much as you like, o Shimr, but do not awake Hussein's child from her sleep. O Lord, have mercy on Zainab; see how unfortunate she is!

Shimr:

Rouse her from her sleep soon, or I will make her cheeks the color of indigo.

Zainab:

Have pity on this wretched girl, o man; do not slap my poor Sakina. Why, o impudent fellow, do you turn my jasmine into a water lily? Why do you make Sakina's face blue with cruel slaps?

Shimr:

I shall drag her now on the ground and humble her; if you will not awaken her I know how to do it myself.

(5223)

Zainab:

O ill-mannered, irreligious Shimr, I adjure you by the Seal of the Prophets (Muhammad) (if you have any faith in him), not to add to my pain, for I have already a pallid face before Sakina. Go away from us, o treacherous Shimr, and rouse not this girl from her sleep; go and hide yourself behind that wall a minute until I awaken her. She is much enfeebled since her father's death; she may possibly die through fear if she sees you. (to Sakina) O poor orphan, arise, awake; it is not time to repose. O captive prisoner, awake, it is not occasion for sleep. Arise from your

slumbers, o sweet worded orphan; fatherless children must not rest after their father has gone.

Sakina (awaking):

Dear aunt, I dreamed a sad dream, which has put me in confusion. It has made me altogether distracted. I dreamed, dear aunt, that Shimr again bound my hands as captive. He had his whip also in his hand. While that cruel villain was whipping me on the head, suddenly there arose the sun of my righteousness in the East; I saw my father with his face sprinkled with blood from his head, and began to speak with him on subjects of love and affection. Now I was complaining of him, now speaking fondly to him, when, suddenly I was awakened by you.

Zainab:

Dear niece, your dream shall be realized this very moment, for this very instant Shimr will come from behind the wall and begin to whip you, as you have dreamed. But as to how you will see your father, it may be possible, but only on the other side of the grave.

Sakina (seeing Shimr):

Aunt, aunt! Behold, Shimr is coming upon me! Where can I flee for refuge? (Shimr binds Sakina's hands).

(5224)

Zainab:

O Lord, let no child be deprived of its loving father! Let no father's shadow be lessened from the head of his offspring. May a woman never become like me, brotherless! Never was a woman bound with chains by a stranger in this fashion.

Imam Zain-al-Abid-din (bound by Shimr):

O heavens! I am a fatherless as well as a sick boy! Is it good that Shimr should be appointed my doctor thus to treat me? O Heaven! You have made my diet to consist of my own liver and heart. You will soon destroy me, O Heaven! That I know full well.

The captives being brought to his presence, Yezid says:

Go on, friends, drinking wine and spirits, and amusing yourselves with the pretty sight of these moon-faced captives. My enemy is killed, we must setup merry entertainments; we must have a glance at the decanters, and snatch a sight at the fair captives.

Zainab:

O Heaven, you embitter my life by continually giving me new occasions of grief. The women of the Sufiyanite family (Banu Umayya) are all behind curtains and enveloped in veils, while the daughters of (Fatima) Zahra are exposed to view before strangers and foreigners.

The Envoy:

Know, o sovereign, that my heart is made sadder still. The sight of these captives rather increases my grief. Yes, my sorrow is exceedingly aggravated by looking at them; please try and cheer me up by some other means.

(5225)

Yezid:

Go, o Shimr; in order to bring our joy to perfection, place the head of Hussein on the brim of the roof over us: we shall make the fire of Sakina's heart blaze, and cause this gentleman also to forget his sorrow.

The Head (reading verses from the Qur'an XVIII: 9-20):

"I FLY FOR REFUGE TO God from Satan the reprobate. In the name of God the gracious the merciful. Did you think (O Muhammad) that the companions of the cave (**SEE BELOW**) were the most wonderful of our signs?" My suffering martyrdom when I was overpowered with thirst, is more wonderful than any marvelous story.

(Qur'an XVIII: 9-20:

9.)

Or do you believe that the companions of the cave and of the inscription were the most wonderful of our signs or miracles?

10.)

When the youths sought refuge in the Cave then they said: O Our Lord! Grant us Your mercy and provide for us that we may put our affairs on the right course.

11.)

Then We set a seal on their ears for a number of years,

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12.)

Then We raised them up that we might show which of the two parties reckoned best the duration of their stay.

13.)

We relate to you their true story; truly, they were youths who believed in their Lord and We increased them in guidance.

14.)

And we strengthened their hearts with steadfastness, when they stood up then they said: "Our Lord is the Lord of the Heavens and the earth. Never will we call other than Him any god, for indeed then we should have uttered extravagantly."

15.)

"These our people have taken gods other than Him; why do they not bring a clear authority in their support? Who is there more unjust than he who forges a lie against God?"

16.)

And when you have left them and what they worship except God, find yourselves a refuge in the Cave, your Lord will extend to you His mercy, and provide for you means of safety and ease."

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17.)

And you may see the sun, when it rose, decline from their cave to the right and when it set, leaving them away to the left, while they were in the cleft. This is of the signs of God; whoever God guides, he is rightly guided, and whoever He leaves to go astray, never shall you find for him any guide to rightly guide him.

18.)

And you would have deemed them awake while they were asleep; and We turned them to the right and to the left; and their dog lay stretching his paws at the entrance (to the cave). Had you looked at them, surely you would have turned away from them in flight, and surely you would have been filled with awe of them.

19.)

And thus did We raise them that they might question among themselves. Said one among them: "How long have we tarried here? Said they: "We have tarried a day or part of a day." Said the others: "Our Lord alone knows best how long we have tarried here. Therefore send one among you with this silver coin of ours to the city, let him see which of them has the purest food, so let him bring to you provisions from it, and let him behave gently, and not make you known to anyone."

20.)

"For truly if they come to know of you, they will stone you, or force you to return to their creed, and then you will never succeed."

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There is universal agreement that the above quoted Qur'anic verses refer to the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus (in Arabic: **Afsoos**). After the assassination of the Roman Emperor Philip the Arab in 249 AD, Decius (called **Daqyanus** in Arabic), his successor, attempted to enforce the Roman State Religion amid much political instability and moral upheaval. Each citizen was ordered to appear in public before a special commission to make

a sacrifice to the Roman pagan gods and receive a document (**libellus**) identifying the bearer as pagan. Those Christians who refused became martyrs. In Ephesus under this affliction, known as the Decian Persecution, seven young Christian men escaped and took refuge from this persecution in a cave outside the city. Their names were: Maximian, Malchus, Marcion, Denis, John, Serapion, and Constantine. Two hundred years later, during the reign of Theodosius II (408-450), the seven young men of Ephesus awoke and found that not only Ephesus, but the entire Roman Empire had become Christian, and the anti-Christian persecutions were, of course, at a permanent end. On their deaths, the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus were proclaimed as saints.

The story of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus is thought to have been written down first in Syriac or Greek. It is recorded by Jacob of Serugh (5th century AD) of whom we have spoken at great length in the previous chapter. There is no doubt that the story of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus was well known by the 5th

(5228)

Century at the very latest, and almost certainly much earlier, as Jacob of Serugh was not the sort of person to invent pious stories; Jacob of Serugh obviously believed the story of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus to be true.

Sakina:

O dear me! My dream is at last realized, for my father has actually come, though somewhat late.

Hussein's Head:

My dear child, the hair of my head has been entangled on the tip of a spear. This is the reason why your father Hussein delayed his coming.

Sakina:

O companion of my burning bosom, peace be upon you! O my guardian in time of distress, peace be upon you!

The Head:

My poor destitute vagrant orphan, upon you be peace! O you who are withering from my absence, peace be upon you!

Sakina:

Father, why did you go to the Garden of Eden without taking your child at the same time with you? Why should the King of Arabia return to his royal home without carrying away his beloved daughter with him?

(5229)

The Head:

My earnest desire to see Ali Akbar made me forsake the world. I went with rent garments to Canaan by the scent of my Joseph's shirt.

Sakina:

Your death is sadly lamented by me, especially when I remember your excessive thirst at the time. May I die for you, father! You left the world without a shrouding dress.

The Head:

Bear with me with patience, dear child, the severe pains of being an orphan; for I quit this earth without shrouds for the salvation of my people.

Zainab (to Sakina):

Dear niece, why are you complaining of captivity? Smite yourself no longer, I fear that you will die. Come to this side, weeping child, and do not burn Zainab's heart any more with your flaming fire.

On Sakina's turning aside, the Head says:

Poor sakina, do not weep, nor rend your garments through grief; turn back, turn back to your father, tell him the adventures of your journey to Syria. Answer me when I ask you questions, child. Dearly beloved girl, you are a restless orphan, pray let me know of whom you most bitterly complain?

Sakina:

Dear father, I have become a captive, an orphan, an exile, and wounded in heart. If I have anything of which to complain, it is regarding my own ill-fortune.

(5230)

The Head:

Tell me, child, if anyone kindly washed off the dust from your dear face; if anyone has combed away the dirt from your pretty locks.

Sakina:

After you were slain, we met with nothing but trouble. Who would show the miserable orphans the kindness of a father? No one's heart feels for other people's children; none would repair the tears of their clothes.

The Head:

In this journey wherein Heaven has grievously tormented you, tell me, where have you fared worst?

Sakina:

Your captive family, o most excellent Imam, has fared ill everywhere, especially at Damascus.

The Head:

Though your pains be many, you poor little girl, yet tell me, what most distresses you?

Sakina:

I have suffered many troubles, dear father, but the severest of all my pains is that of being an orphan.

Zainab:

Your complaints, dear Sakina, have made me again unconscious of myself. How long will you sadly bewail? Come, repose awhile in your aunt's lap.

(5231)

The Head:

Zainab, dear sister, do not grieve me any more. Do not remove my child from place to place so often. Tell me how you have behaved yourself towards my little orphan. When have you been pricked most by the reproaches of the enemy? Is my son Zain 'Abid-din still feverish, or does he now feel better? Has he recovered his health, or is he attenuated by fever?

Zainab:

You ask me about your family, o dignified being; by our Lord, it is a hard question, and I am perplexed

as to how to answer it. Every now and then they expose your captive family and household to the view of strangers. I am a single weak woman, having a caravan of captive prisoners under my care. These men are cruel and devoid of natural affection, and the world is full of commotion and uproar. As for zain al-'abidin, your son, behold him wasting away with disease! Fever's heat from within, and the sun's rays from without.

Yezid:

I am much disturbed by the turbulent noise of these captives; order them, o Shimr, to return to their ruinous dwelling.

Shimr:

Repair, o you captives, according to the command of his majesty, to your desolate habitation; and you, o women who are bound, return to your lodging.

Zainab (to the Imam's head):

O adorable head, adieu! O martyr of the battlefield of Karbala, God be with you!

(5232)

The Head:

You captives of an unbelieving nation, the Lord be with you! Go, poor sister, to your ruinous abode. God be with you!

The Envoy:

O Yezid, to whose garden does this thornless rose bush belong? Whose eloquent, pleasant speeched, though severed head, is this? It is a mysterious pate; it must doubtless have belonged to someone well acquainted with divine truths. His eyes look, in my sight, like the eyes of the Prophet of God. His sweet,

ruby-like lips breathe out eternal mysteries, and his complexion resembles that of Muhammad.

Yezid:

Quaff your wine, noble sir; let us not talk more of the sweet lips of a dry head. That is nothing; be no longer importunate respecting this matter. Think no more about it. There is no mystery or miracle in what has happened; I can refute all such assertions.

The Envoy:

Talk no more in this way, o skeptic infidel; nor deny the virtues of this bright face, you blind in heart. Put off your thick veil of skepticism; do not reason thusly, but listen to what I am about to say. O bodiless head, I am sure that you are substantially what I think. Will you miraculously recite to us a verse of the Qur'an?

(5233)

The Head:

In the name of God the gracious, the merciful: "God is the light of Heaven and earth, the similitude of His light is as a niche in a wall wherein a lamp is placed, which is enclosed in a case of glass, the glass appearing, as it were, a shining star. It is lighted with the oil of a blessed tree, an olive neither of the East nor of the West. It wants little but that the oil should give light, although no fire touched it. This is light added to light. God will direct to this light whomever He pleases. God propounds parable to men, for God knows all things. They wish to quench the light of God with their mouths, but God perfects His light, though the

idolators may be averse to it." Hear me, o you who are sad on account of my misfortune. I am the martyr of Karbala, and my name is Hussein. My father's name is Haidar (Ali ibn Abi Talib), the Lion of God, the prince of faith; my mother (Fatima Zahra) is the best among women, and my grandfather is the Prophet of God.

The Envoy:

I wonder why the world was not destroyed at once, why the palm of mankind's prospects has not cast its fruit! When the head of this illustrious person was severed from his body, I wonder why Jesus Christ did not descend from Heaven!

Yezid:

Why, o sir, are you crying for Hussein? What has he done for you in Byzantium? Where did you become so familiar with Hussein? What connection have Byzantine infidels with us Muslims?

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The Envoy:

No one, o Yezid, ever engaged in a disgraceful action against himself as you have done. No Byzantine infidel, at any time, ever committed such an outrageous deed. I remember a strange anecdote about Hussein and Hasan his brother, which I learned long ago during my stay at Medina. I went one day to see Muhammad, and sat down at his feet to hear his blessed discourse, when suddenly there entered the mosque two brilliant moons, walking most gracefully, and approached the Prophet. The Seal of God's message on seeing them descended from the pulpit to receive them, and embraced both in his arms, now kissing

affectionately Hussein's throat, and now Hasan's mouth.

Yezid:

Seeing that you have begun to trill on miracles concerning this head, let us hear what else you can tell about him.

The Envoy:

How can I tell you, o Yezid, what I saw? Then the Arabian Prophet turned to Hasan, saying, "hasan, hear what your grandfather tells you. Come forward, and wrestle, in a brotherly way, with Hussein your brother." Then the two tender plants of the rose garden of Haidar the warrior took each other's hands lovingly, and began to wrestle. When these two young shoots of the red rose were twining with one another, each striving to throw his opponent, the Prophet said to Hasan, "Child, manage to hold Hussein's leg, and trip him." On hearing this, Fatima, their mother, who was then present, exclaimed, "Father, o honorable Messenger of God, tell me, why do you not instruct Hussein to trip Hasan?" The trustee of God's revelation answered, "Dear Fatima, do not be offended, Hussein has another to encourage him, namely (The Archangel) Gabriel, who is constantly teaching him how to move Hasan from his feet, and trip him up." Well, o Yezid, how can it be lawful that one served by the glorious (Archangel) Gabriel should be cruelly murdered by an unjust nation?

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Yezid:

Tell us, what else do you know concerning this severed head, if you have heard or seen anything else concerning it?

The Envoy:

Furthermore, o accursed of all peoples and nations, I heard the blessed mouth of the Seal of God's Prophets saying to his companions, "Be witnesses of what I speak, for I am the essence, but Hussein is the quintessence [Latin: **quinta essentia**]; Hussein is

of me, and I of him. I and Hussein are one. He who will injure Hussein, God will eternally punish him in the next world." Why then, o Yezid, you accursed, wicked king, why do you not fear the everlasting fire?

Yezid:

Hold your tongue, you Christian fool, and keep your own counsel. You have been altogether born in sin, and do you teach us? You had better go and think of your Church superstition in Byzantium. What have you to do with Islam that you should interfere in this matter?

The Envoy:

O Yezid, you absolute infidel, pretend no longer to be pious, if this is the religion which is practiced by you. Every sensible Christian would scorn your creed, and regard it as a reproach to embrace it. But you are an idolater, an atheist, and not a Muslim. How would a believer in Islam undermine the foundation of his own faith as you have done? Who but you ever murdered the offspring of that Prophet whose religion he was anxious to propagate zealously among the nations? No, even an infidel would not act towards another as you have done to the holy Hussein. Was this head not the ornament of the faithful Gabriel's bosom? Was this head not a delight to the spirit of 'Ali (ibn Abi Talib), the prince of believers?

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Yezid:

Come, Shimr, deliver us from all mischief by cutting, before my eyes, the throat of this foolish Christian; for I fear, on his return to Byzantium, that he will tell the tale to his countrymen, and they will begin to curse and abuse me among themselves. Kill him soon, that we may get rid of his tongue.

The Envoy:

Blessed is the head severed on behalf of Hussein!
Thank God that I have become worthy to give my soul
for him! O Hussein, may I be a sacrifice for your
face, eye brows and eyes! May I be offered for your
head, which is severed from the body! Oh that you
would talk to me on some religious subject, O head! Be
pleased to teach me the chief point of religious truth
in Islam.

The Head:

If God's holy love has taken its seat in your
heart, say, "I bear witness that there is no God but
the one true God." Come, for your place is quite
vacant here with us. Come, for you must soon enjoy our
society in the Garden of Eden.

The Envoy:

I am killed by the unjust order of Yezid the
accursed infidel. Who ever saw such cruelties as
these, o by-standers? I go with all readiness to see
God's Messenger. I therefore say that there is but one
true God, and no more.

Yezid:

Newly prepare us a joyous entertainment, and let
musical instruments play on all sides.(108)

- FINIS -

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SCENE XXXII

DEATH OF RUKAYYAH THE DAUGHTER OF HUSSEIN.

Zainab:

You have, o spheres, with extreme malevolence,
made a ruinous place Zainab's abode; you have heaped
up all the sorrows of the world in her lap. O tyrant,
you have made my Hussein headless by means of a
dagger, and in this way malignantly quenched Zainab's
banquet lamp.

Zain al-Abidin:

I must complain of your oppression, o tyrannical Heaven, seeing that you have unjustly debased Ali's family. That sacred household, which disdained to have communication even with the angels of Paradise, was, by your cruelty and ill will, made to ride on saddleless camels, to their disgrace. So much barbarity on your part not being sufficient, you have made us denizens of ruined places, too, o you who is addicted to cruelty and oppression.

Rukayyah:

O my crowned grandfather, o illustrious chief of all men, behold! Your daughters are captives and wretched prisoners. They have cast us, like African slaves, naked, hungry and thirsty, into this ruinous place. Look on Rukayyah's condition, o chosen Prophet; see how she always pours tears from her eyes for the sad event that has happened to her father.

Fatima, the Bride:

O glory of all the prophets, look down upon my sad condition; see how my days are blackened by my smoky sighs. Your Kasim has been made a martyr, his lovely bride a most despicable captive. Oh, look for a while upon this my hopeless heart!

(5238)

Umm Kulsum:

We are, o spheres, the flowers of Fatima's garden, like nightingales of her rose bush. O shameless Heaven, how will you, on the Day of Judgement, answer Fatima's tearful eyes?

Rukayyah:

O my beloved father, why do you not come tonight? Why do you not hold your destitute offspring in your bosom? Seeing that nobody deigns to inquire after the sad condition of your orphan daughter, nor takes any notice of how your dear child is? The morning of my hope is joined to the morrow of the Day of Resurrection. I wonder why this evening of separation has no dawn of delight for poor hapless me!

Zainab:

May I be a sacrifice for your name, o memorial of Hussein, the light of my eyes! Why are you shedding tears tonight? Why have you faded away, o fresh rose of the garden of my lap, and become like a melancholy nightingale deprived of its feathers and wings? I can no more see you so miserable; have compassion tonight in your soul distressed aunt.

Rukayyah:

Do not forbid me to weep, o desolate aunt, my eyes must tonight cause oceans of water to pass over my head. How many little tears have I tenderly brought up in the cradle of my lap in remembrance of my Ali Asghar, o aunt! My groans are entangled in my throat, o aunt, yet I know that my father will take no notice tonight of the sad state of my sorrowful mind.

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Zainab:

How long will you let pearly tears drop from your eyes? How long will you make the heart of an oppressed woman like me to break? How long will you mourn in sorrow for your brother, or weep in grief for your father?

Rukayyah (fainting):

My soul has reached the tips of my lips in anxious desire to see my brother, and how long must I have patience in tribulation on account of my father's absence? My body, by reason of sorrow and grief, has become like a crescent. The time has arrived that I must set my face toward the next world. O the pain of being an orphan! How can I bear it? To whose face can I look for comfort besides my father's, o aunt?

Zainab:

O my hapless niece, open your eyes. May the dust of the whole world be on my head! O memorial of those that are unfortunately gone from the world, o sweet tongued girl, open your eyes.

Rukayyah:

A thousand times thanks be to you, o sphertes, in that you have made me a miserable orphan in the world.
O
father Hussein, may I be a ransom for your head, which is severed from the body! Oh, I cannot hear your voice any longer in the world! What shall I do, o father, for you? How shall I act? Oh, I can do nothing but burn and endure!

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Fatima, the Bride:

May I be a sacrifice for your soul, o Rukayyah, you solacing companion of the afflicted ones, you ringing bell of the caravan of the grieved souls! As you and I are stars of the same constellation, and glorious pearls of the same shell, let us both prepare ourselves to weep and mourn for our father's absence; let us both throw dust on our heads, like orphans.

Rukayyah:

May I be a sacrifice for you, o heart rent bride! Let us sing sad songs in sorrow for our lost companions. Let us beat on our heads and breasts, grieving for our beloved friends, and lament in this ruinous place at Damascus for the absence of our dear father.

Fatima:

Come, sister, mourn grievously; cut the soul to the quick with your sad expressions, for we are despised prisoners in the corner of this desolate abode.

Rukayyah:

O my beloved Hussein, my king both in this world and that to come, we are wretched and in bondage in thi miserable habitation.

Fatima:

O father, you have gone from the world, but you did not take you daughter with you. We are poor, ill treated slaves in this revolting spot.

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Rukayyah:

Where are you, dear father? Why do you not come to us? We are desolate captives in the corner of this ruinous place.

A Damascus Girl:

O girls of the territory of Damascus, let us go and see those unhappy captives dwelling in that ruinous waste through the cruelty of our own wicked

people. They are like the disc of the moon, so beautiful are they.

Rukayyah:

O Lord, we are prisoners and strangers in this land, deprived of the sight of our most beloved friends. How happy is the child who is so fortunate as to place his head in the bosom of his father! How blessed was the day when I was in Medina, when this my heart was free from all pain and sorrow!

The Damascus Girl:

Alas! I cannot tell what sort of sigh is that which so burns the soul; it enters my heart like a piercing arrow. I hear a child weeping sadly, o companions, and my spirit within me is ready to die for the poor thing.

Fatima:

Where are you, o father, the soul of the whole world, for whose separation the very marrow of my bones has begun to burn? Tell me, dear father, why the moon of your beauty is hidden from my view?

(5242)

The Damascus Girl:

O Lord, why are these two poor little girls so sad, and thus sighing and crying? Who are you, o two sorrowful girls? Why are you beating so much on your breasts and heads?

Rukayyah:

We two destitute and broken hearted girls are both solitary creatures. We are helpless and friendless prisoners, and in a most miserable plight.

The Damascus Girl:

What have you done that you are thus rendered miserable, and caught as prisoners in the snare of the people of Kufa?

Rukayyah and Fatima (in unison) - We are exiles, we are despised! May God send us speedy death that we may die!

The Damascus Girl:

There are many broken hearted like yourselves, letting loose the bridle of their hearts.

Rukayyah and Fatima:

Although there are many afflicted souls in every part of the world, yet none is in the sad state in which we two orphans find ourselves.

The Damascus Girl:

There are so many orphans in the world that one can count them by the thousands.

(5243)

Rukayyah and Fatima:

Where will you find poor orphans like us put cruelly in iron chains?

The Damascus Girl:

Who killed your sick father and convulsed your affairs?

Rukayyah and Fatima:

The merciless Shimr acted so cruelly towards us; he severed our father's head from his body.

The Damascus Girl:

Here are some alms for you, poor orphans; take the money, and pray for me in return.

Rukayyah and Fatima:

It is not right, o Syrians, that we should take alms; it is unlawful for the family of the chosen Prophet to do so.

The Damascus Girl:

Tell me the name of your father, for I have lost all patience in my anxiety to learn this.

Rukayyah and Fatima:

The thirsty lipped Hussein was our father, the glory of the Arabs was our parent.

The Damascus Girls (to one another):

Oh girls, pelt these captives with stones in a cruel, inimical manner.

(5244)

Rukayyah and Fatima:

Oh, do not cast stones at us poor captives, for we are already troubled enough!

The Damascus Girls:

We shall beat you cruelly with stones, that blood may gush out of Zahra's eye through much grief.

Rukayyah and Fatima:

We beseech you, o aunt, to look upon us poor orphans; my head is broken with the enemy's missiles. Behold how Rukayyah's head is injured by the stones of this malignant nation!

Zainab:

O shameless and impudent maidens of Damascus, why are you pelting our children with stones? We are neither infidels, nor Jews, nor idolaters, to be reproached by you for our faith; we are the sacred household of your own Prophet. You must not pelt the descendants of his daughter with stones.

Rukayyah:

O my dear aunt may the dust of sorrow be on my head! Had my father been with poor sorrowful me, how could they have dared to cast stones at me? Behold, all my body is bruised. O my dear aunt, have pity on the sad state of my mind, seeing the thread of my patience is snapped by the tyranny of this unjust people.

Zainab:

Enough sighing and crying, o my niece; be no more restless. My darling, do not shed red tears; come and lay your head on my lap.

(5245)

Rukayyah:

Come, o father, and help Rukayyah. Shall I seek you at Mecca or at Medina? Or should I inquire after you in the city of Damascus? Being greatly distressed in mind on account of your absence, I shall wander about inquiring after you until I find you. O Hussein my dear father where are you? I can no longer bear to be separated from you.

Yezid's Daughter (addressing her father):

I beg you to kindly permit me to visit that ruinous place and see the prisoners. Please do not refuse my request, but kindly allow me to go and see these people of Hijaz.

Yezid:

I will, provided that you go with the daughters of Damascus, all merry and rejoicing, having your hands dyed with henna. You must tell all the maidens to take care of themselves, and to beat the drum before you, and play on musical instruments. Do this to break the hearts of these destitute, miserable creatures so that you may appear thoroughly happy and cheerful, while they scatter dust on their heads to show their grief.

Yezid's Daughter:

O maidens, to prove your loyalty to me, you must all be dressed in scarlet robes; and tell the daughters of the territory of Damascus to be gathered together about me with perfect respect and deference. For I intend to go, together with you, to look at the aptives belonging to the family of the Prophet, that the hearts of the destitute descendants of Ali may be broken at the sight.

(5246)

A Maiden:

Be aware, o daughters of the territory of Damascus, thusly has the daughter of the most excellent Amir commanded, "Prepare yourselves to go in your best makeup to that ruinous place, and amuse yourselves by looking at the family of the Prophet. You must set forth merrily, with timbrels, and drums, and other musical instruments, to the great annoyance of the descendants of the thirsty lipped king Hussein."

The Daughters of Damascus (to one another):

O damsels, go on beating the drums on all sides; play merrily on musical instruments, and sound the timbrel.

Rukayyah:

O my dear aunt, o my dear aunt, behold this treacherous people coming to see us poor wretches! How impudent these girls must be!

Zainab:

O daughter of the best of all mankind, o fatherless child, do not lament; sit down and dry these tearful eyes of yours. Do not weep, o poor orphan.

Yezid's Daughter:

The descendants of (Fatima) Zahra are made captives in the hands of wicked enemies; but my father has become the emperor of the world. Go on, beat the drum joyfully.

Rukayyah:

Dear aunt, what shall I do, being bare headed, in this ruinous place, seeing that these mean people have come on purpose to look at us, the miserable creatures?

(5247)

Zainab:

I shall hold you like my soul in my bosom, covering you with the hair of my head; so you need not weep, o desolate creature.

Yezid's Daughter:

We have golden garments, but Umm Kulsum and Zainab are meanly decked, being without a head dress; they are destitute of all sorts of friends. Go on sounding the drum and playing on musical instruments.

Rukayyah:

My dear aunt, my dear aunt, hear the taunts of the Syrians! How, reproaching us, they say continually, "Where has the chief of the thirsty lipped ones gone?"

Zainab:

Do not be sorry, o fatherless girl, nor shed tears down your cheeks; with my moans and sighs I shall burn the root and branch of this wicked people.

Yezid's Daughter:

Behold this weeping star! Look at this tattered girl, whose visage shines like the moon. As a contrast to the groans of this mournful girl, go on beating the drum and playing on musical instruments.

Rukayyah:

O my heart rent aunt, I cannot bear the thing any longer. I am unable to endure being contemptuously pointed at with the finger of scorn by these girls.

(5248)

Zainab:

Do not weep, my dear niece, for the injury done to you by these unjust persons. I cannot manage to help you, o homeless child.

Rukayyah:

May I be a ransom for you, o my excellent aunt!
Look at those Syrian girls. They are in company with
the accursed Yezid's daughter. Oh! I beg of you, aunt,
hide me away!

The Maid of Yezid's Daughter:

O assembly of captives, hasten all to go and
meet the daughter of Yezid, the emperor of the age.
Rise from your seats respectfully.

Zainab:

Be ashamed, o maiden; do not use such
expressions before God's Messenger, o impudent,
reckless woman. How can it be right for us to go out
and salute the daughter of this wicked infidel?

The Maid:

O girl who looks so distracted in mind, go to
meet the daughter of the Sultan of Damascus.

Rukayyah:

Oh, have pity on me, a hapless child! Excuse me,
for I am Hussein's daughter, while she is but the
offspring of Yezid.

(5249)

The Maid:

Come, o little one, without any delay, otherwise
I will take you by force, and make you perform the
ceremony of salutation.

Rukayyah:

O Lord, have regard for my misery and desolation, and take my soul, o just and living God. By the oppressions of the deceitful spheres I have become a companion of misfortune. How can this thing be done, since I am Hussein's daughter, and she is but Yezid's child?

Yezid's Daughter:

Withdraw your hand from this sorrowful little girl, o maid, and do not break her poor little heart. (to Rukayyah) Why do you weep and cry? Why are you afflicted with grief? Have you no father, o broken hearted miserable thing?

Rukayyah:

Truly I have no father, I am a sore hearted orphan! I am a poor despised exile, humbled by the cruelty of this revolving sphere.

Yezid's Daughter:

Has your father died that you should look so sad? Who has done this cruelty to you, o unfortunate girl?

Rukayyah:

Know, o daughter of Hindah, that they severed the head of my father from his body, through the tyranny of the revolving spheres.

(5250)

Yezid's Daughter:

How nice it is, o my worthy fellows, that this girl has no father and mother to take care of her. It is but just and proper that I should scoffingly tell her a few words to vex her.

A Syrian Girl:

O daughter of the sovereign of the age, o pearl of the sea of the Sufyan family, although you are a most lovely princess, and can do what you like, still, see that you are such an intelligent girl, I beg you not to be unmindful of God. As this pearl belongs to the sea of the family of the Prophet Muhammad, and this bud appertains to his daughter's garden, will not the anger of the Lord overthrow you if you do anything to vex her mind?

Yezid's Daughter (addressing Rukayyah):

Behold my crowned head, o girl; see the pretty ring on my finger, look at my splendid gold shoes! Truly, by the Lord, we are really sovereigns: we belong to the highest family.

Rukayyah:

Behold the annoyance to which I am subjected, o girl; look how I am bare footed, o princess; see how a ruinous place has become my habitation. O Lord, we have no father; o God, we have no helper.

Yezid's Daughter:

Look at my painted hands, o girl; and at my golden necklace; see the ornaments of my feet, poor creature. Truly we belong to a high family, because we are in dignity like the Heavens.

(5251)

Rukayyah:

Blood is the paint for my hands, o girl; a rope is the necklace for my throat. See how my eyes are tearful! O Lord, we have no consolers; o God, we are sacred to grief.

Yezid's Daughter:

Look at my beautiful head attire, o girl; consider how great is my father; behold the numberless maidens around me! Truly we are sovereigns, in truth we are dignified beings.

Rukayyah:

O my dear aunt, for God's sake look upon my misfortune! She being the daughter of Yezid, and I the child of Hussein, why should I not cast all the rubbish of the place on my head, seeing that I am bare headed, while she has such a splendid sheet to screen her face? O my dear aunt, since I am but a little child and am thus despised in infancy, it is better that you should pray for me that I may soon die.

Zainab:

Why should not both of us have died at Karbala, and carried to the grave our sorrow for Hussein? My dear niece, as you are a destitute orphan, it is good for you not to talk with children that have parents.

Yezid's Daughter (addressing Rukayyah):

May I be a ransom for you, o afflicted little girl, your speech has made me devoid of patience and rest! Although I cannot redress my father's wicked conduct towards you, yet I am greatly sorry for my own evil behavior. Come, I beg you, forgive my fault, and tell me what is the thing that I can do for you, my sister.

(5252)

Rukayyah:

If you are honorable in the sight of your father, have the goodness to do me the following favor out of sympathy for me. Go to your father and ask him to give you my father's head, then kindly bring it to me.

Yezid's Daughter (to her father):

O my father, my heart is burning for a little girl to whom it is proper that I should appropriate the name of rose. She is, poor thing, living like an owl in a solitary place, through Heaven's injustice; with sorrowful mind and tearful eyes, she begs you one simple favor.

Yezid:

Did I not tell you not to repair to that ruinous place, lest you should be infected with its evils? Yet in spite of my admonition, you did go there, and now have come back sad and with a beating pulse and trembling heart. Well, what is the request to be granted her by me, the infidel of the two worlds?

Yezid's Daughter:

That poor creature plunged in affliction and trials, has requested me to get her father's head. I beg you give it to me, that I may carry it to that wretched prisoner.

Yezid:

Go, oh girl, to our private apartments, you will find there many severed heads. Take the luminous head of Hussein, the king of the East and West, and carry it with respect to his poor daughter, that the mind of the poor girl may rejoice.

(5253)

Yezid's Daughter (bringing a head):

Come out of your solitary place, o Rukayyah, for I have brought to you the head of Medina's king.

Rukayyah:

This is the head of Abbas, the standard bearer, who was my uncle, my companion, my friend and my commiserator. O my uncle, how long, and till when,

must you be unkind and live separate from your friends?

Yezid's Daughter (bringing another head):

My mind is greatly agitated for you poor girl; I trust that this is your father's head.

Rukayyah:

This head, o Hindah's daughter, is that of my brother Ali Akbar. O dear brother, why do you shun our company? Why are you unmindful of our society?

Yezid's Daughter (bringing another head):

Heaven is at enmity with those who are called the authors of religion. Take this, I believe that it is your father's head.

Rukayyah:

This head belongs to my poor cousin and brother-in-law Kasim, for whose disappearance I am so restless. Come, my dear Kasim, look at your poor spouse, look at the sad state of this heart rent young body, which longs for you.

(5254)

The Girl:

There are so many heads in our house, it is better to let me know what are the marks or tokens by which your father's head can be distinguished.

Rukayyah:

That head whose hair smells like ambergris, that head whose locks are soiled with blood, even that head

belongs to my father, for whose absence I am shedding tears.

Yezid's Daughter:

Do not set my soul on fire by your sighs. By the Lord, I cannot know your father's head.

Rukayyah:

My father's head has got a handsome face, and locks scented with ambergris. His eyebrows are like those of a Huri of Paradise, and his eyes turn about in expectation for me. Such is the head of my father, even the father of me, poor afflicted creature that I am.

Yezid's Daughter:

O father, where is the head of the thirsty lipped king? I cannot find it among the martyrs. Give it, I beg you, to his daughter, that she may no more cry and sob on account of her father's absence.

Yezid:

Here is the head of the chief of martyrs; take it to the girl, his daughter, in that ruinous place, that she may no longer be in distress at his absence.

(5255)

Yezid's Daughter (bringing Hussein's head):

O troop of prisoners, Hussein's head is coming. O company of mourners, the chief of the two worlds is approaching. Turn out to meet him, o those of his family, for the chief occupier of the seat of honor and glory is approaching you.

Rukayyah (to Zainab):

O aunt, the period of sorrow has come to an end, my luminous sun has entered by the gate. My father, having no feet, has come with his head to visit his children.

Zainab (to the head):

O King of Karbala, peace be upon you! O you whose head is severed from your body, peace be upon you! Dear brother, look at your Zainab, for my heart and soul are burning for you. You were always favorable to your child Rukayyah. Come, come, in whose hands did you leave your daughter?

Rukayya (to the head):

Peace be upon you, o my dear father! Peace be upon you o my soul and faith! I am so pleased to see you, o beloved father! My soul had almost come to my lips without you! I offer my life as an humble sacrifice to be thrown at your feet.

Imam Zain al-Abidin (to the head):

May I be a ransom for your luminous head, o father, peace be upon you. I am so glad to see you return from your journey. Look at your poor ill treated Zain al-Abidin, who has a pair of tearful eyes owing to your absence. How shall I describe what the party of Yezid has done to me! A thousand times mercy from the tyranny of Yezid's people!

(5256)

Rukayyah:

O great God, I adjure you, by the merits of Muhammad the Prophet, and of this head of my father the thirsty souled Hussein, give me, o merciful Lord, the honor of seeing my father in the next world. After all these sorrows, let me have the joy of becoming Hussein's companion in Paradise. Take my soul, o Lord of both the worlds, for I have no more strength to bear the burden of separation from him that I love.

Zainab:

What is the end that you have in view, o bud of the rose garden of my heart? Inform me of your circumstances, o beloved of my soul. Tell me, o sounding bell of the caravan, what has made you thus silent? Do you, o spirit of my soul, intend to leave for a journey?

Rukayyah:

Know, o my aunt, you light giver of my blood stained eyes, that I shall soon go to the garden of delight in Paradise; if you have any message to my father, tell it to me, your poor sorrowful and weary hearted niece.

Zainab:

May I be a ransom for your soul, o light of your aunt's eyes, you the remedy of her oppressed breast. Now that being tired of this world, which is full of tribulation and anguish, you are journeying towards Paradise to enjoy the society of your father; give, I beg you, my humble respects to him, as soon as you shall have the honor of visiting that beloved intercessor. Tell him, o light of all men's eyes, that you will be missed in this ruinous place at Damascus.

(5257)

Rukayyah (to Imam Zain al-Abidin):

O dear brother, I beg you to pardon me from the bottom of your gloomy heart and soul. As I am going now, with blood shedding eyes, to Paradise to visit our noble father Hussein, you may let this poor sore distressed girl know what is your message to that chief.

Imam Zain al-Abidin:

When, o sister, you come to my father, you shall salute him in my name with tearful eyes, and afterwards respectfully deliver to him the following message: "O the cruelty of the son of Ziyad, o father! O the severity of Yezid's wrath, and the infidelity of the people of Kufa!"

Rukayyah:

O my sorrowful sister, o Fatima, you the light of my eyes! I am going to your spouse, o you the ointment of Kasim's ulcerated soul!

Fatima:

O fresh plant of the garden of Paradise, o my poor wandering sister! When you meet Ali Akbar my brother, give him, o my sister, a hearty kiss from me. Yes, give my love to Ali Akbar and Kasim the faithful, saying, "I am in great trouble for you. I am carrying your grief with me to the grave."

Rukayyah:

Adieu, my sore pressed aunt; adieu, o my desolate sisters. Adieu, o Zain al-Abidin, you vexed in soul. Adieu, o homeless and destitute one. Adieu, my dear aunt, let me kiss your feet, for I am in distress and sorrow.

(5258)

Zainab:

Separation! O Rukayyah, you groaning child, alas separation! Let me behold your tearful eyes.

Rukayyah:

Separation! O my homeless aunt. Separation! O sad hearted Zainab.

Zainab:

Separation! You are cheerfully going to Hussein your father, the king of the age.

Rukayyah:

Separation! O my aunt, you who has suffered so many troubles for my sake.

Zainab:

Separation! O poor moon faced orphan, I have not suffered the least trouble on your account.

Rukayyah:

Separation! O companions of sighs and sobs, I am much obliged to you for your care.

Zainab:

Separation! O light of my eyes, o nightingale of the garden of my soul, make no mention of what I have done for you.

(5259)

Rukayyah:

O great God, I adjure you, by Hussein's light, and by his subverted camp and pavilion, forgive, for the sake of my wet eyes, the sins of all those who weep over my calamity. I am going now with groans and sighs from this world, bearing witness that there is no God but God. (Dies.)

Zainab:

O how hard it is to die in a foreign land, how difficult to give up the ghost in captivity! Come, my niexe, let me close your eyes, let me stretch your hands and feet towards the Kiblah. O God, we poor exiles have nothing for our pillow but broken bricks.

Umm Kulsum:

O Lord, strangers have none to care for them, they are despicable and mean in the sight of the world. Should even a king die in a place far from his country, they carry him to his grave with disgrace.

Imam Zain al-Abidin:

O God, poor Rukayyah has died in regret and grief. What shall I do, seeing that I cannot get anyone to have her buried? Bring, o aunt, a pickaxe, so that I may dig my sister a grave in this place, and set the world on fire with my sighs and groans.

Zainab:

How I am unfortunately entangled in misery? I myself must dig a grave for my poor desolate niece. None cares for a stranger in exile, unless the God of poor wandering souls Himself be moved in compassion towards such miserable creatures. At the time of death none even deigns to pour some drops of water down an exile's throat, nor will anyone be so good as to stretch an outcast's feet towards the Kiblah.(109)

(5260)

SCENE XXXIII

RELEASE OF HUSSEIN'S FAMILY FROM CAPTIVITY.

Yezid (to Imam Zain al-Abidin):

May I be a ransom for you, o light of the eye of nature! I have a petition for you, which I hope that you will be good enough to accept. Being repentant and ashamed at the evil that I have done, I beseech you to

stay at Damascus, that I may serve you as one of your meanest slaves, and that I may place Syria, Mesopotamia, and the Hijaz under your holy jurisdiction, o highly dignified Imam.

Imam Zain al-Abidin:

The garden of Iran without Hussein is to me as a prison full of trials. The whole world without Hussein would be Karbala to us. Do not consider us as living beings without Hussein. We deem ourselves dead, and Damascus the abode of pleasure, is to us but a cemetery for the reception of our bodies. Now that Hussein is dead, Medina, the place where our grandfather is buried, is the best suited for us.

Yezid:

May the curse of God fall on Ubaidullah, who killed Hussein out of sheer spite. It must have been the decree of the Almighty that Hussein should thus be slain, and things that are ordained by God must take place. Be so kind as to pardon what has occurred, and to forget what befell at Karbala. A jar that is shattered to pieces cannot be put together again, and the Lord has said, "If you suffer loss, do not grieve over it."

(5261)

Imam Zain al-Abidin:

Oh! How is it possible that I should forget events that have made such an impression on me? How can I pardon the loss of such precious blood, o Yezid, despised as you are by all men, good and bad? You reprobate! Granting that I was pleased to overlook some of the things that have befallen us, how could I pass over the act of the cruel, accursed Shimr, who, when my father was on the point of death and reeking with wounds and thrusts from his sacred body, actually gave him a hard kick on his meek and humble breast, and then drew out his merciless sword, and in an

ostentatious manner severed my poor father's head from the neck while the lips were parched from thirst?
Yezid:

I beseech you to forget and to forgive our wrong doings, and to dispel from you mind the murder of Hussein, so that we may not be uneasy any more on this account. Let bygones pass forever from memory, and turn your attention to things appertaining to present existence.

Imam Zain al-Abidin:

Have you the impudence again to ask me to forget the incidents of Karbala? Were my bones to turn to dust and be scattered by the wind, I could not efface from my mind the massacre of Hussein, nor banish from my thoughts the sad recollection of his murder. Is it possible that I should forget the arrow which the archer darted on the mouth of that king of religion, or lose remembrance of the missile dispatched by Sinan at the throat of the chief of the thirsty lipped martyrs?

(5262)

Yezid:

In lieu of Hussein's blood, I will give you whatever you may desire, if you would be so gracious as to forget what is past. Take the kingdoms of Hijaz and Yemen as the price of Abbas' blood, and let the countries of India, China, and the whole of Tartary belong to you in lieu of the blood of Ali Akbar the similitude of the Prophet; and for the blood of Hussein the king of all nations, I offer you, o respected being, all the treasures which my empire may hold.

Imam Zain al-Abidin:

Be ashamed of what you say, o merciless tyrant. O impudent wretch, you have cut off the posterity of the best of the prophets from the land of the living. You have demolished the house of faith by the rage of your malice. You have slain some of our young men, the like of whom cannot be found in the whole world. The price of the blood of the martyrs cannot be paid for in money or possessions, its only recompense is the merit of being able to intercede with God for sinners. Hold your tongue, o accursed wretch, and cease such unworthy importunity. Send us back to the shrine of the Lord's Prophet in Medina, for your arguments will never be approved by the Creator.

Yezid:

O worthy Bashir, be a companion to the family of the Prophet on their present journey. Prepare, o virtuous Bashir, litters of gold, that the sacred family of the Prophet may be conveyed in all honor to the home of that king of righteousness. Look out that the ill-starred Zainab is not troubled on her journey back. If Sakina frets for her father, you must comfort her with soothing words, and beware that you obey every order that Zain al-Abidin may issue to you.

(5263)

Bashir:

I have been for a long time earnestly wishing and desiring that I might have this duty to perform, and I assure you that I shall most willingly carry out your orders; all my attention shall be devoted to this work, and I shall be very assiduous. I will serve Imam Zain al-Abidin with humility and sincerity, in hopes of being rewarded with a bright face on the Day of Promise.

Zain al-Abidin:

Do not mock us, we beg you, o impudent creature. Painted litters and colored garments do not suit our mournful condition. The blood of Hussein's throat is yet fresh, and his head still keeps its eyes fixed on us. Sakina's face is even now blue from the severity of the slaps that she has received, and my back is still

smarting from the effects of the lashes it received. My side is at the present time in pain from the dart of the spear, and my neck is still sore from the pressure of the rough rope put around it. Hussein's blood continues to drop from Shimr's dagger; how can we sit on thrones in his presence? After the loss of Hussein and our other companions, the most suitable thing for us is a coffin or planks for a bier, not a Takht-i-Rawan (Literally "moving sofa or couch": litters carried between camels or mules, with scarlet and brass trappings). O hopeless tyrant, the only things that befir us are black garments, and litters covered with black cloth.

Yezid:

Go and cover the Kajawahs (camel litter for females) of these poor captives with black cloth, as that is the most appropriate color for mourners. Put on your dress of honor with beseeming respect, and accompany the king of the Hijaz to his home.

(5264)

Bashir:

O mighty Amir, I am your most obedient servant; I will carry out your orders, and cover the litters with black cloth. O faithful servants, cause the gilded litters to be draped with black cloth.

Imam Zain al-Abidin:

O oppressed aunt, may I be a sacrifice for you! What makes you look around as if something were wanting, or someone was expected? Please mount, so that the rest of the family may do the same, and proceed homewards with bitter thoughts.

Zainab:

Wherever I turn, whether to the right or the left, I am unable to see my destitute and blood stained Hussein. Oh! Why does Sakina strike her head? Has Ali Akbar not accompanied her? Why do I see you all miserable, and looking uncomfortably around you? Is it because Hussein has not yet mounted his Zu'l Janah? Why is the mother of Ali Asghar so sad? Is it because her milkless child is not awake?

Imam Zain al-Abidin:

O dear aunt, may my scorched heart be sacrificed for you! I swear by the Almighty that what you say has deprived me of all fortitude. My father has been maliciously slain, and we are all in grief for him. Mount, dear aunt, we have no resource but to be patient. Raise up your standard of groans and sighs like one in chief command, and we will follow with weeping and lamentation towards the plain of Karbala.

(5265)

Zainab:

O crowned being, lauded in the chapter of the Qur'an beginning with the initials Ya Sin (Some say that this refers to Surah XXXVI of the Qur'an, which begins with the words **Ya Insan**), o cavalier of the famous battlefield of Karbala, behold how all the members of your family are mourning like melancholy nightingales (**Persian: 'bulbulha'**), and are sad and destitute. O most noble king, you are reposing on the

black earth without a rag of clothing. O precious pearl, what misery is this?

Bashir (at the head of the caravan):

I proceed, with a bleeding heart and blood shedding eyes, towards the plain of Karbala, and with sighs, weeping and lamentation. O friends, I am going, with wailing and groaning, to Karbala for the honor of kissing Hussein's feet.

Sakina:

I am Sakina, the sorrowful daughter of Hussein, and am proceeding to Karbala with plaintive tones and shrieks; for I am distressed, and am going, with blood pouring from my eyes, to visit the martyrs.

Zainab:

My heart palpitates at the mention of the name of Karbala. My head has been covered with the clay of sorrow; my own eyes saw the body of Hussein cut to pieces. Qoe is me! My dear brother was slain with the dagger of the accursed Shimr.

Sakina:

may I be a ransom for you, o sorely depressed aunt! Why are we so late in arriving at the stage of this dark night? Is the spot far or near, o aunt?

(5266)

Zainab:

O tear-shedding child, may I be a ransom for you, o blasted rose of Hussein's vernal garden! Though the night be dark like the evening of those afflicted with sorrow, yet you need not be troubled, for you see that the morning is at hand.

Sakina:

The sighs of my heart do not relieve me. I believe that my night has no morning light to succeed it. How long is my breast to receive the darts of heart piercing sighs night and day? O bird of the morning, what ails you that you will not utter your song? Are you a broken winged creature like myself? Will you not give me a reply, o desolate bird? Surely you must be asleep, like my destiny.

Bashir (to the Prophet's family):

O sacred tenants of the pavilion of the two worlds, I adjure you, by the soul of Hussein, not to weep any more. We have arrived at a place where the road divides one path leads to Medina, and the other to Karbala. Please tell me which way you are inclined to take the one that leads to Medina, or the other that passes through Karbala?

Imam Zain al-Abidin:

The mention of Karbala, o Bashir, has, alas, kindled a flame in my heart! Your speech, o comely personage, has set my soul on fire. O Bashir, your words have added pain to my sorrows. May I be a sacrifice for Karbala! Yes, even for its very dust. I have an earnest desire to see the plain, and am resolved to visit that musk-scented land.

(5267)

Sakina:

O kind and good Bashir, you who knows so well how to make one happy, we expect from you the favor of taking us to Karbala. The only desire of my heart is to see my father, for my weary soul is in flames consequent on his protracted absence.

Zainab:

O Bashir, I adjure you by the Lord and His Prophet, and by the luminous sepulcher of Ali, the cup bearer of Al Kauzar, that, if you have a mind to please me, you will take me to Karbala instead of to Medina.

Imam Zain al-Abidin:

O gracious aunt, may I be a sacrifice for you! Refrain from tears, I beg you. The road to Karbala is before us. Cease your sobs, for we are now proceeding towards your brother's abode.

Zainab:

O Zain al-Abidin the invalid, may I be a sacrifice for you! Do not forbid this oppressed woman to weep and mourn. Do you not know what I have suffered at the hands of the black hearted nation? From Karbala to that ruin in Damascus we were led bare headed. I swear by the Almighty that my weeping is involuntary. I can have no rest now that Hussein is no more.

Imam Zain al-Abidin:

Alas, alas! Your words inflame me. You bring to my memory the incidents of that cruel treatment that we experienced at Damascus. It was your lot, dear aunt, to be a captive, to be treated with tyranny and oppression, and to be made a fellow traveler with thirty thousand strangers.

(5268)

Zainab:

Woe is me! Woe is me! I am unable to say what land this is. My olfactory nerves detect the scent of blood in this wilderness. Tell me, dear nephew, from whence this perfume of blood comes. If I am not mistaken, this is the land of Karbala, to which we are bound. Is the stream from Hussein's throat still

flowing, that I smell such a strong odor of blood in this place?

Imam Zain al-Abidin:

O gracious aunt, may I be a sacrifice for you! We have certainly arrived at the scene of our father's murder, for I constantly inhale the fragrant smell of Hussein. God is witness, dear aunt, that I have become utterly restless.

Bashir:

O camel driversm lead the camels with your hands, and carry the sacred family of Hussein to Karbala, that, with bleeding hearts and tearful eyes, they may perform the ceremony of visiting Hussein's sepulcher.

Sakina:

I hope, dear aunt, to have the happiness of visiting the ashes of Hussein my father. As soon as it is morning I shall fervently embrace the holy sepulcher, and relate to my father the sad story of what befell us in Damascus.

Zainab:

O oppressed creatures, weep no more. Allow your overcharged hearts to have some rest. Let us lodge tonight in this place, and in the morning we shall arise and go to the sepulcher.(110)

(5269)

SCENE XXXIV

DEATH OF ZAINAB.

Zain al-Abidin:

Alas your cruelties, o merciless sky, whose habit is injury, whose custom is malice, whose manner is obstinacy! Why were you not subverted, o pitiless Heaven, at the time when Shimr put his dagger at my father Hussein's throat?

Zainab:

Alas your tyranny and oppression, o cruel spheres! Let me make loud complaints against your many injustices. I am weary of my existence, since I cannot see my dear Hussein's face. How tenacious of life am I, that, notwithstanding all these griefs, I do not die!

Umm Kulsum:

O spheres, may the curtain of your day and night be rent asunder! May your stars droop as tears down your cheeks! My eyes are about to become blind through excess of grief for Hussein. May meteoric darts pierce your eyes, o base spheres!

Fatima, the Bride:

O Heaven, whoever in this world saw a bride put on black garments and mourn on the day of her joy? I have become an orphan, vagrant, and despised by all. Unjust fate has allotted to me tearful eyes.

(5270)

Sakina:

Sakina, O Lord, is an exile in her own land, and has neither friends nor relation to visit her. All the people of my country are rejoicing cheerfully except I, who am sighing and complaining. Oh, I was reminded

of that instant when the shameless Shimr severed my father's head from his body with his sharp sword, thereby afflicting me with the grievous pain of this untimely separation.

Zainab:

Do not beat on your head and breast, o Sakina. I fear lest you die through over grief, o sorrowful creature. When you were in the ruinous habitation in the city of Damascus you did continually make mention of Medina, and now that you have come to that city, you do not cease filling your lap with tears of blood. Tell me, why do you do this, o distracted, desolate girl?

Sakina:

If it be Medina aunt, where is my honored father? If it be Medina, why do I not see Ali Akbar? Medina without my father cannot afford me pleasure. Medina without the rose of his face leaves but scars on my heart.

Zainab:

Zainab is very weary of her life; what can I do, dear niece? Thus was it predestined by God that you should become fatherless, destitute and helpless, and return to Medina. Have patience; may I be a ransom for your moist eyes! Have patience, as regards what has befallen your father.

(5271)

Sakina:

Teach me, dear aunt, how to forget this sorrowful event. I cannot obliterate the remembrance of my father's tragedy from my recollection. You did prevent

me from remaining in Karbala with my father; now, how great is the distance between Medina and Karbala! Come, dear aunt, for my sake, commence to mourn for the martyrs of Karbala.

Zainab (to Umm Kulsum):

O my sister, brightness of Ali's eye, take the trouble to bring me, o you who are afflicted with grief, the garments of those slain in Karbala, that we may set up lamentations for the martyrs, thereby making even the very angels and jinns weep and deplore.

Umm Kulsum:

O my poor distressed sister, take from me the clothes of the martyrs, and moan with fervor of heart, o sorrowful one, in remembrance of those slain and drenched in blood at Karbala.

Zainab:

Come and sit in a circle around me to lament, o companions; sing mournful songs for the misfortune of those who dies with thirst. And you, o good Umm Kulsum, take this standard of Abbas, stained with blood, and bear it, to remind us of his office. This is the thing, o Sakina, that you the brightness of my eyes, must do: hold up the blood stained dress of little Ali Asghar. Take this, o Fatima, the coat of Ali Akbar; and also, o bride of Kasim, the shirt of your beloved spouse. As for myself, my lot is to exhibit to the band of mourners the robe of Hussein, the king of religion; I shall lay it on my head, saying, "Hussein, Hussein!" and seek my Joseph in his coat of many colors.

(5272)

Umm Kulsum:

O young Abbas my brother, o you who was killed with spears, o my brother. Alas! Grief for you overpowers me, o my brother. May your sister die through sorrow on your behalf!

Zainab:

O innocent king, o Hussein! O prince without an army, my Hussein! O desolate and homeless Hussein! May your sister die from sorrow!

Sakina:

O brother who was endowed with all perfections, o my brother handsome as Joseph, look upon my state; may your sister die with grief on your behalf!

The Bride of Kasim:

O my late spouse, Kasim! O my fir tree branch, Kasim! O my free cypress, Kasim! May I die for your sake! My walking cypress, Ali Akbar! My disappointed brother, Ali Akbar! O peace of my soul, Ali Akbar! May your sister die for your sake!

Zain al-Abidin:

Cease your mourning, o destitute and afflicted creatures, for I am stunned by your wailing and screaming. Bear with patience the unfortunate loss of the thirsty martyrs. Groaning and wailing will do you no good.

The Inhabitants of Medina (to Zain al-Abidin):

Peace be with you, o chosen of God, o Imam Zain al-Abidin, the remnant of the deluge of Karbala! How long will you weep, o poor Imam? Your lamentations have made us lose our patience and endurance.

(5273)

Zain al-Abidin:

How can I refrain from weeping, seeing that I have lost the king of land and sea? I have been deprived of pearls and gems in the land of Karbala. Jacob, having lost a single son, became blind through sorrowing for him; how can I forbear weeping, seeing a father as great as the world itself has been taken from me?

The People of Medina:

O you who are lost in the abyss of affliction, grief, pain and trouble, the truth is on your side. Mourn on for the death of the King of Karbala; but there is one thing that we ask of you, o dignified Imam, which is that you should kindly come to the mosque, and deliver us with your own gem scattering tongue, an oration of your own composition, that we may profit from your grace.

Imam Zain al-Abidin:

Oh! How can I put my foot in the mosque for such a solemn act, seeing that my father has lately been killed, and I must shed tears for him? But since you are so importunate, I shall, for your sake, place myself on the top of the pulpit, however sad I may be.

The People of Medina:

Though the world was filled with the tyrannical influence of the family of Abu Sufyan (ancestor of the Umayya dynasty; enemy of the Prophet Muhammad) yet, thanks be to God, truth has once again been established in its own central seat. O asylum and guide of all men, both old and young, deliver your speech, that we may offer our souls for your words.

(5274)

Imam Zain al-Abidin:

Oh! Which of the magnified pains of Hussein shall declare to you? Or which of his numerous sorrows shall I describe? By the Lord do I swear, I cannot dare to relate the thing with my tongue, nor can I show forth the exact sufferings of the martyrs with my words.

The People of Medina:

Rehearse for us, we beg you, some of the trials of Hussein; talk to us of the temptations Hussein had in the plain of Karbala.

Imam Zain al-Abidin:

O friends, what shall I tell you about the battle of Karbala? How can I say what happened to us there? O men and women, beat first on your heads and breasts before I repeat what misfortunes befell my dear father. They killed Hussein on Friday, making him roll in his own blood with thirsty lips. After that sad transaction they rushed atrociously on the family in the pavilion, tying the hands of the destitute ones, and hurting the hearts of the women and children.

The People of Medina:

Alas! Alas for what has happened in the desert of Karbala, in a most cruel manner, to the destitute family of Ali!

A Certain Busy Body:

Know, o Yezid, that I have just come from Medina, from the threshold of the sanctuary of the matchless king. The praised of God, the lord of the worshippers, the son of Hussein, has seated himself on the pulpit, claiming that he is the true Caliph. Remedy the matter before the government shall have gone out of your hands, and the whole world become worshippers of Ali the chosen of the Prophet.

Yezid:

Reason tells me to place my foot in the stirrup and start for Hijaz with the most cruel intentions: to gather again countless armies from Syria and Kufa; to cut off, with the sword of injustice, the very seed of the house of Muhammad; to make Zainab and Umm Kulsum pass again bare headed and naked in the streets of the city of Damascus. Well, you are commanded, o Shimr, to go and destroy Medina, and do with this family what seems best to you.

Shimr:

I will go to Medina, and do to it what shall never be forgotten until the Day of Resurrection. I shall give such a slap to the face of Sakina that the impression of the blow shall ever remain on the page of succeeding generations. If God will carry me to the city of Medina, I shall leave no trace of the family of His people.

Sakina:

O malicious spheres, what have you again in view? It appears that you have gotten new ideas in your head; let the tyranny inflicted on us, the destitute, suffice. Woe to us, from the apostate Shimr! Alas for Yezid the tyrant.

Zainab:

Dear Sakina, why do you commence mourning, and mention the names of Shimr and Yezid?

Sakina:

I saw in a dream that Shimr the accursed, like sudden death, arrived from his journey on purpose again to make us prisoners. He put a yoke and chain around our necks, and carried all of us, small and large, to Syria. I cannot tell what the dream can signify; it has indeed made me burn with fever since I have awakened.

Zainab:

May I, the afflicted, be a ransom for your sad condition if, God forbid, such a thing shall happen again! Zainab must of necessity be a fellow traveler with you; I must also, a second time, become a destitute vagrant captive.

Sakina:

No, aunt, I am not weeping because of my captivity, nor am I complaining and wailing owing to my being made a prisoner again. I am rather sorry because I dreamed that, while the Syrians ill treated me, I could not see you anywhere among us.

Zainab:

Sakina, dear niece, do not vex yourself, but prepare yourself for captivity; the vision which you have dreamed last night points to Zainab's death.

Shimr (arriving):

Beat the drum, o Syrians, most maliciously, and let the people know of our arrival at Medina. O armies of Damascus and Mosul, enter all at once into the town, and raise a great disturbance in the city by the slaughter of the family of the Prophet with the edge of the sword.

Sakina:

O muslims, I am quite overwhelmed on hearing the rough voice of Shimr the infidel. Trembling has fallen on me from dread of him; fear has made the very marrow of my bones burn.

(5277)

Shimr:

I have, o Zain al-Abidin, to take your life, and drag your feeble body on the ground. I have heard that you have become a leader of mankind, and have taken your seat once more on the pulpit. I have received orders to sever your head from your body, with the edge of this my dagger.

Imam Zain al-Abidin:

Look upon me the invalid, o God, my Lord, in the hands of the wicked enemy.

Shimr:

O poor afflicted Zain al-Abidin, do not complain of me to God; tell me, now, where is your wretched, miserable aunt, where is Zainab the sorrowful? I am commanded to make her pass bare headed in the streets and bazaars.

Imam Zain al-Abidin:

My poor melancholy desolate aunt is continually beating her head, mourning grievously for her brother. Let my aunt alone, you accursed skeptic; do not hurt or trouble her maliciously; fear the result of her sighs.

Shimr:

Your sad entreaties cannot soften my heart. I must again carry off your aunt. O Zainab the sorrowful, o daughter of the Prince of Arabia, let it be known to you that you must be a captive, a prisoner, again.

(5278)

Zainab:

Alas! The dream of Sakina has its real fulfillment, the tree of misery bears its bitter fruit in the garden of malice. Shimr, the accursed wretch, is about to mistreat me again; once more I must become weary of my life.

Shimr:

O oppressed Zainab o sister of Hussein, now cease from making these doleful noises; tell me, where is Sakina, the daughter of Hussein? Because Yezid has particularly made mention of her, demanding me to seize her a second time.

Zainab:

Why should you inquire after Sakina? What do you want with the poor girl, now that you have cruelly killed her father?

Sakina:

O Muslims, my father's murderer has come! Mercy! O soldiers! What shall I do? My dreams are realized! How can I escape from this calamity? I do not know where to hide myself; grief has brought my soul to the tips of my lips.

Shimr:

Why do you run away, o girl? Behold the blood of your father still on this dagger. Today I have numerous things against you; I have many malicious designs in my heart.

(5279)

Sakina:

Dear aunt, let me grasp the skirt of your garments and be sheltered, if possible, from the cruel enemy Shimr; my face has become the color of violets, from the slaps that he has given on my cheeks. Deliver me, aunt, from the hands of this infidel. I cannot bear his tyranny any longer.

Zainab:

O horrid cruel tyrant, be ashamed before the Messenger of the two worlds. Do not slap Sakina so cruelly; beware of the consequences of her sighs. O irreligious man!

Shimr:

Cease your shouting and complaints, o afflicted wandering Zainab. You, o Sakina, stop your whining, show me where to find your sister. I must carry her off, seeing that the poor thing has noy yet experienced any captivity.

Sakina:

Give up your intention, o perfidious wretch! My poor sister is not well, she is confined to bed, grievously suffering from illness; she is so troubled, that she is weary of life.

Shimr (coming to the pillow of Fatima):

It is not possible that I should leave this broken hearted invalid. I must now lead her away as a captive. Up, desolate invalid, from your bed; Heaven, the plotter, has contrived new plans for you. You must set out with your feverish body towards Syria; the time of suffering injury and cruelty has come for you.

(5280)

Fatima:

Who are you, o foul, impure wretch, by the harshness of whose words the limbs of my body so tremble? I think that you are Shimr, whose deeds are so tinged with blood. Yes, you must be him, for your voice has at once banished peace and quietness from my mind.

Shimr:

Yes, o poor oppressed creature, I am Shimr, who cut your father's throat with this very dagger. Arise from your place, you sorrowful creature, and prepare to depart with disheveled hair to Syria.

Fatima:

O Heaven, have you at last made me a prisoner in the hands of the wicked enemy, notwithstanding my sufferings from fever? O base Shimr, be somewhat mild to me, for God's sake, for I cannot bear hard treatment.

Sakina:

O merciless, accursed Shimr, you who has not an atom of humanity in you, can a body so delicate that it is unable to bear the pressure of a rose petal, endure your heavy chains? I am your prisoner, o treacherous Shimr, withhold your cruel hand from this broken hearted invalid.

Fatima:

No, sister, you have been troubled enough already in Karbala, it is now my turn to suffer affliction and contempt.

(5281)

Sakina:

O sister, when the almighty hand of God tempered me and formed me, it was with a design that I should be made a prisoner of oppression. I must be led with shame and ignominy to Syria. I ought to be exposed to the public bare headed, and not you.

Fatima:

O Heaven, do you finally separate me from Sakina, and leave me solitary and destitute here in Medina? How long shall I again sit by the way side, waiting for her return, which may or may not ever happen? O my faithful and dear friends, forgive me with all your hearts in case that I have done you any wrong. Come, sister, seeing that it is the time of separation, let me kiss your eyes, for I am afraid that you will not return. There is one desire, sister, left in my heart, to which you must consent to grant, o my dearly beloved sister.

Sakina:

I am going away from you, bearing many scars on my heart. I carry your grief with me from stage to stage. Well, sister, tell me what is your desire or request, perhaps it may now be obtained.

Fatima:

Sit down, dear sister, you who are acquainted with sorrow, that I may see your face; since I behold death always before me, it is necessary that we should bid each other farewell once and for all.

Shimr:

O oppressed ladies, abandon your weeping and crying, or take them with you and set out for Syria. I have received orders from Yezid, o Zain al-Abidin, to break your head with a cudgel.

(5282)

Zainab:

Do not beat Zain al-Abidin with a stick, o tyrant, let your blows fall on my head instead of his.

Umm Kulsum:

O infidel, do not strike on Zainab's head with a stick; rather beat on the head of Umm Kulsum the afflicted.

Sakina:

O unjust one, do not strike Umm Kulsum my aunt with a stick; rather beat on my head, o execrable atheist.

Shimr:

Depart to Syria, o band of prisoners; there is no more time to be lost, o sad assembly.

Zainab:

O Shimr, for the sake of God and His Prophet, dismiss me, o ill starred, impudent creature, that I may go to the sepulcher of Zahrah my mother, and speak to her of my griefs and pains, because it will not be possible in the future for me to visit again her holy monument.

Shimr:

Do not scatter starry tears from the clouds of your eyes; go and visit the tomb of your mother.

(5283)

Zainab (at her mother's sepulchre):

O moon of the orbit of modesty, peace be upon you!
Look upon my tearful eyes. Arise, o mother, for a
while from your earthly bed in the grave, and see what
I am suffering at the hands of Time. Are you not aware
of my condition, your sorrowful daughter how I am led
away captive to Syria? Where is my former golden
litter, o
mother? And where is my brother gone? Let him now come
and assist me into my litter. Where are Abbas and Ali
Akbar, that they may endeavor to make me comfortable?
Who, mother, ever saw a woman, except myself, twice
led into captivity by the enemy? See how Zain al-
Abidin, the lord of God's worshippers, is bound with
chains and carried to Syria with tearful eyes, dear
mother. Sakina, the innocent daughter of Hussein, is
shedding tears and going to Damascus with a scarred
heart, o mother.

Shimr:

Enough of this crying, o sister of Hussein; set
out at once to Syria, by order of his majesty Yezid.

Zainab:

Zainab is goinh into captivity, o friends,
enveloped in black; behold her a poor homeless exile.

Imam Zain al-Abidin:

Beat on your heads, of mourners, for it is the
beginning of sorrow; that Zainab should go into
captivity is not a trival matter. All people, once a
year, have a month for mourning, but for us the whole
year has become a time of desolation.

(5284)

Zainab:

Alas! I do not know why I have suddenly begun to feel very dull: my painful and melancholy heart is melting into blood! Tell me, o Zain al-Abidin, for God's sake, what is this place called, and where does it lead? That view of the town which is there open to view, seems like the city of Mecca, or the land of Karbala.

Imam Zain al-Abidin:

This same dark omened glimpse of the habitation which you behold, is that of the ruined abode in Damascus, woe is me. Tomorrow the home of us desolate creatures shall be in Damascus, where the tyrants will lavish their cruelty on us.

Zainab:

The day of my death has arrived, o companions and the end of my life has come. O dear friends, ask Shimr to let us lodge to night in this place.

Imam Zain al-Abidin:

O tyrannical, ill visaged wretch! Thus does Zainab send you a message through me, saying, "You villainous fool, unmindful of God and religion, stay tonight in this place." She feels extremely ill; being in a very sad condition, she does nothing but weep.

Shimr:

O ugly and villainous Syrians, stop, for the sake of Zainab. Unburden your beasts in this noisy place. You may start tomorrow morning for Damascus.

(5285)

Zainab:

O great God, I adjure you, by the verity of Your Prophet, and by the merit of the blood stained head of Ali, the cup bearer of Al Kauzar, do not make it my lot, o glorious Creator and Lord of All, to again see with my own eyes the unsightly face of Yezid. No, rather bring the days of my life to a close, o God, for it is not expedient for me to live longer.

Umm Kulsum:

O sorrowing sufferer of the age, my oppressed sister, tell me why the color is gone from your face? Dust be on my head! What are you expecting, that, like a person on the point of death, you turn your eyes in different directions?

Zainab:

I am expecting that my brother will come from Karbala, that I may cast my soul at the dust of his blessed feet. Forgive me, all you my friends; behold I am going from you with a reluctant mind. Come here, Sakina, let me see your beauty for a while, for I shall carry with me to the grave the desire of being in your company.

Sakina:

O dear aunt, see how unlucky a creature I am, in that I have suffered three great losses: that of my father who was slain, which is the cause of my captivity; that of my mother, which has rendered me an object of scorn; and now that concerning which you speak. Oh! Never, never so! For if I be removed from your presence, and be deprived of the honor of kissing your feet, no abode will befit me better than the grave. Yes, I will go now, dear aunt, and sit sorrowfully in ashes! O God, how hard it is to be fatherless! How burdensome to be despised by all!

(5286)

Zainab:

O my fatherless and motherless girl, sit by me awhile and comfort me, The day of your aunt's life is darkened; my death, dear niece, is at hand. I have always nourished you in my lap, alike in Medina as elsewhere. Now my day has drawn towards its evening, the sunbeam of my life can be seen on the roofs and house tops. You know, dear niece, that I have no children left, and am dying, like a poor exile, in this solitary place. I beg you, in place of my two children to beat on your head and breast, and weep over me. Let this be your motto, aye, sob forth, "Alas my aunt Zainab! Alas my father Hussein!"

Sakina:

O God, is there a miserable one like me - a wretched creature, expatriated contemptuously from home? I bear in my heart the scar of my dear father's absence. I am destitute, helpless, and sore distressed in soul! Should Zainab my aunt go from this perishable abode, the world, I must die also.

Zainab:

Sakina, darling, do not weep so much, for I cannot bear to see you doing so. Come to me, o afflicted Umm Kulsum, for I have, dear sister, to enjoin you something.

Umm Kulsum:

Here I am, my sorrowful sister; what is your request, o crown of my head?

Zainab:

O sister of fair complexion, I have several things with which I intend to entrust you, to be kept faithfully after I am gone.

(5287)

Umm Kulsum:

Tell me what are those things may I be a sacrifice for you! and deliver them to me, trusting that I shall faithfully keep them, and with great pleasure.

Zainab:

Take from me this casket full of gems, containing the two sacred teeth of the Prophet. Take also this little box, in which is the blood drenched turban of Ali, the cup bearer of Al-Kauzar. Take this flask from me with expression of sorrow, for it contains some pieces of Hasan's heart. Take also the dear shirt of Hussein the martyr, and keep it with you like your own dear life, for my mother must intercede on the Day of Judgement concerning the sins of mankind through the merit of these things.

Umm Kulsum:

O my eyes! Whatever you, my faithful friend, has ordered me to do, I will, if death does not prevent me, perform the same faithfully. I see that your color has turned blue through thirst: here is some water, take it and nourish your throat.

Zainab:

O sister, do not aggravate my pains by reminding me of my pale color. Do you not know that on the day that Hussein went to Paradise he was killed while in the agonies of thirst by the inhabitants of Kufa. I must also, dear sister, got to Haidar (Ali ibn Abi Talib) our father with parched lips. O my companions, I, the sorrowful invalid, be kind enough to leave me alone for a time, for I intend to speak my mind to the Lord, and disclose my secrets to my Creator.

(5288)

Umm Kulsum:

Alas, o Heaven, how cruelly do you revolve! You always lay some additional grief upon my heart. I have suffered sorrow for the death of six brothers (Hasan, Hussein, Abdullah, Abbas, Uthman, and Ja'afar) of my own; with what strength shall I bear the absence or separation of my dear sister? How can a single heart bear so many deadly scars? Pour patience on me, o Lord!

Zainab:

Alas! Death stands before me, staring me in the face, while I am thinking over my past afflictions and captivity. O death, give me respite, that I may mournfully sing a funeral dirge for myself. Sit in a corner, Zainab, you poor distressed creature, and ponder over the injuries that you have received in your lifetime. Fate dragged you to Karbala, where destiny laid on your soul innumerable scars, poor Zainab! After the martyrdom of your brother you became a wretched captive, riding bare headed on a camel, poor Zainab! When you came to the city of Kufa, the women of that place pelted you with stones from the walls and terraces, poor Zainab! Remember the time when the unprincipled son of Ziyad ordered his servants to put you to death, poor Zainab! You were led away from Kufa to Syria with the sound of drums and musical instruments, without any helper, friend, or acquaintance to pity you or to sympathise with you, poor Zainab! A miscreant villain threw dust and ashes on your head in a certain place, but you only beat on your head with the ejaculation of "O Lord, look upon me!" on your tongue, poor Zainab! Where was the heroism of Abbas at that time to avenge you on the wicked party, o poor Zainab! Ah, alas! The time when they presented you in a most abject manner to Yezid, the treacherous mangy cur dog, in his court, poor Zainab! You saw with your own eyes how Yezid struck continually with a cane the lips which Muhammad, the chosen Prophet, used to kiss fondly, poor Zainab! How can you enter Damascus another time? Wish death for yourself at this very moment, poor Zainab! Submit to die in this land of exile, and give up all hopes of seeing any good in this uncertain life, o Zainab! I go with an eager wish to see the face of the Messenger of

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God in Heaven, saying meanwhile as a witness, "There is no God but the true God."

Umm Kulsum:

O friends, strength has anadoned my heart, for my sister Zainab is gone from the world. Come, let me close your eyes, sister, and stretch your hands and feet in the direction of Mecca, our Kibla. O Zain al-Abidin, do not remain silent, but mourn, and come and dress your aunt with winding sheets.

Imam Zain al-Abidin:

Oh! Where, in this land of exile, can I get winding sheets to bury the poor remains of my dear aunt? Come here, Sakina, my afflicted sister; go and tell Shimr, in my name, saying, "My aunt is gone from this world after many trial; procure some spices and a shroud for my aunt."

Sakina:

Know, o Shimr, that Zainab, whose lot was nought but sorrow in this world, has departed from this transitory life to Paradise. Have compassion on my tearful eyes, and furnish my poor aunt with some funeral spices and a shroud.

Shimr:

When Hussein, the brother of Zainab, died, his body remained three days and nights exposed to view without any winding sheet. He had no friend to carry away his remains, nor did anyone attempt to place him under the ground. Go and bury this miserable creature naked, or as she is. Zainab is not superior to, or dearer than, the thirsty lipped Hussein.

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Sakina:

Since you do not give my aunt a winding sheet, nor have you any compassion on my blood shedding eyes, tell me which is the road that goes to Najaf, for your cruelty has made me impatience itself.

Shimr:

Tell me, why do you inquire about the road to Najaf, because your words have made me curious?

Sakina:

I wish to go to Najaf and, with tears in my eyes, to inform Ali, the friend of God, about these things. I will say to him: O Ali, come out from your burying place in Najaf, your daughter Zainab has died; get her funeral garments.

Shimr:

O daughter of Hussein, do not scream so loudly. Zainab is not dearer to Ali than his son Hussein, who was buried with his body cut into hundreds of pieces, yet his father did not do anything for him. Go! Zainab does not require winding sheets.

Sakina (to Zain al-Abidin):

Dear brother! Ah me! The sarcastic words of Shimr. By the Lord, the very marrow of one's bones becomes inflamed by his bitter speeches. He says that the body of a poor stranger does not want any spice nor a winding sheet.

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Imam Zain al-Abidin:

Do not weep, poor broken hearted sister. I will wrap Zainab in my cloak, and have her buried. Alas, dear aunt! You have gone from this life, and escaped from many troubles, leaving me alone to suffer grief. Because you longed to see the dear face of young Ali Akbar you hastened to Paradise to behold him. Were you thinking about those who died in Karbala so that you went thirsty to the water giver of Heaven? Dear aunt, when you shall arrive at Paradise and have the honor of being in Hussein's presence, remember and give my respects to my honored father. As soon as you arrive there in her presence, speak according to the best of your abilities to Fatima concerning our troubles and captivity.(111)

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SCENE XXXV.

CONVERSION OF A CHRISTIAN LADY TO THE MUSLIM FAITH.

A Young Christian Lady:

What a well watered plain and beautiful landscape is this, o companions! The very air seems to be pregnant with odors and scents. It cheers the heart, and nourishes the soul with its fragrance and aromatic odor. I cannot tell whether it is the Garden of Paradise, or merely the bazaar of perfume sellers. If I call it the place of Moses the son of Imran (not to be confused with another Qur'anic Imran, i.e., the father of the Virgin Mary, called "Joachim" in the Christian tradition), I may not be right; so, likewise, I may perhaps err if I say that the Spirit of God is hidden in this land.

The Lady's Maid:

May I be a ransom for you, o fair faced lady! May I perish for your sweet name, to prove my faithfulness and attachment! I wonder what place or locality is this, for there ascends from its soil such a nice perfume of roses! I have but one request to you, o my sweet faced mistress, which is (if you think it proper) that we all may alight in this territory for a time, and rest somewhat from the fatigue of our journey.

The Young Lady:

I adjure you, O happy and auspicious maid, by the truth of Christ the Prophet, go without delay to the leader of this caravan, and induce him to come to me.

The Maid (to the Leader of the Caravan):

The intent of my addressing a charming young man like you, is, that my lady has sent me to you. Will you be so kind as to accompany me to her?

The Leader (coming to the Lady):

Peace be upon you, o most fortunate lady, chief of all beauties, moon of the sphere of glory! Declare to me, o majestic damsel, what is the reason that I have had the honor of being summoned to your presence?

The Young Lady:

I called you, o leader of the caravan, to ask you what this land is called, even this territory, which is invigorating to the spirit, like Paradise, and the very view of which brings the smell of musk to our olfactory senses.

The Leader of the Caravan:

Know, o good principled lady, that this land, which vies with the lofty Paradise this spot which invigorates the soul and refreshes the mind generally goes by the name of Karbala.

The Young Lady:

Order instantly that the animals be disburdened, and that the whole caravan alight in this pleasant plain. I intend to pass a few days in this spot, that our minds may be relieved from the dullness occasioned by the tediousness of the journey.

The Leader of the Caravan:

Very well, I shall most willingly obey your orders, since your commands are obligatory upon all mankind. Alight, o people, in this plot of ground, and rest awhile from your fatiguing journey. Run, o faithful servants; pitch the tents and pavilions instantly.

The Young Lady (talking to herself):

Oh, what a wonderful climate this land has! What a pleasant sight do I behold! What a beautiful landscape! In whatever direction I look, or wherever I turn my eyes, the very dust of the place appears to sing wonderful praises to the Deity! I am amazed at myself, not knowing what sort of spot this can be; my fate must have drawn me to a marvelous locality.

The Leader of the Caravan:

What is the secret of this wonderful phenomenon, O Lord God? I observe streams of blood running in different directions. I do not know whether I am dreaming, or in reality do see this strange marvel. At any rate, the mysterious things that I behold must have some secret at the bottom.

The Maid (to the Leader of the Caravan):

Come, let us hasten now to my lady, that queen of the sphere of glory, and inform her of the wonderful event, crying, moaning and heaving sighs from the heart while communicating our message.

The Leader of the Caravan:

Know, o heaven like lady, that we are in much distress and sorrow. A wonderful calamity, the like of which no human being has seen nor heard, must have taken place in the world; for where we begin to drive in the pegs in order to set up our tents, there gushes forth a stream of blood of an intensely red color, which fills the air with its exhaling scent of musk and ambergris.

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The Young Lady:

Your words have kindled a fire in my heart, and made the whole surface of the universe dark in my sight. Walk before me, so that I may at once follow you, and observe the phenomenon with my own eyes. None can remember to have ever heard of such a strange occurrence under the nine pillarless indigo colored spheres.

The Leader hammers a peg in the ground, whence blood instantly springs up.:

Come and observe, o handsome lady, how blood bubbles up at the foot of this slope. If you, o virtuous lady, think it advisable, let us at once leave this bewitched, ill starred ground, for the great sign which we behold in this wilderness may be a token of affliction and grief peculiar to this land. I fear that if we continue to remain in this place the jealous spheres will, by some accident or other, maliciously hurt your feelings.

The Young Lady:

I am sure, o amiable youth, that all your advice arises from fidelity and good intentions! But it will do no harm if, by way of trial, we lodge but one night in this plain of affliction. In the morning, as soon as the sun rises, we shall at once leave this dismal, grief stirring place.

The Leader of the Caravan:

We are willing that the few drops of blood that we possess should be shed at the dust of your feet, and have no objection to anything that your ladyship may think proper. Better sleep awhile in this field, o happy lady, that you may forget the fatigue of the road for some minutes.

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The Young Lady (to the Maid):

Come, o maid, I adjure you that you without delay fetch me a pillow (for my soul is going to burn; yes, the very marrow of my bones is about to be consumed in this land of trial) that I may repose a moment; perhaps I may be relieved from the sorrow of the age for a while.

The Maid (to the Lady):

Come, o beautiful mistress, may I be offered in alms for the safety of your pretty head! Sleep in this bed with perfect tranquility. I hope that your shadow will not for a minute be removed from us in this wilderness.

The Christian Young Lady, praying, retires to rest:

O great Lord, I adjure You by the truth of Eternity, by Your world-illuminating, atom cherishing sun, by the truth of Lord Jesus and the Prophet Moses, and by the veracity of Joseph, Jacob and Zacharias (father of St. John the Baptist), reveal to us, o gracious and merciful Lord, the circumstances appertaining to this terrible and mysterious wilderness.

The Young Lady (to Jesus):

Who are you, o you whose face shines like the moon? For I see the light of prophecy visible in your countenance. I adjure you by the Omnipotent Judge, o you that brings me good tidings (Greek: **Euangelion**: Latin: **Evangelium**) of Paradise, declare to me who is this Fatima and who is her crowned father, and what is the reason of her coming to this place?

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Jesus:

Know you that my name is Jesus Christ the Apostle of God in Heaven and earth, and that I have come as a pilgrim to this land, with tearful eyes, to visit the sepulcher of the son of Ali ibn ABi talib, I will declare to you who is this Fatima, by whose hands you must become a Muslim. She is that lady whose noble father is called the Prophet of both worlds. Her husband is the famous Ali the elct, who is appointed by God as guardian over all the creatures of the world. She, even Fatima, the best among all women (remember **Ave Maria**, the Latin prayer to the Virgin Mary: **Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum: Benedicta tu in mulieribus ...**, which in English would be: **Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you: Blessed are you among women**), will quickly arrive in this land of trial to weep over her son Hussein (once again, Fatima as the **Mater Dolorosa** or, in English: **Sorrowful Mother**).

The Young Lady (awakening):

I wonder what dream was this in which I, poor sorrowful creature that I am, have dreamed, and the excessive joy which has awakened me from my sleep! Oh! What good tidings are these which are brought to me in this land? Good news indeed, no less that that I have to inherit Paradise.

The Maid:

May I be a ransom for your soul, o heaven dignified lady! Why did you untimely awake from your refreshing sleep?

The Young Lady:

Know, o maid, that as soon as I fell asleep in this land of trial, I saw our Lord Jesus, having his head and feet bare, like those who mourn for the dead. He came to me, ordering me to embrace the holy religion of Muhammad, and promising me, as a reward, the enjoyment of eternal life in heaven.

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The Maid:

Come, o pious mistress, let me revolve around you. I beg you to cheer up your heart, and think no more of grief or sorrow, but sleep a little more; perhaps you may be freed from all manner of painful thoughts.

The Young Lady:

Know, o maid, that I feel like one deprived of her senses; but I see that your advice is deserving of respect. I beg you, good damsel, sit at my pillow and watch me while I sleep, for I feel, I cannot say why, very dull and sad, and have some curious presentiment that something is about to happen.

Michael, the Archangel (to Gabriel):

O prime minister of the court of the glorious Creator, o my brother Gabriel, there has come an order from the Lord of Heaven and earth that both of us should go down to Karbala, and after our descent there, we should, by His divine order, try to console Hussein the martyr.

Gabriel:

O my poor brother Michael, I wish to God that I had not been alive in the world! How can I bear to see the body which I caressingly brought up in my arms, and for which I sang lullabies to make him sleep? He is now cut to pieces, and thrown on the ground with contempt and scorn.

Michael:

O my brother, the very equal of my soul and heart, your words consume me from head to foot. Arise now in obedience to the order of the Omnipotent Judgem that we may, with tearful eyes, go and visit our lord, Imam Hussein. Then we may both set up lamentations as we like.

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Gabriel and Michael (to the body of Hussein):

O Hussein, you whose head is severed from your body, peace be unto you! O martyr of the temple of faith, peace be upon you!

The Body:

O my brothers and friends, on you be peace! Welcome, my dear companios, for I wish you joy and happiness. It is strange that you should remember a headless person like myself, and be mindful of your poor Hussein.

Gabriel:

May I be a ransom for your body, cut into many pieces! May I be a sacrifice for this your symmetrical stature. Dust be on my head! How well as a servant have I attended on my Lord! Oh! Why should I neglect to serve you as I ought?

The Body:

Tell me, what is the message of the wise Creator, and how has he ordered you to comfort the heart of Hussein, the thirsty souled martyr? Is my Lord pleased with me, or not? Is my martyrdom accepted at his court or not?

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Gabriel:

May I be a sacrifice for your throat that was unjustly cut? God, the glorious Lord, has sent you a message, saying, "O oppressed Hussein, I am your shield and buckler. I am a witness that you have fulfilled your promise and made good your word. The sole Creator has granted you four things in return. First, whoever prays under the dome of your shrine, his prayer shall be heard. Second, all true Imams of religion shall be of your seed. Third, the earth of the land where you are buried shall be a cure for all diseases. Fourth, whoever visits your sepulcher shall live a double life."

The Body of Hussein:

Gabriel, dear brother, I am glad to hear that our Lord has granted me four things. Say in return, O messenger of God, say as follows: "O mighty Creator of all things, Hussein has a regard for the salvation of souls. He sheds tears for the misery of his grandfather's followers; I am willing that my head should be cut off a thousand times more with daggers, if it be that the Lord of Heaven and earth will graciously pardon the sins of Muhammad's followers on the Day of Judgement."

Gabriel:

Do not be troubled, O ornament of God's lofty throne, on account of the sinfulness of the Prophet's people, on that day, for the God of men and jinns will certainly forgive the sins of Muhammad's followers for the sake of your meritorious offering.

The Body of Hussein:

Tell me, O messenger of the Divine Maker, where is my noble grandfather Muhammad, the intercessor of the Day of Judgement? Where is my excellent father Ali, the Imam of the age? Where is Hasan my brother, the rose garden of faith?

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Gabriel:

May the soul of your cradle mover, Gabriel, be an offering for your head! May I be a sacrifice for this your body thus rolling in dust and gore! Do not be grieved, your grandfather Muhammad the elect will soon, with your noble father Ali, come here to see you.

Michael:

Let it be known to all, both small and great, that Muhammad, the elect of God, is arriving at Karbala, and with him Ali and Imam Hasan, all dressed in mourning apparel. They are coming with sobs, sighs, lamentations and weeping, to visit the mutilated body of Hussein their beloved.

The Body of Hussein (to the Prophet and his companions):

O Prophet, O moon of the constellation of dignity, peace be upon you! O perpetual denizen of Heaven, peace be upon you! O father, how did you come to remember me? O rose of the garden of religion, peace be upon you! O brother, may I be a sacrifice for your soul! You are worthy of praise and admiration, peace be upon you!

The Prophet:

O Hussein, martyr for the people of God, on you be peace! You who was slain in the quarter of faith, on you be peace! Where has your head gone? May I be a sacrifice for your sacred blood stained body! What tyrannical, irreligious apostate unbeliever has maliciously severed your head from your body with a dagger?

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The Body of Hussein:

O my acceptable grandfather, may I be a ransom for you! May Hussein's poor soul be made an offering for your head! How strange of you to remember your servant, stranger still that you should come to Karbala. Behold what your sinful people have done to me, how they have cruelly put my head on the tip of a spear.

The Prophet:

Do not be sorry, o light of my tearful eyes; do not be sorry, my dear thirsty souled Hussein, for it has pleased the glorious Creator to forgive the sins of the Prophet's followers, for the merit of your blood which has been shed.

Ali ibn Abi Talib:

May I be a ransom for your throat that is thus unjustly cut! May I be a sacrifice for this your stature immersed in blood! At the time of your death, who was burning like a candle at your pillar? Who spoke soothing words to you in that hour, my child?

The Body:

When I fell from my saddle to the ground, I looked on my right hand and on my left, there was nothing to be seen except arrows and lances at my pillow, and there was nothing but the edge of a sharp sword to soothe or console me. I made many supplications to Shimr, the ill starred, accursed wretch, begging him to pour a few drops of water down my parched throat, but that wicked villain refused, and answered that I must drink water from the edge of the sword.

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Hasan:

Alas, dear brother, may I the afflicted one be a ransom for you! Come, let me revolve around you, O thirsty souled Hussein. Whay has your delicate body, O nightingale of the garden of light, been riddled with wounds like a wasp's nest?

The Body:

I am glad to find you by my side, O light of my blood shedding eyes. You are welcome indeed, my poor afflicted brother. Alas, you were not in the plain of Karbala to see how the careless cruel people led all my family into captivity to Syria! Well, brother, tell me, where is my mother, that best among women (once again, recall the Latin Prayer to the Virgin Mary, **Ave Maria: "Blessed are you among women "**) is she not aware of the condition of Hussein her son? O dear Hasan, I beg you to inform my respected mother in my own humble words, saying: "Mother, come out for a while from Paradise, and see how the body nourished day and night in your sacred arms, whose hair you used to comb caressingly with your eye lashes, is now rolling in its own blood by the tyranny of the inhabitants of Kufa."

Hasan:

May I be a ransom for your soul, O Imam Hussein! Do not lament so much and sigh to my great vexation. Your mother, O sore hearted nightingale, will soo come and see you with tearful eyes.

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The Young Christian Lady (awakening):

I do not know what has taken place in this field of battle, that cry after cry continues to reach my ears! Yes, I hear mournful voices and sad noises, which well nigh turn me into a flute. I do not know in whose chalice the cup bearer of fate has malignantly poured wine mingled with poison. Has Jesus Christ, the Spirit of God, gone from the world, that I may say that it is Mary His mother who thus laments for him? Accompany me, O my companions, to the spot from whence the doleful cry comes, that I may know who is the author of this bitter lamentation? Or whose rose of life has faded away through the effect of the autumnal wind of death? For how long must I conceal in my heart the painful sorrow caused by this noise?

The Maid:

O my virtuous mistress, what made you start from your sweet sleep in this distracted manner? Every now and then there happens something new to make you restless in this land, and ever since you have come to this place I have seen you weeping and heaving sighs. March out from this spot for an hour, that you may amuse yourself a little; perhaps these painful sorrows may leave your heart if you would change your abode.

The Young Lady:

O maid, what kind of a land is this, where the axe of injustice being laid at the base or foundation of one's happiness, pulls down the edifice in this sad manner? I fear that the tyrannical spheres will maliciously blow me away in this dangerous land. I forget all the pleasures and joys of this world by reason of the abundance of sorrow which now fills my heart. The more often I try to drive away grief from my distressed mind, the more frequently I find that new troubles come and congratulate us.

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The Maid:

Oh, may the soul of this miserable creature be an offering for your safety! Do not pour tears of grief so copiously down your cheeks. Come, let us walk off together and see the fields, that you may be diverted with the pleasurable sight of the tulips, roses and hyacinths. The view of the beautiful plain will relieve you from all sorts of dullness. I am sure that you will forget your grief in this way.

The Young Lady:

O maid, I feel so sad and melancholy in my mind, that my tongue cannot describe it. I swear, by our Lord Jesus and Our Lady Mary, that the sorrow which has settled in my heart cannot be removed by the sight of any beautiful field or plain.

The Maid:

I adjure youm by the Spirit of Christ the Prophet, not to say such things, o fair creature and lovel to behold. Come, let us set out for a while and have a good walk in these country fields. You shall certainly be amused by the sight of the hyacinth and the roses, of which there are so many in this plain, that you shall entirely for get what dullness of spirit means.

The Lady (walking out with her maid):

O maid, the further I walk in this wilderness, the greater does my sorrow become. Every step brings a new grief with it, and loads of sorrow re heaping themselves one upon another in my heart. I swear by the Virgin Mary that my sadness is increased, for I smell the scent of blood in this desert.

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The Maid:

*May I be a ransom for you, o handsome mistress!
I see the land covered with all sorts of flowers. Oh,
what beautiful rose colored tulips are in this land!
What fine fields and meadows! What hyacinth beds!*

The Young Lady:

*It is indeed a wonderful land, a strange tulip
field and rose garden. I see many slain there plunged
in blood. It was not strange that I felt so dull, that
I spoke of pain and affliction to such a degree. It
was not without cause that I was so melancholy and sad
in that dark night. I cannot tell to what nations
these martyrs belong, nor by whose fire of tyranny
they were thus pitilessly slain.*

The Maid:

*Rest quietly for a time, o my fair faced lady,
and do not now shed tears of affliction from your
moist eyes. Come and behold these poor slain
creatures, how their bodies shine like the full moon.
There is no doubt that these martyrs belong to some
great family, or are they all of them of the posterity
of Ali?*

The Lady (drawing near to the body of Abbas):

*May I be a ransom for you, o poor creature! May
I the wretch be a sacrifice for your dear precious
soul! O elect of the Creator, why have they cut off
your hands from your body in this contemptuous manner?
Why is there not a hair's breadth of soundness in all
the members of your elegant body?*

The Maid:

*For God's sake, arise from your place, O
mistress, and mourn no more; you have cried, moaned,
and shrieked enough, arise now and bestir yourself.*

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The Lady (coming to the body of Kasim):

Oh, I cannot say who is this beheaded youth, nor why are the palms of his hand so nicely painted with henna. May I be made an offering for you, O cyoress of the orchard of bashfulness! Why is your palm tree thus hewn down? I am sure that you have newly been made a bridegroom, but the jealous spheres have not allowed you to rejoice long with your bride.

The Maid:

I adjure you, by the Virgin Mary, not to make such doleful sounds, for I am overpowered by the noise of your weeping and lamentation.

The Lady (to the body of Ali Asghar):

Many thanks be to God for this His unexpected favor, for He has graciously given me the desire of my heart. Until now I have had no child, and it has pleased the Almighty to bestow on me such a precious little darling. Open your mouth to receive the apple of my breast, and rest like a dear soul in my lap, you pretty thing. Come, O maid, see how this poor little suckling has, instead of milk, received the point of an arrow in his throat. I adjure you, O great God, by Jesus to reveal to me the miserable story of these slain bodies.

Gabriel:

Prepare the way, prepare the way! Fatima, the daughter of God's Messenger, is coming. Prepare the way, prepare the way! Because with her come Khadijah, her mother. Prepare the way, prepare the way! For here comes the Virgin Mary, Asiyah, Pharoah's wife, and Eve too, the wife of Adam. Be at your posts, for Zahra (Fatima) is coming forth to visit her child. Shut your eyes, all men and jinns, for Hussein's mother is coming from Paradise.

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Fatima:

O my lost child Hussein, my child, my child! O my curved tree, my son, my son! (Addressing the Lady.) O sweet, eloquent lady, put the poor slain suckling in my hand; put the tongue tied nightingale, this newly grown tender plant, in my lap. Give me this rose of the
flower garden of Hussein, the monarch of both worlds, the rejoicer of my heart and soul.

The Christian Young Lady:

Tell me, O respected lady, why are you weeping with both eyes; why do you seem thus distracted like your disheveled hair? What is the reason, o solar orb of the eastern horizon of hope, that you wish for me to give you this little martyr? By the truth of Jesus and Mary, I swear that I will not turn this poor oppressed infant over to you unless you first tell me the names and circumstances of these unhappy slain persons.

Fatima:

You must know that this poor wounded infant, who looks, as it were, feathered with arrows, is the blossom of the meadow of my son Hussein, the light of my eyes. He is called Ali Asghar. All these martyrs whom you see thus cruelly beheaded are cypress trees belonging to the florid meadow of Ali, they are all immersed in blood through the tyranny of Heaven.

The Christian Young Lady:

Your speech, O lady, has quite upset me, my heart has lost all patience, peace, and tranquility. Who are you, that your sighs have such a potent influence?

Fatima:

You must know that I am the daughter of God's Messenger, my name being Fatima, the mother of the king of martyrs. I am the well beloved offspring of the glorious Prophet. I am she whose Hussein is maliciously beheaded. The glorious Lord Himself has described my father's position and dignity in the pages of the Gospel (Injil). I am she by whose father prophecy has been sealed, and my beloved son, the light of my eyes, has rolled in blood and dust.

The Christian Young Lady:

May I be a ransom for your soul, o laudable virtuous lady! Come, let me kiss you hands and feet, Madame; last night, in a vision, I was warned that we all must become Muslims in this very place, and that I must embrace the holy religion of Muhammad. I adjure you, then, by the spirit of your noble father, to do to me what the religion of your father teaches you.

Fatima:

Say, I am a witness that there is no God except the true God, that Muhammad is the Messenger of God to all creatures, and that after Muhammad the elect of God, Ali ibn Abi Talib the warrior is the immediate successor to that Heaven dignified Prophet. (The Shi'a call to prayer says: **"There is no God but God, Muhammad is the messenger of God, and Ali is the friend of God."**).

The Young Lady:

Be a witness, O God, that I worship You, O King, and confess and witness that there is no God except the true God; that after Muhammad the elect, Ali the warrior is Imam and successor of the Prophet. Come, o my maiden, take me kindly to the caravan.

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Fatima:

Every place in this plain looks like a garden of tulips; the whole surface has become, as it were, a field of violets, through the blood of the youths killed in it, but among all the martyrs my Hussein alone is not to be seen, wherever I look for him. Oh! Where is Hussein, the light of my eyes, that I do not behold him? He is not visible to my eyes, poor sorrowful matron that I am. (once again, Fatima as the **Mater Dolorosa**, or "Sorrowful Mother") O son of Ali the elect, where are you? Lift up your voice, my dear son, O may I be a sacrifice for your seet voice!

The Body of Hussein:

Dear mother, may I be a sacrifice for your soul! Why do you weep? Why are you standing perplexed in this wilderness? If you inquire after Hussein, come here.

Fatima:

O you who were slain with the sword of injustice, on you be peace! O light of the eyes of the best among women, on you be peace! Oh! How can Zahra bear to behold you thus a martyr? May I be a ransom for your throat thus unjustly cut, may I be a sacrifice for your body worn out by affliction! I wonder why the Heavens were not destroyed at the time the you were killed, why the foundation of the universe was not subverted.

The Body of Hussein:

O mother, I am glad that you have come; may the sacred body of your dear Hussein be a sacrifice for all of your steps! It is strange that you have been mindsul of me your beheaded son, and have remembered your destitute Hussein. See how my frame is cut to pieces, how the body which you cherished day and night in your arms, without separating it a minute from your bosom, is now rolling in its own blood.

Fatima:

O Hussein, may I be a ransom for you and your rosy cheeks! Come, let me kiss your deadly wounds. Where is your head, that I may be a sacrifice for it? Oh, let me be a ransom for your throat so unjustly cut! Tell me, in whose lap was your dear head when Shimr drew out his poisoned dagger and made it cross your throat?

Hussein's Body:

Except the wicked Shimr himself, there was none at my head at the time, and I moistened my throat with the edge of the sword instead of with water: my sister Zainab came out from the tent beating sverly on her breast, snd saying, "Give me time that I may first close my brother's eyes with my own hand"; but the ill starred Shimr would not allow it, and maliciously cut off my head with his dagger.

Fatima:

Where now is Zainab, or the light of my eyes Umm Kulsum? Where is my little girl Sakina the oppressed? Where is Fatima the broken hearted bride, or Zain al-Abidin, the helpless invalid boy?

The Body of Hussein:

They led all my family into captivity, making them ride bear headed on camels; they cruelly tied up the hands of poor Zain al-Abidin, and thereby hurt my feelings a second time.

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Fatima:

Do not be sorry, O light of my tearful eyes, for I shall appear before the Lord on the Day of Judgement, bearing in my hand the pearly tooth of Muhammad the elect; on my head the blood stained turban of Ali the warrior, and with both hands holding the mutilated corpse of your brother. Bearing your blood stained pretty shirt on my shoulder, I shall lay hold of the foot of the throne of Divine Majesty, and ask Him to give you may rewards.

The Body of Hussein:

I am willing to offer my head even a thousand gimes over for the salvation of sinful people, provided that the God of men and jinns graciously forgives, on the Day of Judgement, the sins of my grandfather's followers. (112)

Note that in Scene XXXI, "Conversion and Murder of the Ambassador from Europe (or Byzantium)" included among the selections from The Miracle Play of Hasan and Husain translated by Colonel Sir Lewis Pelly which we have cited above, there occurs a brief conversation between Umm Kulsum, a sister of Imam Hussein, and Sakina, one of the daughters of Imam Hussein, which contains a play on words is of special interest to us:

Umm Kulsum, a Sister of Hussein:

I am the daughter of Ali, the Prince of Arabia, the glory of the world. I am Umm Kulsum, at present an exile, a woman well acquainted with grief. I live among gazing strangers, without any veil to cover my head. Woe is me! All my confidants are gone from me. **Alas! Where [Persian: 'ku' or 'coo'; Welsh; 'cw', pronounced 'coo'] is Hussein my brother? Where [Persian: 'ku' or 'coo'; Welsh; 'cw', pronounced 'coo'] is Ali Akbar, my nephew? I have lost both my Solomon and his ring.**

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Sakina, the Daughter of Hussein:

Dear aunt, how long shall I be desolate - how long? For what length of time shall I suffer contempt, and wander about a miserable orphan? **Till when must I coo like a dove [Persian: ek qomree or ek fakhteh], or moan sadly like a cuckoo [Persian: "ek ku-ku or "ek coo-coo"]?** How long is this moaning bird [Persian: 'parandeh'] to pour forth her melancholy notes?

Sakina and Fatima Kubra, the bride of Qasim:

We two gems belong to one and the same mine. We two doves [Persian: do qomreean or do fakhtehan] are both of one dovecote [Persian: ek kabootar khan or ek kaftar khan]. Oh! We are worn out with excessive toil and labor. What shall we do, we poor orphans? Sir, we are the offspring of this people's holy Prophet. We two doves [Persian: do qomreean or do fakhtehan] are cooing for one and the same thing. By Heaven's tyranny we are made thus despicable. We are daughters of the king of the righteous. (See scene XXXI) (113)

There is an Indo-European pronominal root ***kwo/kwe/kw-**, one of whose meanings is "**Where?**". Derived from the above-mentioned Indo-European pronominal root is the Classical Persian **ku**, Modern Persian **ko**, which means "**Where?**". Persian and Welsh are both Indo-European languages. Also derived from the Indo-European ***kwo/kwe/kw-** is the Old Welsh **cw**, which, (Gaelic: **ca**) like the Classical Persian **ku**, is pronounced like the English "**coo**". Thus, in Classical Persian and Old Welsh, the words for "**Where?**" are phonetically identical.

Omar Khayyam, contemplating the ruins of a royal palace of the Sassanian Period, is reminded of the kings and heroes of the

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Shah Namah: Jamshid, Feridun, Kai Kobad, Bahram Gur, Kai Khusrau, Rustam, Isfandiyar, Bihzan, Siyavush, et cetera, and in

the following *ruba'i* (quatrain) in the translation of Edward Fitzgerald, says:

The Palace that to Heaven his pillars threw
And Kings the forehead on his threshold drew,
 I saw the solitary ringdove there,
And "coo, coo, coo", she cried, and "coo, coo,
coo".

Says the great Welsh scholar Ifor Williams:

"Our early (Welsh) poems belong to well-defined types, or are blended of various types. The simplest perhaps is what is usually called nature poetry; it consists of descriptions of a landscape, the view on a certain day, a scene in Spring or Winter, followed usually by lyrical passages, or sage reflections, sometimes connected with the particular scene, sometimes not. It never forms a complete poem, but is always introductory, a sort of prologue to another type of poem. The prologue at first was relevant: later it deteriorated into mere padding. Of the early type the best example is a poem in the twelfth century Black Book of Carmarthen, beginning with a line which will be familiar to all of you:

Kintevin keinhaw amsser.
Dyar adar; glas callet.
Ereidar in rich; ich iguet.
Guirt mor; brithottor turet.

Ban ganhont cogev ar blaen guit guiw
Handit muy vy llauridet.
Tost muc; amluc anhunet.
Kan ethint uy kereint in attwet.

Ym brin, in tyno, in inysset
Mor, im pop fort in elher,
Rac Crist Guinn id oes inialet.

.....

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Rec a archawe nim naccer,
Y rof a Duv dagnouet.
Am bo forth y porth riet.
Crist, ny bu(i)ve trist orsset.

Maytime, fairest season,
Loud are the birds, green the groves,
Plows in furrow, ox under yoke,
Green is the sea, lands are many-colored.

When cuckoos sing on the tops of fine trees,
Greater grows my gloom.
Smoke smarts, sorrow cannot be hidden
For my kinsmen have passed away.

On hill, in hollow, on isles
Of the sea, wherever one may go,
From Holy Christ there is no escape.

.....

A gift I ask which will not be denied me,
Peace between me and God.
May there be for me a way to the Gate of Glory,
Christ, may I not be sad before Thy Throne!

Kuno Meyer years ago edited four Irish (Gaelic) songs, which he dates in the ninth (or early tenth) century, songs of Summer and Winter. The first begins with **Cettemain cain re**: its **cettemain** is an exact parallel to our (Welsh) **cyntefin**, used in Old Welsh for the month of May, the first month of Summer: **cain** corresponds in meaning and also very closely in sound to our (Welsh) **cain**, 'fair, beautiful', the adjective which in its superlative form occurs in our Welsh song. Then **re** in Irish (Gaelic) and **amser** in Welsh both mean 'time, season'. The correspondence is thus very striking in the first line, not so later. Both poets bring in the song of birds, the green of the trees, the oxen plowing, the smooth sea, but the Irisman sustains the same joyous note for fourteen stanzas without a break, while the Welshman changes to the minor key in the fifth line, immediately cuckoos are mentioned. And so in other poems in the early period. It is a very curious thing that the song of the cuckoo invariably brings about this change of mood. For instance, in one of the Llywarch Hen poems of the ninth century:-

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At Aber Cuawg cuckoos are singing.
Sad is it to my mind
That he who once heard them will hear them no
more.

The poet then listens to the cuckoo on the ivy clad tree, and confesses "Still greater is my longing for those I loved." On the hill, on a mighty oak, the birds are singing, and amongst them loud is the cuckoo. His comment is **Cof gan bawb a gar**, 'Everyone remembers the one he loves'. He describes the cuckoo as the 'songster of constant song', and adds **hiraethawc y llef**, 'its cry, its call brings hiraeth' ('longing' for those who are gone). The blackbird, the thrush, the lark and the nightingale (Persian: **bulbul**) - all these find a place in his songs of love and pleasure, but the cuckoo is always a killjoy. Not so in modern Welsh poetry, nor in Old Irish (Gaelic), nor in medieval English poetry. That first merry lay set the fashion:

Sumer is icumen in. Lhude sing, cuccu!
(Summer is coming in. Loud sing, cuckoo!)

Why then the difference in our ancient (Welsh) poetry? The answer is very simple, though I am ashamed to say that it took me years to find it. It is because the cuckoo sang in Old Welsh! In Old Welsh the interrogative of place, 'where?' was **cw** (pronounced like English **coo**). Men everywhere hear the cuckoo's call as **cw-cw**, and so it was when the Leper of Aber Cuawg heard it, or the author of the Black Book (of Carmarthen) poem. But these men gave it a meaning. The monotonous, persistent question **cw-cw** - 'Where? Where?' rang in their ears, and saddened their hearts. "For", as one of them said, "my kinsmen have passed away". Where are they? The White Christ found them on hill and dale and in the isles of the sea: from Him there is no escape, even in the most desolate wilderness (cf. Psalm 139.7 - "**Quo** ibo a spiritu tuo? Et **quo** a facie tua fugiam?" "**Where** shall I go from Thy spirit or **where** shall I flee from Thy presence?").

[Note that the Latin '**Quo**', meaning '**where**', like the Classical Persian '**ku**', the Old Welsh '**cw**', and the Gaelic '**ca**', is also derived from the Indo-European pronomial root ***Kwo/Kwe/Kw-**]

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I think you will find a parallel in Omar Khayyam:

The Palace that to heaven his pillars threw,
And Kings the forehead on his threshold drew,

I saw the solitary ringdove there,
And 'Coo, coo, coo' she cried, and Coo, coo, coo'

So (Edward) Fitzgerald; the literal translation by

Herron-Allen is:

"Uttered its cry 'Where, where, where?'" , for **ku** in Persian signifies "Where?" or "Where are they?". No wonder, then, that Binning found this quatrain upon a stone in the ruins of Persepolis!" (114)

In Classical Persian, the Eurasian Ringdove [**Persian: qomree** or **fakhteh**] [**Scientific name: Streptopelia Decaecto**] was saying: "Where?, where?, where?" , where are the bygone kings and heroes?

As Ifor Williams noted, the same image occurs in Medieval Welsh poetry. Another, almost uncanny example of the affinities between the Celtic and the Iranian peoples.

The songs of both the Eurasian Ringdove [**Persian: qomree** or **fakht`ar**] [**Scientific name: Streptopelia Decaecto**] and the Common Eurasian cuckoo [**Scientific name: Cuculus Canorus**] are, in English phonetics, **Coo, coo, coo**. To Omar Khayyam and other Classical Persian poets, the Eurasian Ringdove [**Persian: qomree** or **fakhtar**] sang **ku?, ku?, ku?**, or "Where?, where?, where?". In the selection from the Ta'ziyeh cited above, Sakina, daughter of Imam Hussein says:

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"Till when must I **coo** like a dove [**Persian: ek qomree** or **ek fakhteh**], or moan sadly like a cuckoo [**Persian: "ku-ku"** or **"coo-coo"**]? How long is this moaning bird to pour forth her melancholy notes?".

Sakina, the dove and cuckoos are saying ku?, ku?, ku? Or "Where? Where? where?".

*To the Medieval Welsh poets, the Common Eurasian Cuckoo [Scientific name: **Cuculus Canorus**] sang cw?, cw?, cw?, ("coo, coo, coo," in English phonetics), in Old Welsh, "Where?, where?, where?".*

*Thus, to both Classical Persian poets and Medieval Welsh poets, Eurasian Ringdoves [Persian: **gomreeha** or **fakhtehha**] so Common Eurasian Cuckoos sang "Where?, where?, where?", and were harbringers of melancholy.*

*Not all members of the cuckoo family have "coo, coo, coo" as their song. The song of the notorious "Brain Fever Bird" of India [Scientific name: **Cuculus Varius**] has a typical call which seems to say "brain fever".*

*Interestingly, the commonest member of the dove family in North America [Scientific name: **Zenaida Macroura**] also has as its song "coo, coo, coo", and is commonly called the "mourning dove". Was it a Welshman who gave the North American Mourning Dove its name? No doubt.*

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The Ta'ziyeh is peculiar to Iran; however, it is not the only aspect of the commemoration of Ashura in that country. We will now deal with other aspects of Ashura in Iran, which will serve as introduction to Ashura commemorations in the Indian Subcontinent.

In Iran, processions are held on Ashura proper, i.e., the 10th day of the month of Muharram, and also on the 40th day after Ashura. These processions are called *Dasta-ye-Azadari* in Persian (114), and take place in both urban and rural areas. The processions may be simple or they may be elaborate and filled with pomp and pageantry. Besides the marchers, there may be floats representing the tragedy of Karbala accompanied by bands, drums and the singing of dirges and laments, as well as horses representing *Zuljaneh*, the horse of Imam Hussein present at Karbala. Men flagellating themselves also accompany the procession. The Shi'a ulama often frown on the most extreme of said practices of self-mortification, but have not stopped them. Breast-beating [**sineh zani**] is perhaps the most common form of self-mortification, and is universally accepted by the Shi'a ulama. Breast-beating is also a feature of Holy Week processions in Spain, as was self-flagellation in the recent past. Others [**zanjir zani**] beat their backs with chains, and, most extreme of all, are those [**shamshir zani**] who cut their heads with swords and

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knives until blood flows. We have dealt with the psychological aspects of this in the preceding chapter.

The most important item carried in the above-mentioned processions is the **Alam**, symbol of Imam Hussein's standard at Karbala. The **Alam** is a metal standard, often decorated with

feathers, brocade and silk.(115)

Another symbol always carried in said processions is the **Nakhl** or date palm, which symbolizes the bier of Imam Hussein, who was carried from the battlefield of Karbala on a stretcher made of date palm wood. Today the **Nakhl** has lost all resemblance to a date palm or a stretcher, being a wooden lattice structure in the shape of tear drops which symbolizes the tears shed for Imam Hussein. The **Nakhl** is elaborately decorated with silk, carpets and brocade during Ashura, but bare the rest of the the year.(116)

The **Tabut** is simply a coffin covered with drapery, and is another symbol of the death of Imam Hussein carried in Ashura processions.(117)

Rawza Khani or simply **Rawza** may be held throughout the months of Muharram and Safa, and may be held in tents, mosques, private homes or special buildings, called **Husseiniyehs** or **Takiyehs**. A Rawza consists of alternating storytelling with songs about Imam Hussein and his fellow martyrs of Karbala.(118)

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Hei'at-e-Mazhabis or religious gathering is the usual forum for a Rawza. There are two types of hei'at-e-mazhabis; **hei'at-e-mabaleh**, organized by the village or town quarter, and **hei'at-e-senfi**, organized by members of a certain trade, who may also own or sponsor a processional float.(119) Some refer to these organizations as "guilds", but a much more exact equivalent would

be the *cofradias* of contemporary Spain, which also are often composed of members of a particular trade, who own, maintain and carry floats for the Holy Week processions.

Ta'ziyehs, processions and Rawzas are the three pillars of Ashura commemorations in Iran.

It would be accurate to say that Shi'ism came to the Indian Subcontinent from Persia. The very names of local Shi'a dynasties - Bahmani, Khorasani - indicate a Persian origin.

As one might expect, Ashura commemorations in Iran and the Indian Subcontinent demonstrate many similarities, but also considerable differences, as we shall see. In contrast to Iran, in the Indian Subcontinent Shi'as have always been a minority within a minority. However, the prestige and patronage of local Shi'a dynasties was a great help in augmenting the importance of said festivals, notably in Lucknow and Hyderabad. Also, as I learned in Lucknow and have read in many places, Sunnis, Hindus

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and Catholics often participate in Shi'a Ashura commemorations, sometimes even helping to defray expenses.

The Ta'ziyeh, in the sense of "Passion Play" is unknown among the Shi'as of the Indian Subcontinent. This may appear strange, as Shi'ism came to the Subcontinent from Persia, and India, unlike Persia, has an ancient theatrical tradition, both popular or folkloric and literary; the well-known play Shakuntala by the

great Sanskrit poet Kalidasa being an example of the latter. My friend Syed Mohsin Naquvi in a personal communication explained why there is no equivalent to the Iranian T'aziyeh in Avadh, including Lucknow, the capital:

"Even though the culture of Avadh was created by the Moosavi Syed (or Khorasani) Nawabs of the Kingdom (of Avadh), it did not just copy everything from the Iranian culture. A new sense of shame and embarrassment (haya) and a new level of "interum" was added to the social norms. It is considered sacreligious to show pictures of any of the holy souls. Similarly, it was considered sacreligious to have other people playing the parts of those holy souls in a real stage drama. The Urdu Marthiyyah was developed to fill that gap. That is why the classical Marthiyyah is usually replete with dialogues between husband and wife, between father and son, and between friends. The words of the Marthiyyah were used to paint the pictures in the mind of the reader and the listener."

While Syed Mohsin Naquvi's explanation may serve for Avadh, I am not certain that it is valid for the rest of the vast Indian Subcontinent. Once again, one can only say that a development which may seem logical and natural is not necessarily inevitable.

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While not entirely absent, floats and tableaux play a far lesser role in Ashura commemorations in the Indian Subcontinent than is the case in Iran.

Though perhaps a bit less prevalent, auto-flagellation of the same types as we have noted in Iran is also practiced by the Shi'as of the Indian Subcontinent.

One feature of Ashura commemorations in the Indian Subcontinent not found in Iran is the "Muharram Fire" or Alava,

representing the trench of fire around Imam Hussein's camp at Karbala. Though not unknown in the North, the Alava is more typical of Hyderabad and the Deccan. The Alava may consist of a trench or large pit filled with burning wood, charcoal and incense, or it may be a simple fire in a ceramic pot.

Perhaps because of the absence of the Ta'ziyeh, Zuljaneh, Imam Hussein's horse present at Karbala, plays a much greater role in the Ashura processions in the Indian Subcontinent than is true in Iran. Louise Brown records the Ashura processions in the Old City of Lahore:

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"Maha's immensely fat cousin is hosting an evening majlis to which select local women have been invited. The cousin has a house near the sweepers' church; she's set up a sabil in the street that looks like a brightly lit little stage two feet off the ground, with colorful curtains and a canopy. Forty or fifty women are sitting cross-legged on the floor in her downstairs room. They are dressed in black, singing religious songs and looking disconsolate. A few are crying. It's like a funeral. A group of boys are irreverently playing tag in the street, but the women surrounding me haven't noticed them, nor the fight between two stubborn rickshaw drivers whose vehicles are locked together in what remains of the road. The women comfort one another as they sing. Every now and again someone glances up for inspiration at the religious pictures stuck all

over the wall: highly stylized depictions of the body-strewn battlefield at Karbala; drawings of Mullah (Imam) Ali, looking strikingly handsome, with a full black beard and smoky eyes; a big colorful poster of Abraham and photographs of the tombs of the Sufi saints. The food is served; the singing stops but there isn't the faintest trace of a smile.

The local community shows its religiosity and its wealth by hosting these majlis and performing the charity mandated by Islam. The better-off also organize parades, hiring a horse and all its trappings, and commissioning a tazia. Some of the participants in the rituals wish to pay their respects to the parade's patrom, but many are simply desperate for food. There are more parades, more matam, more food distributions, and more majlis in Heera Mandi than anywhere else in the Walled City (or Old City). In part this is because there are far more Shias here than anywhere else in Lahore, but it might also be that the people of Heera mandi fell a greater need to prove their religious and social worth. They are guaranteed to put on an impressive show.

Another Muharram parade is passing through Heera Mandi tonight. Tarranum Chowk is packed and the road to Bhati gate is lined with women as the procession advances in an energetic rush of men and horse. Alam, replicas of the battle standards of Karbala, take the lead. A great metal panja draped with bright shawls follows, then a smaller panja on a long pole wound with tinsel, flowers, and silky scarves. A white horse snorts as it passes by covered in finery, and following

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it is a tazia festooned in flowers. The women around me gasp and wail and some, overcome with emotion, begin to weep at the sight of the tazia. I ask someone what it is, and they cry, "The cradle. The cradle. The cradle for the baby." An old lady takes my arm. "They killed him. They left him for seven days without food and milk. He was crying and they wouldn't give him water. And then they killed him. They fired an arrow into his little throat." She holds her head back and puts three fingers into her mouth to illustrate the method. The women around us nod. It's as if they have seen it happen themselves to a baby they loved dearly. This may be a confused memory of the martyrs of Karbala and the tortures inflicted on the family of the Prophet, but it is horribly real to the grieving women.

Hundreds of men are singing from song sheets outside the cinema, sad songs about martyrdom, death,

and the killing of innocents and the just. Now I'm weeping too. Everyone from Heera Mandi is taking part in the ziyarat, the seeing and doing of holy things. To be accepted in Heera Mandi I also have to participate in the memory of Karbala. For the first ten days of the month (of Muharram) we must watch the men beating themselves, we must touch models of tombs and cribs, and we must admire a colorfully dressed white horse as it is divine. The horse represents Zuljaneh, the horse of Hussein, which returned riderless to the Shia camp: a witness to the bloody martyrdom. This animal can reduce adult men to tears and women to a state of hysteria.

Maha is distributing refreshments to the poor lining up in an orderly queue. She bought a large drum of milk that's been sweetened and flavored with cardamom and nutmeg: one of her male relatives is overseeing the pouring of the milk while she looks on dressed in her best black chador. Along the main road a hundred or more men are performing matam before a beautifully adorned Zuljaneh. Their bare chests are a bright shade of pink and some of the more vigorous have pounded away the top layer of skin so that their raw flesh is glistening in the sun, the blood running in rivulets over their stomachs.

The horse is well trained. It snorts with rolling eyes and stamps its restless hooves as the believers place their hands on his jeweled coat and kiss the flowers hanging over his back. I'm obliged to kiss his flanks, and the old man holding the bridle smiles and
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exclaims, "You're a Shia!". He hands me a fistful of bruised, slimy petals that have been made holy by their proximity to the horse's muzzle. My companions watch in satisfaction as I eat the blessed flowers. Happily, they do not taste of horse.

The Old City (of Lahore) is quiet on the eve of Ashura, the climax of the Muharram commemorations. Most shops are closed, their metal grills pulled down and their wooden shutters padlocked. Rickshaws, vans, and motorbikes no longer clog the gullies. Police barricades cordon off the main bazaars and chowks, and great tumbles of rusty barbed wire wind through the main streets. It's calm and peaceful, and boys have transformed the normally congested city into dozens of cricket pitches.

Ariba is accompanying me on my walk. She saunters barefoot by my side. I wonder if her lack of shoes is a kind of Muharram ritual of suffering and sacrifice.

She's never struck me as a religious girl, so I ask her. She tells me that her shoes broke a few weeks ago, but that her mother says she doesn't have the money to buy new ones. Maha, however, has had enough money to buy me a new black cotton suit like her own especially for Muharram. I wince at the girl's broad, rough feet on the road and promise to take her to Barba Market for some new shoes as soon as Ashura is over.

We stop at one of the few open shops where an audience has assembled to watch sheep being butchered. Ariba's interest wavers when she spots a man selling gola - ices - from a cart on the opposite side of the road. Golas are a favorite with the children now that the hot season is here. The gola wallah shaves pieces off a block of ice with a plane set into a wooden frame, packs the ice into a mold, and pushes in a sharp stick as a handle. The lump of reconstituted ice is pulled out of the mold and drenched in the syrup of your choice - something bright and wholly artificial - and the top of the fluorescent gola is dipped into sweetened yogurt.

A loud slurping accompanies our progress around the city. Ariba is relaxed and on familiar territory. She's not fussing with her dupatta. She walks with a streetwise confidence. She knows the nooks and the crannies of the lanes, taking me into the gloom of narrow alleys that snake through the city. At their base they are four or five feet wide, just enough room for two people to pass if they press against the walls.

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But above us, three or four storeys high, the building twist in, one upon the other, so that in places there's only a three-foot gap between the houses and the sun never reaches beyond the windows of the topmost storey.

...In a side street, malika, Tasneem's landlady, walks toward us with a group of khusras. All are dressed in silky black shalwaar kameez. They look like a flock of big, shiny crows flapping up the lane. Malika caws and gives me an intense beady look. She asks when I am going to visit. Ariba stares at her in amazement because Malika has seriously overdone the scarlet lipstick and diamante, and even Ariba, with her great fondness for glitz, knows that the look isn't in keeping with Muharram. I'm glad when they rustle and sqawk off home.

The biggest procession starts on the evening of the ninth of Muharram and involves the entire inner city, skirting Heera Mandi as it winds its way slowly along the streets and galis, stopping for Zuljaneh to visit mosques and mausoleums and the houses of the

better-off. It will continue throughout the night and finish late on the tenth, on Ashura.

Masses of people crowd into the part of the Old City where the procession begins. Most of them are men jostling in the dark and pushing through bottlenecks in the galis. Maha, Nene, and I squeeze our way into a mausoleum where two hundred women and a few frail old men are waiting in comparative safety. Everyone is performing matam: beating their chests and chanting the name of Hussein. A shout from the entrance tells us Zuljaneh is coming, and there's an immediate wail and a dramatic surge in the chanting and the force of the beating. It's difficult to believe that the horse can enter this packed room, but it does. Zuljaneh jumps and bucks through the door as the women cry, fighting to get close to it. Maha elbows her way into the mob and I lose sight of her. Nena stays close to me, but she's not aware of me by her side: she's looking in adoration at Zuljaneh, tears coursing down her face, her breathing fast and shallow. Dozens of women hang onto the horse; others swirling around it until Zuljaneh is maneuvered out of the mausoleum and the women are left dazed and weeping.

A wild-eyed Maha returns. Her neck is red and she's bareheaded. Somone had taken advantage of the chaos to try to tear off her gold necklace, but the

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thief had only managed to snatch her best chador. Maha fumes, gingerly touching her neck where the chain has cut into her skin. An old lady clucks in sympathy and gives Maha a shawl to wrap around her head so that she won't be shamed by appearing unveiled in the street. Maha undoes her necklace and stuffs it into the great vastness of her bra. No one will ever be able to find it in there.

We follow in the wake of the white horse, the crowds around us working themselves into a frenzy. Long lines of men push through the middle of the spectators holding knives and chains above their heads. Those going in the direction of Zuljaneh are carrying clean blades pointed upward - they look brand-new and a few are still wrapped in newspaper. In the opposite direction come the men who have used their knives. Some walk, many stagger, their chains and blades held even higher but now covered in blood that runs down over their hands. They're stripped to the waist, their backs a mess of wounds and blood soaking their white shalwaar. Few are so badly injured that the blood-sodden fabric clings to the backs of their thighs. It's

a grotesque but triumphant and profoundly moving procession of men bearing their symbolic trophies of battle and martyrdom.

In the path of Zuljaneh men hold the wooden handles of their chains and swing them around, first one way and then another, so that blades cut into the flesh of their backs. Fine droplets of blood spray the crowd, and our hands and faces are speckled with dried blood long before dawn.

A loud, deep thud of hath ka matam is coming from a large mosque filled with two or three hundred women all crying for Hussein. An announcement comes over a loudspeaker that a child has fallen under the horse's hooves and been trampled to death. The women beat harder and call more desperately for Hussein: another child has been martyred.

It takes a full hour for Zuljaneh to arrive and the matam is becoming painful. I don't know how long I'll be able to continue. The horse arrives and is led immediately into a side room; the tired Zuljaneh is being replaced because it's impossible for one horse to parade nonstop around the city for twenty-four hours. Dawn is spreading through the open roof before the fresh, enormous new Zuljaneh bursts into the mosque,

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and by the time it has pranced out, two dozen women are lying unconscious on the floor.

The finery is being removed from the retiring Zuljaneh. Maha drags me into the room despite my protests that it's serious to be in such a small, overcrowded place with such a large, exhausted and nervous horse. The animal is swamped with adoring people kissing its flanks and rubbing it ecstatically. A large pink chador is taken off the horse's back, torn into little strips, and distributed to waiting women. These holy and blessed strips are tied around their wrists to bring them luck. As we walk away, Maha delightedly presses a strip to her lips. I hold my own drenched piece at a distance.

"What's the matter?" Maha asks.

"I don't like horse sweat.

"I reply with a laugh and, in an instant, she turns on me.

"Don't say that. It's such a bad insult," she berates, deeply offended.

"it's not funny. It's not horse sweat. It's beautiful. It's ziyarat perfume."

Back in Heera Mandi I sit in the bazaar with Iqbal, enjoying the morning sunshine and the release from the crowds. His wrists and forearms are covered with deep gashes, as if he has made a ham-handed attempt at suicide. He explains that it's the responsibility of family members and friends to ensure that matam never becomes life-threatening: it's hard for a man, mindful of his honor and his masculinity, to stop the flagellation voluntarily. Others have to intervene. One of Iqbal's friends was particularly enthusiastic and difficult to restrain during his matam, and Iqbal is bearing deep scars as proof.

Dozens of youths walk by in their blood-soaked shalwaar kameez. They stink of stale sweat and congealed blood but refuse to change. They wear their bloody clothes as marks of honor, swaggering with pride; you can see them wince as the material touches the wounds, but they pretend that it doesn't hurt. We

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walk with some of them up toward Tarranum Chowk. The area is closed off and police are everywhere. The road to Bhati gate is a seething mass of bodies. From the Tibbi police station we can hear the chants and see the flying chains as the procession continues through the Old City."(120)

Kashifi describes the actions of Zuljaneh after the death of

Imam Hussein:

"Its mane stained with the blood of that worthy man, tears streaming from its eyes, it headed toward the tent of Imam Hussein. As for the women of the Imam's household: when they saw it approaching with a bloodstained face and that its rider was not to be seen, a cry rose up from their very hearts. They began to speak to the mount: "O Zuljaneh, what have you done with the Imam? Since you took him away, why didn't you bring him back? You took care to leave him in the midst of his enemies, but you left without him to return to the camp"

(According to Kashifi the women then cry out in verse)

What have you done to Islam, O lord?
What have you done to the king of Kings of all time?
What dust is this, O horse, upon your face?
Your head is wounded, your mane streaked with blood.

(Kashifi continues)

"They began making lamentations. Zuljaneh lowered its head, and teardrops fell from its eyes. It rubbed its face against the feet of Imam Zayn al-Abidin (Imam Hussein's surviving son, who became the new spiritual leader of the Shi'as upon Hussein's death)

Abu al-Mu'ayyad al-Khwarizmi has recorded a tradition to the effect that this horse beat its head against the earth (in grief) so many times that it died. Abu al-Mufakhir has said that it went towards the desert, and no one has any further information about it."(121)

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David Pinault comments on the above:

"This horse beat its head against the earth": a significant gesture. Zuljaneh, in Kashifi's telling, itself engaged in the act of matam. Characters from the Karbala drama perform paradigmatic actions: if even Hussein's horse struck itself in grief, so, too, should we who hear the story. Zuljaneh's matam also reflects Shia legends to the effect that Hussein's martyrdom was an event of such cosmic significance that even members of the animal world and the angelic kingdom lamented the death of the Imam."(122)

Says Muhammad Baqir al-Majlisi (died 1698) in his work Bihar al-Anwar ("The Ocean of Lights"):

Nad the horse came from the battlefield, deprived of its rider,
Announcing the death of Hussein, shying with fright.
Dyed with the blood of Hussein, it ran towards the tents,
Its saddle pulled awry.
Zaynab said, "O Sakina, Hussein's horse has come.
Look, behold its condition!"

Sakina stood up, saw the horse as it whinnied,
As it flung about its reins, then she wailed a great
cry.
Weeping, she said, "Oh, the malicious joy of those who
have envied me!
My aunt Zaynab! They have killed Hussein and orphaned
his children."
And the stallion drew near, stained with the martyr's
blood;
Its tears trickled down to the ground.
When the pure women heard Sakina
Announce Hussein's death and cry aloud,
They let forth screams from the women's quarters of the
tents,
Bewailing Muhammad's favorite grandson.
Scratching their own faces and slapping their cheeks,
They let fall their veils and howled forth their
grief.(123)

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Below is an Urdu poem by an author identified only as
"Javeed":

When the Winged One, Zuljaneh, returned riderless
From the battlefield to the tents,
Every weeping eye looked about for the master.

At the final hour the horse took this message from the
battlefield.
"The Umma, the members of Hussein's own faith,
Have thrown down and trampled on the living image of the
Prophet!"

It rubs on its own forehead
This blood of the Martyr of Sorrow
And cries out in anguish, "O Lord of the Two Worlds!"

The whole body of this mute creature
Is wounded by arrows.
Against him, too, the tyrants have directed their
violent impulse.

"Where is my father?

*Say something, O horse of the holy warrior!"
She asks this, crying, the girl who once slept at the
parent's breast.*

*Overwhelmed by his words,
The master fell from the saddle.
The horse had sustained this treasure bestowed by Fatima
on the world.*

*This is the Buraq of Karbala, on which the Shah mounted.
The king permitted his own head be cut off
And then soared forth in a mi'raj, a heavenly flight,
Like that once attained by the Prophet.*

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*The animal's ability to recognize truth
Is greater than man's
At Karbala, Zuljaneh's conduct is exemplary.*

*Why shouldn't Faithfulness now kiss the feet of this
horse?
The mute poet Javeed has received blessings from those
in sorrow,
From the Karbala martyrs.(124)*

Comments David Pinault on the above:

"Two features of this poem are especially noteworthy. The first involves the poet's reference to Zuljaneh as the 'Buraq of Kaarbala'. Buraq was the mythical winged creature which (according to popular Islamic legend) was ridden by the Prophet Muhammad on his Mi'raj (the ascension to Heaven, referred to in the Qur'an, Chapter 17, verse 1). Shia devotionism makes frequent reference to the intimate warmth and closeness shared by the Prophet and his grandson. Here the poet highlights this closeness by suggesting that Hussein's actions imitated those of his grandfather: just as Buraq bore the Prophet in the mi'raj, so, too, did Zuljaneh bear the Imam in the battle that led him to Paradise.

The second feature I wish to examine involves the **takhallos** or signature closing at the poem's end, where the poet inserts his own name into the text. As remarked in a previous chapter, this is a device familiar from classical Persian poetry. Yet note that the poet describes himself as "mute" (be-zaban). At first this can be taken as a conventional show of modesty and self-abasement: good poets, after all, should be anything but mute. But then return to stanza four and observe that Zuljaneh, too, is referred to as be-zaban. So the poet is assimilating himself to the status of Hussein's horse. Like the Horse of Karbala, Javeed implies, he, too, is wounded and in sorrow. And like the horse he, too, despite his creaturely limitations, will do what he can to convey the tragic truth of Hussein's martyrdom."(125)

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Below is another Urdu poem:

When afternoon arrived,
The celestial sun of the faith became lost.
After Zuljaneh became separated from its master,
It came to the tent's entrance.

With a heart full of sorrow,
Zaynab came out of the tent.
She cried out, putting her face
To the stirrup.

She began to speak to Zuljaneh
With this complaint:
Alas, that you have abandoned
My brother.

O horse, so spattered with blood,
Has martyrdom befallen my brother,
King of Kauthar (the stream that is believed to flow
through Paradise),
Who was thirsty and exhausted?

My brother, with a body
Like that of the Heavens,

*Has fallen asleep with wounds
More numerous than the stars.*

*Has the lamp of the faith been extinguished
On the field of Karbala?
And what kind of tyrant has won victory
And made the world blind?*

*Alas I, along with the orphans,
Have fallen into the enemy's captivity.
And it has become my lot to remain weeping
In the darkness of sorrow.(126)*

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An anonymous Urdu poem from a placard:

*Zuljaneh, the Winged One of the Imam Hussein
Peace be upon him: Martyr of Karbala.
Zuljaneh's Account.
This horse struck its head
Against the earth and spoke:
I have lost my rider;
My rider is dead.
What are you asking, o wretched one?
My lord, the bearer of a kingly name,
Having been inflicted with wounds
Numbering one thousand, nine hundred and fifty,
At that moment swooned
And fell upon the ground.(127)*

Perhaps in part because of the absence of the Ta'ziyeh in the sense of "Passion Play" and the smaller role of floats and tableaux in the Indian Subcontinent, the Alam or battle-standard plays a key role in the Ashura processions. While the Alam may take various forms, the commonest is that called Panjah, from panj, the Persian and Urdu word for "five". The Panjah consists of a large, inscribed metal standard in the form a hand, the five

fingers symbolizing Muhammad, Fatima, Ali, Hasan and Hussein.(129)
As in Iran, elegies are chanted or sung during the Ashura or Muharram processions.

Very important among the Shi'as of the Indian Subcontinent is something called Ashura Khana, Persian for "Ashura House", in Hyderabad, and Imambara, Urdu for "House of the Imam" in the North. This may consist of little more than a closet where the paraphernalia of Ashura, or may be a large, separate building;

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indeed, under the navabs of the Khorasani dynasty, Imambaras were constructed in Lucknow which are not only large but are authentic architectural gems.

The large Ashura Khanas or Imambaras serve various purposes. They always contain a minbar or pulpit, an Alam, and what is called Tabut in Hyderabad and Ta'ziya in Lucknow. This last requires a bit of explanation.

While a Tabut or Ta'ziya, which in Iran is literally a coffin, is not by any means unknown in Ashura processions in the Indian Subcontinent, something quite different is far more usual. Living far from Shi'a shrines in Karbala, Najaf, and Meshed, the Shi'a of the Indian Subcontinent construct cenotaphs which represent the tomb of Imam Hussein in Karbala. Generally, these cenotaphs, Tabut or Ta'ziya are cheap constructions with a

framework of bamboo or light wood, which are ceremoniously buried after the Ashura processions. However, there are large, costly cenotaphs which are carefully hidden away after each Ashura procession and reused year after year.

Besides serving as a storehouse, the large Ashura Khanas or Imambaras also serve as meeting houses in which mourning sessions are held throughout the long period of Muharram. These mourning sessions consist of preaching and the recitation or singing of

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elegies concerning the martyrdom of Imam Hussein, called **marsiya** in Persian and Urdu.(128)

Says Kashifi:

Earth and heaven weep at the death of Hussein;
From the Throne on high to the dirt far below, all
things weep.
Fish in the ocean depths, birds in the sky's upper
heights:
All weep in mourning for the King of Karbala.
(dar matam-e Shah-e Karbala mi-geryand).

Paradise is awarded to anyone (argues Kashifi) who weeps for Hussein

... for the following reason, that every year, when the month of Muharram comes, a multitude of the lovers of the family of the Prophet (jam'I az muhibban-e Ahl-e Baayt) anew and make fresh the tragedy of the Martyrs.(129)

David Pinault comments on the above:

"Lovers of the family of the Prophet": here Kashifi defines a Muslim community not in terms of doctrine but rather in terms of emotional disposition and ritual activity: matam-e Shah-e Karbala, "mourning for the King of Karbala."(130)

Below are some Urdu verses dealing with the tragedy of Karbala, which are commonly chanted at public performances of mourning for the martyrs of Karbala:

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*Farid, may there always be matam (mourning) for Hussein;
Let there be no sorrow save sorrow for Hussein.
Until the Day of Resurrection, let there remain
Only this season and no other;
Hail beloved Hussein, O beloved Hussein.(131)*

*In our eyes, even now is that time when Ali's son fell
Bathed in his own blood.
On the battlefield, there resounded the complaint
And cries for help of one afflicted.
Even if streaks of blood now flow from our breasts,
May our hands never cease:
Let this matam continue on behalf of the one who was
wronged,
For as long as Fatima's cry comes forth.(132)*

*O young men of lamentation,
You embody the prayer of everyone's heart.
Truly, till the gathering of humankind on the Day of
Resurrection,
There will continue from breasts the sound of matam.
(133)*

*Today those of Karbala once more become our guests ...
This sound of matam is a message of wakefulness;
For this reason flows the lifeblood of our veins.
Our life consists of lamentation for the king
O exalted one, in this sorrow there will be a people*

Who will beat their breasts. (134)

David Pinault comments:

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❖ 1.) The verses evoke not only the event of Karbala in the past but also the liturgical commemoration of that event in the present.

❖ 2.) rather than emphasize Hussein's intercession in exchange for Muharram lamentation, the poems refer far more frequently to the group of Muharram participants performing the action of mourning. Implicit in such references is a definition of Shias as a community that has covenanted to perform matam: "for this reason flows the lifeblood in our veins.

Our life consists of lamentation for the king ... in this sorrow there will be a people who will beat their breasts."

❖ 3.) Even though in actual practice most Muharram participants limit themselves to simple bare-handed hath ka matam, these poems evince admiration for matam in its most spectacular and excessive forms: "Even if streaks of blood now flow from our breasts, may our hands never cease: Let this matam continue on behalf of the one who was wronged." (135)

In Hyderabad at least, various groups sponsor and enact Ashura commemorations and maintain the various paraphernalia of said commemorations are known as **guruhan** (singular: **guruh**). English does not have an exact equivalent for the word **guruh**. David Pinault translates **guruh** as "guild"; however, this translation is not only inexact, it is misleading. Spanish does

have an exact equivalent for *guruh*: I refer to *cofradia*, which word bears exactly the same relation to Catholic Holy Week celebrations as *guruh* does to Ashura commemorations. Henceforth, I shall translate *guruh* as *cofradia* and *guruhan* as *cofradias*. Perhaps this is another example of the special affinities which exist between Shi'ism on the one hand and Spanish Catholicism on

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the other; perhaps it is one of the many Shi'a elements which have carried over into Spanish Catholicism.

Below are some poems used by some of the *guruhan* or *cofradias* of Hyderabad. The following was written by Allamah Najm Effendi, and is used by a *guruh* known as the "Moths of Hussein". The image of the moth and the candle flame is very common in classical Persian poetry.

Truly, within these very breasts, our hearts are
lamentation shrines for Hussein;
Our heads are flooring stones of the doorway of
Hussein's house.
We will tell throughout the world his story.
Praise, O give praise, to the beloved splendor of
Hussein;
We are his lovers, the moths of Hussein.
We are his lovers, who offer our lives for him,

Hussein, who thirsted for two days,
Who received not even a taste of water at the moment of
his slaughter;
Fatima's beloved offspring, Muhammad's grandson.
Praise, O give praise, to the beloved splendor of
Hussein;
We are his lovers, the moths of Hussein.

This head was severed in the moment of making
prostration to God.

A deathly sleep came to him who had awakened the world;
He fell asleep in the dust storm, having lit a lamp for
others.

Praise, o give praise, to the beloved splendor of
Hussein;

We are his lovers, the moths of Hussein.

No one has ever seen or heard of

Such lamentation for any sultan.

Never before has there been such matam

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For one who announced the word of the Qur'an.

For thirteen hundred years there has been wondrous
matam.

Praise, o give praise, to the beloved splendor of
Hussein;

We are his lovers, the moths of Hussein.

May this effort be acceptable;

Perhaps through this means pardon and forgiveness will
be attained.

Najm, you, too, join these moths and say:

Praise, o give praise, to the beloved splendor of
Hussein;

We are his lovers, the moths of Hussein.(136)

The following is from a collection titled; Yeh matam kayse
ruk ja'ay (How Could This Matam Ever Cease?) used by various
guruhan or cofradias of Hyderabad. The author is Ali Javid Maqsud:

Having given all the wealth of the two worlds,

We must preserve this sadness.

We must live for the sake of Hussein,

We must die for the sake of Hussein.

This body might survive; it might cease to be;

Yet matam in honor of the one wronged must be performed.

May Fatima's desire be fulfilled,

Regardless of whether our life survives.

This matam is a prayer for Fatima;

How could this matam ever cease?

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Abbas, Hussein's warrior chief, what can be said of him?
The one who scaled heavenly heights of loyalty.
Even now, waves still surge
Since you retreated thirsty from the shore.
It was Hussein's command that you no pause to fight;
You bore every wound, you endured every wrong.
For as long as he was conscious, one thought prevailed:
His niece should not continue in thirst.
This matam is a prayer for Fatima;
How could this matam ever cease?

For as long as there is strength in this body
One must perform one's duty.
If fate were to grant us this happiness,
We must give away this life of ours as a sacrifice.
Either with tears or with heart's blood,
We must dampen our tunics with weeping.
A princess has arrived, one who has come to offer hope.
This matam is a prayer for Fatima,
How could this matam ever cease?

In our eyes even now is that time when Ali's son fell
bathed in his own blood.
On the battlefield, there resounded the complaint and
cries for help of one afflicted.
Even if streaks of blood now flow from our breasts,
May our hands never cease.
Let this matam continue on behalf of the one who was
wronged,
For as long as Fatima's cry comes forth.
This matam is a prayer for Fatima;
How could this matam ever cease?

This matam is the echo of Hussein's prayer, of Hussein's
call for help;
Each tear is part of a passionate desire for victory.

Thus even now there is an opportunity to come toward
truth.
Recognize the cry of heart and mind; join in this matam
lamentation!
Even now Hussein is calling; if a free man is present,
let him come forward!
This matam is a prayer for Fatima;
How could this matam ever cease?(137)
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Below is another poem used by the guruh or cofradia known as
"The Moths of Hussein":

Karbala achieved the preservation of Muhammad's
religion.
Karbala is where the prophets prostrated themselves in
prayer.

In the dust storm of tyranny is the search for truth.
Thirst performs with its wounds the ablution for prayer.
Behold the intimate speech between God and the servants
of patience.
Until Judgement Day the voice of truth is Karbala.
Karbala achieved the preservation of Muhammad's
religion.

Karbala is the record of the blood shed in thirst.
Karbala is the key that unlocks the Qur'an.
Karbala is the destiny of Islam.
Karbala achieved the preservation of Muhammad's
religion. ...

When the land of the Kaaba (Mecca, the Hijaz) became
boastful
Suddenly a voice came forth from the celestial Throne
"Where is there within your borders such auspicious dust
of healing?
Above you Karbala is exalted in rank!"
Karbala achieved the preservation of Muhammad's
religion.

In what realm can the like of this dust be found?
In the land of thirst is the palace of tears.
Karbala: come to the best of deeds.
Karbala is the furthest limit of divine servitude.

Karbala achieved the preservation of Muhammad's religion.

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*They set fire to Sakina's garments.
Again and again she was scourged by Shimr.
Burning wounds increased the thirst.
Karbala is a miracle of thirst.
Karbala achieved the preservation of Muhammad's religion.(138)*

Below are some verses used by the guruh or cofradia called Guruh-e Ja'fari:

*Whoever has true knowledge of Karbala knows
That to Karbala the Prophet's religion owes a great debt.*

*The blood of the Karbala martyrs has blossomed;
The desert of Karbala has become a rose garden.(139)*

Below are some lines from Mir Anis:

*There are nineteen hundred wounds
Of sword and lance and axe.
From the blood of the stones of violence
This body has become a rose and tulip garden.*

Bagh, gul va laleh: *garden, rose and tulip. We are indeed in the world of classical Persian poetry, though the language of the above verses be Urdu and not Persian. Of course, as we have noted earlier in this chapter, the blood image has a long history in Persian literature. As Lynda Clarke noted:*

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"In popular Shii martyr culture (in Iran) blood also has positive associations. Martyrs are (this phrase was a favorite during the Iran-Iraq war, and was translated exactly as I give it here) laleh-ha bi-khun khufteh - 'tulips clotted in blood' ... Thus a certain (Persian) cultural background combined with Shii martyr-ethos, have united at last in the Iranian context to make blood redeeming rather than a polluting substance." (140)

Said Hafiz:

Who can tell where (**'ku'**) Kaus and Kai have gone?
Who knows even now where the restless wind
Scatters the dust of Jamshid's Imperial Throne?
And where the tulip, following close behind
On the footsteps of spring, puts forth her blood-red
chalice,
There Ferhad pined for the love of Shirin,
Dyeing the desert sands red with his heart's blood and
tears.

Once again, an example of **'ubi sunt'**, literally "where are?".

Shirin is, of course, the heroine of the the great romance by Nizami of Ganja, Khusrau and Shirin, Khusrau being the Sassanian Emperor Khusrau II Parviz. Ferhad is the subject of Khusrau II Parviz who was also in love with Shirin. Since Shirin was a Christian, some say that she was Byzantine, some say Georgian, some Armenian. However, I believe that Shirin was Kurdish. In Kurdistan there is a place called Qasr-e Shirin, "The Castle of Shirin". Also, the name "Shirin" would be the same in Persian and

Kurdish. In the time of Khusrau II Parviz there were many Kurds who were Christians, because Kurdistan is borders Armenia,

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as well as northern Mesopotamia, which at that time was mostly Christian. Also, parts of Kurdistan were under Armenian or Byzantine rule from time to time.

Once again Hafiz:

At break of day in a meadow of tulips
I spoke to the early morning breeze,
'What martyrs must be buried here,
Lying here in their blood-stained shrouds?

The Persian word for "garden" is **bagh**, while the Persian word for "meadow" is **chaman**, so there can be no confusion between the two, whatever incompetent or dishonest translators may say. In the above poem, Hafiz distinctly says: **chaman-e laleh**, "meadow of tulips". There may be a bit of poetic license here, for the sake of the metre, as "meadow of a single tulip" makes no sense; therefore, Hafiz may have used the singular **laleh**, "tulip", because the plural, **laleh-ha**, "tulips", would mean the addition of another long syllable, as the "a" in "ha" is long. In strictly grammatical Persian, one would say **chaman-e laleh-ha**, "meadow of tulips".

In any case, if Hafiz had meant to refer to the cultivated tulip, he would have said **bagh-e laleh** or **bagh-e laleh-ha**, "tulip garden, or "garden of tulips". Since there are no wild tulips in Europe nor America, the expression "tulip meadow" or "meadow of

tulips" may sound strange. However, what Hafiz is obviously referring to is the blood-red wild tulip of Mount Demavand, the

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holy mountain of Zoroastrianism. So, in Persian it makes perfectly good sense to speak of a "tulip meadow" or "meadow of tulips", as in Iran wild tulips do exist. In any case, the wild tulip of Mount Demavand is indeed blood-red.

Below is a poem in Persian written by Uthman Asif Sabi', used by the Hyderabadī guruh or cofradia called: **Guruh-e Ja'fari**. This guruh is one of the few in Hyderabad that still performs chants in Persian as well as Urdu. This poem once again affirms Haidar Amoli's saying: "Shi'ism is Sufism, Sufism is Shi'ism", and affirms the role of the Shi'a Imams as great initiates, as Sufi masters:

Peace be with you, o you of exalted rank, salaam:
O king of martyrs, salaam!
The ruby of wisdom now shares with you
The same color and the same secrets.
O pearl of the ocean of Gnosis, salaam!

Your heart is full of the deepest secrets and essence of
subtleties;
It serves as a receptacle of the Qur'an: salaam!

Each rose effaces itself in prostration at your door;
The nightingale of mystic sight, too, recites praise in
your honor: salaam!

Listen to what cries of blessing my spirit gives forth:
The poet Uthman offers his life as a sacrifice for you:
salaam!(141)

David Pinault comments on the above:

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"As in many other Muharram poems, this **nauha** is directed to **shah-e shahidan**, the "King of Martyrs", Hussein. But rather than visualize the torments of the desert battle, this text evokes a different mood, one of serenity and peace. Here the Imam is praised in terms derived from the vocabulary of Sufism. The pairing of the rose and nightingale is commonplace in mystical poetry. (Annemarie) Schimmel says:

'It was Ruzbihan Baqli who highlighted the prophetic tradition according to which Muhammad declared the red rose to be the manifestation of God's glory (see Dante Alighieri, Paradiso, third and final part of the Divina Commedia). He thus gave the rose - loved by poets throughout the world (the great Irish poet William Butler Yeats noted that the rose is the mystical flower of the West - including Persia - as the lotus is the mystical flower of India) - the sanction of religious experience; his vision of God is a vision of clouds of roses, the divine presence fulgent as a marvelous red rose. Since this flower reveals divine beauty and glory most perfectly, the nightingale, symbol of the longing soul, is once and forever bound to love it - and the numberless roses and nightingales in Persian poetry take on, wittingly or unwittingly, this metaphysical connotation of soul-bird and divine rose.' (142)

There is one reference to the violence of Hussein's death, but it is discreet. His blood-stained corpse matches the color of the ruby of wisdom.

'Behind all created beauty the mystic sees a witness to the source of eternal beauty - the ruby is the heart of the stone, which has been transformed into a priceless jewel through patience and shedding its blood.'

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(again I rely on (Annemarie) Schimmel's discussion of Sufi symbols)"(143)

"The poet thus acknowledges Hussein's death but passes on at once to praise a quality that transcends death: mystical knowledge. 'O pearl of the ocean of Gnosis, salaam!' The phrase translated by "ocean of Gnosis" is darya-ye 'irfan. 'Irfan, "gnosis", can also be rendered as "esoteric insight". Moojan Momen's study of Shia Islam notes that irfan is often linked to interpretations of the Qur'an that bring out the scripture's inner or hidden meanings. This should help us understand the reference to Hussein's heart as a "receptacle of the Qur'an". The Persian phrase is rihl-e Qur'an. The word rihl refers to a bookstand, a frame to hold a copy of sacred scripture."(144)

David Pinault continues:

"Shia Gnostics share with Sufi masters the feeling of being a select minority within Islam. Shias and Sufis (who are often one and the same person) alike perceive a reality unnoticed by the multitude. For Shias the means of access to this secret is participation in the events of Karbala."(145)

Before proceeding, it may be necessary to make a small digression, for the benefit of readers who are unfamiliar with the character of Hurr ibn al-Riyahi and his role in the tragedy of Karbala.

Says David Pinault:

"Just before the combat between Hussein and Yazid's forces, the Imam cried out, 'Is there anyone who will come to my rescue for the sake of God? Is there any person who will dispel the danger that threatens the ladies of the Prophet's house?'"(146)

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This incident is recounted by the Shia author Mustafa Hussein Sahib in a pamphlet printed in Lucknow entitled What Happened at Karbala? His account tells of the effect that Imam Hussein's cry had on one of Yazid's soldiers, Hurr ibn al-Riyahi:

'Hurr walked away from his regiment and stood alone and silent. He was trembling. Mujahir ibn Aus accosted him thus, '...I am surprised to notice your disgraceful condition as you are shaking with fear.'

Hurr replied, 'I tremble not for fear of battle, but because I have to choose between Heeaven and Hell, and by God, I shall never prefer anything to Heaven, even if I am flayed to bits and burnt for it.'

So saying, he spurred his horse and galloped away towards Hussein. He put one hand on his head and cried, 'O God, forgive me and accept my repentance.' (147)

To express his repentance, Hurr fought beside Hussein and dies a martyr. Another version of this story, written by the Ayatollah Hibat ud-Din ash-Shahristani, puns on the fact that in Arabic the name Hurr also has the literal meaning 'free man'. According to this version, as Hurr lay dying on the battlefield, Hussein saluted him with the words, 'You were a free man as your mother named you in this world, and you are blessed in the next.' (148)

In effect, Ayatollah Hibat ud-Din ash-Shahristani's version simply takes up where Mustafa Hussein Sahib's version leaves off. In any case, Hurr is a gallant and honorable man who "prefers death before dishonor".

Below is a poem used by the Hyderabadî guruh or cofradia called the Anjuman'e Ma'sumeen or "Association of the Immaculate Ones:

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*Karbala is a jihad, Karbala is steadfastness
You have given a message which will endure until the Day
of Judgement.
The spirit of Karbala, the secret of the world's origin
And the mysteries of creation.
Hail, beloved Hussein, O beloved Hussein*

*Lord of life, conqueror of death,
Light of the ancients, unveiler of Eternity,
Karbala is your everlasting citadel.
Hail, beloved Hussein, O beloved Hussein.*

*Reference to Hurr is on every page of the story,
He who heard the sound of truth,
The inner meaning of the adhan (pronounced "azan" in
Persian and Urdu), the call to prayer,*

*He who heard and came forward, the morning of Karbala.
Hail, beloved Hussein, O beloved Hussein. (149)*

*Below is another example of Sufi-oriented Shi'a devotional
literature, this exquisite, very Persian-flavored Urdu poem by an
unnamed author is from a collection titled Bayaz-e matam (The Book
of Matam/Mourning) sold at a popular Shi'a shrine in Lahore called*

Karbala Gamay-Shah:

*In the rose garden,
The early morning's breeze from the East
Searches only for you.
On the tongue of the nightingale ('bulbul' in Persian).
Is there talk
Of no one but you.
Your creative power
Shows its splendor
In every color.
Whichever flower I smell,
Your fragrance is there.(150)*

Comments David Pinault:

"This poem offers Qur'anic imagery together with familiar (Persian) mystical vocabulary: the gardens of Paradise, the rose and the nightingale. The statement, 'On the tongue of the nightingale is there talk of no one but you', illustrates a Sufi concept called *lisan al-hal*, the tongue of circumstance'. Every being in creation, to the extent that it can, gives utterance to its circumstance, to its circumstance, to its state of separation from the Creator and desire for reunion. Says Annemarie Schimmel:

'The Qur'an asserts that everything created worships God; everything utters praise and thanks to its creator in its own tongue, which may be the human voice, the humming of the bee, the growing of the leaves, the scent of the flower, or just the *lisan al-hal*, the "state of speaking by itself," someone's whole attitude." ...

..."The Musibatname (The Book of Affliction, is one of the works of the great Persian Sufi poet Farid al-Din Attar) is the story of the Sufi's quest for the absolute: in an objectification of the experience of the forty days' seclusion, the mystic wanders through the world of created beings, from the divine spirit down to the *lisan al-hal*, the "tongue of the state" of wind and earth, of fire and sea, and hears the endless yearning of all creatures, who in a state of confusion long for their original home. The experiences that result from discussions with the forty created beings are submitted, one by one, to the Pir, who explains them. Finally, under the guidance of the Prophet Muhammad, the seeker finds his way into the ocean of his own soul, where all longing ends. But even the union with the ocean of the soul is not final - when the soul has finished its journey to God, the journey in God will begin - the state that the mystics call *baqa*, subsistence in God - and the soul will traverse ever new abysses of the fathomless divine being, of which no tongue can speak."

No explicit reference is made anywhere in this poem to (Imam) Hussein or the other Karbala martyrs. Only the setting of these verses, embedded as they are within a 'book of matam', invites us to modulate our understanding of the text. The Beloved of whom the nightingale speaks could be understood as God; alternatively the subject might be the Imam, whose blood transformed the desert into a rose garden. Indirection governs this poem."(151)

Below is an Urdu poem by the 20th century poet Mustafa Zaydi:

After all that has happened to the Imam of the
encampment
Where mouths were parched with thirst,
Whom could I tell? How could I speak?
Karbala, O Karbala!

How could the story be told,
Of wretchedness and shame?
A family of exalted lineage,
Driven forth in dishonor.

A water flask in which
The tongues of arrows slaked their thirst.
A green banner has been lowered
Into the midst of dust and blood.

A sigh that rose forth from the breast
Has been lost in the desert wastes;
A light that has failed
In the declining hours of the day.

That corpse of the lionlike family,
Of the family of the Prophet,
That corpse of Ali Akbar, who had once slept
In the lap of the recite of Qur'anic verses.

*That corpse, its arms hacked away,
Of one who had guarded the battle flag;
That corpse of Ali Asghar, the infant who drank milk
As it listened to lullabies.*

*The innocent youths, who had endured
The taunts of the barbarians:
Aun and Muhammad, who stretched forth their hands,
So small, so small. (152)*

*Below is a brief but exquisite poem in Urdu which speaks of
the tragedy of Karbala:*

*The cypress trees and jasmine mourn
Today, this very day.*

*The flower gardens are afflicted
Today, this very day*

*The songbirds, too, feel their hearts broken
Today, this very day.*

*Open is the gate of sorrow
Today, this very day. (153)*

*Perhaps due to the absence of the ta'ziyeh or "Passion Play",
the recitation or singing of poetry, whether during the
processions or in the Ashura Khanas or Imambaras, plays a
considerably larger role in Muharram or Ashura commemorations in
the Indian Subcontinent than is the case in Iran. Marsiyas or
elegies in memory of the martyrdom of Imam Hussein have been
composed in many of the languages of the Indian Subcontinent,
including Dravidian languages such as Telugu and Kannada, as well
as Indo-Aryan or Indo-European languages such as Sindi, Punjabi,*

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Hindi, Kashmiri, Braj Bhasa, Khari Bholi, Avadhi and Bengali.

However, it is in the Urdu language that the marsiya is most prominent, and in that splendid, elegant language (in North India it is said: "Arabic is learned, Persian is sweet and Urdu is polite") reached its peak.(154)

The exact origin and early development of the Urdu language is the subject of much controversy. Be that as it may, Urdu belongs to the Indo-Aryan branch of the great Indo-European family of languages; the phonology, vocabulary (about 75% of which is derived from Sanskrit) and grammatical structure of Urdu leave no room for doubt on this point. The very close resemblances between Urdu on the one hand and Punjabi, Braj Bhasa, Khari Bholi, Avadhi and Hindi on the other make it obvious that Urdu originated in the northwestern part of the Indian Subcontinent.

Ironically, however, Urdu first became a literary language with its own poetic tradition in a region far from its original home and in which the vernacular speech of the bulk of the population is Telugu, Kannada and other Dravidian languages of the Deccan, which, not being Indo-European, have absolutely no kinship with nor resemblance to Urdu. How did this come to pass?

During the 14th century, Shi'a dynasties of Persian origin established kingdoms in the Deccan, Bijapur and Golkonda being the most notable. Northerners came to these Shi'a kingdoms in the

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Deccan as mercenaries, traders, Sufis (especially the Chishti Order), scholars et cetera, and Urdu, the lingua franca of these

immigrants from the North became the court language and that of the ruling class in general. Because of the overwhelming - indeed suffocating - prestige and predominance of Persian as the literary language and language of culture in general under first the Delhi Sultanate and later the Moghuls, in the North Urdu remained a vernacular, not achieving the status of a literary language. However, in the Shi'a kingdoms of the Deccan, the prestige of the Persian language was not so overpowering, and the Urdu speaking ruling class began to develop a literature in Urdu, though using Persian prosody as a model. From being a mere vernacular, in the Deccan Urdu became a polished literary language.

Previously in this chapter we have cited many examples of Shi'a devotional verse, mostly translated from Urdu. However, these poems have all been relatively short, many or most written using the verse form called *tarj-e-band* in Persian and *zejel* or *muwashshaha* in Hispano-Arabic literature. However, there is a style of Shi'a devotional verse of the Indian Subcontinent which is much longer, generally narrative, often having an almost epic quality. We refer to the *marthiyya*, or, as it is pronounced in Urdu, *marsiya*. Which word is usually translated into English as "elegy".

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It was in the Deccan that the Urdu *marsiya* first appears, the first *marsiya* poets being Sufis of the Chishti Order, notably Jaman, a Chishti who resided in Bijapur. Ibrahim Adil Shah II,

king of Bijapur (1657-1672) was a marsiya poet in his own right, while Mirza, his court poet, wrote nothing but marsiyas, which were believed to have been divinely inspired. Mirza vividly described the battles fought by the martyrs of Karbala.(155)

Many marsiya writers thrived in Golkonda, perhaps the finest being Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah. Many other marsiya poets, too numerous to list here, flourished at the court of Golkonda.

The language used by the Urdu poets of Bijapur and Golkonda came to be known as Dakhini or Dakkani, though, as we have said, it has no connections with the Dravidian languages of the Deccan.

After the conquest of Golkonda by the Moghuls, Urdu-writing poets spread from the Deccan to the North, thus, in a sense, returning Urdu to its homeland. Literary Urdu changed on moving from the Deccan to the North, though not greatly. As one might expect, as Delhi became the new center of Urdu literature, the Punjabi element in Urdu declined in favor of the Braj Bhasa, Khari Bholi, Avadhi or Hindi element, and the number of Persian words increased.

This more recent, northern version of Urdu is sometimes called Dehlavi or to distinguish it from the earlier Dakhini or

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Dakkani. It was a Dehlavi poet, Ali Khan Himmatt, who first wrote Urdu marsiyas using the six line musaddas strophe, of which we will have more to say.(156) Prior to this time, Urdu marsiyas were written using four line strophes or quatrains.

The Urdu marsiya poets of Delhi and Lucknow during the late 18th and early 19th centuries are far too numerous to list here.

With the decline of the Moghuls, Lucknow under the rule of the nawabs of the Khorasani dynasty became the main center of the composition of Urdu marsiyas, and it was in Lucknow that the Urdu marsiya was brought to its peak of perfection.

Says J.R.I. Cole:

"Poets, such as Mirza Rafi'u'd-Din Sawda and Mir Taqi Mir, began making their way to Lucknow from fading Delhi, where they often turned their talents to (Shi'a) religious elegiac poetry or marthiyyah (nota bene: marthiyyah is the original Arabic pronunciation; in Persian and Urdu it is pronounced marsiya) poetry. Some, such as Miyan Sikander, Gada, Miskin and Afsurdah, began specializing in the marthiyyah. In the late 18th century poets replaced the four-line form (strophe) of the Urdu elegy, favored in the Deccan, with a more reflective (strophe) of six-lines (musaddas), beginning a transition to the almost epic feel of the mid-nineteenth-century elegies (marthiyyah or marsiya) of Imam Hussein." (157)

On occasion of note of Indian Muslim pride or particularism is struck in the Urdu marsiyas of Delhi and especially Lucknow, with its intense local pride. Below is an example by Mir Taqi Mir, native of Delhi who later moved to Lucknow. In this example, Imam

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Hussein has seen most of his supporters and male family members killed. He addresses the army of Caliph Yezid thusly:

I now swear to you an oath
That I shall restore my honor
I shall go elsewhere, having left this Arab
Army, I shall make India my abode (158)

Below are other examples of Indo-Shi'a pride and particularism:

"It is an undisputed fact that any description of Shiaism and the Shias will be incomplete without taking into account the role and place of India among the Shias and Shiaism. Historically speaking, is Shiaism as a doctrine and Shias as an important minority in the Islamic world still survives, a lot of credit goes to India and its traditional values of religious tolerance and the spirit of accommodation. In fact, this is the basis of a unique symbiotic relationship between the Shias and India.

Without resorting to any repetition (as the history and development of Shiaism have already been presented in earlier chapters), it may be remarked that the first signs of Shiaism may be traced back to the days of (the) Caliphate of Ali, the first Imam of the Shias. Quoting Futuh ul-Baldan, S.H. hanvi (1962) remarks that Sindh had come under the influence of Ali around 630 AD, and Shanshah, a leader of Shanshab lineage and a Buddhist, had embraced Islam. Subsequently, he was appointed ruler of that region by Ali. He was so deeply attached to Ali that at a time (just after the assassination of his spiritual leader) when Ali was the target of all sorts of derogatory comments in the whole of the Islamic world, he remained unwavering in his allegiance even under serious threats.

Further, there was a settlement of Indian Jats (a community of north Indian Hindus) in Iraq and Ali was their favorite leader. When Ali conquered the port city of Basra (Iraq) these jats were appointed by him as the protectors and custodians of the treasury of Basra (Ibid., 1962). Moreover, a historical fact which the entire Shia community of India have been remembering and repeating in their majlis (mourning congregation
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related to the tragedy of Karbala) is the request of Imam Hussein and his caravan to take asylum in India. When Hussein and his caravan were surrounded at Karbala by the army of the then Muslim ruler Yazid, Hussein, though refusing to bow before the imperial power of Yazid, suggested a via media - he offered to go to exile in Hind (India). The request was turned down and he was massacred along with his family members and companions. The fact that he chose India of all the countries is a matter of pride for the Indian Shias. It

also indicates that, even at that time India was a safe place for the Shias. It may also be taken as a tribute to the old Indian tradition of religious tolerance and it is not without significance that minorities everywhere had India in their minds whenever they thought of fleeing their native lands due to harassment and persecution.

The examples of some Indians taking sides with some Imams of the Shias and fighting for them strengthens this symbiotic bond further. The example of Mohyal Brahmins is a case in point. They have figured in the affairs of Arabia, central Asia and China. Highlighting the role of a group of Mohyal Brahmins settled in Iraq and Syria, Amarnath Rai and B.N. Datta (1976) suggest that this community was a staunch ally of Hasan and Hussein, the second and third Imams of the Shias respectively. These Mohyal Brahmins under the leadership of their chief Sultan Rahab played an important part in avenging the massacre of Karbala. Consequently, the descendants of the Prophet - the Sayeds - continued to show great reverence to the Mohyals as 'dauntless defenders of humanity'.

After avenging the 'massacre of Karbala' and extending their influence to Iran and Afghanistan, they re-entered India through the north-west and the Arabian Sea, spreading in Punjab, Sindh, Kashmir, U.P., Bihar, Bengal and Central India. Once back in India, they tried to reunite themselves. Before partition, most Mohyals were settled in the Jhelum district in the Punjab (now in Pakistan). With partition the vast majority were rendered homeless and they settled in the districts of Gurdaspur, Amritsar and Jullundar in the Punjab and in Ambala and Karnal in Haryana. Most of those remaining have settled in Delhi, Meerut, Agram Jabalpur and other cities. "They are a branch of Saraswat Brahmins. But they have renounced their priestly calling to become clerks, soldiers and

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farmers. They are a Punjabi-speaking community numbering 300,000. Half a dozen different etymologies of the name Mohyal have been suggested. The most obvious and commonly accepted derives from Muhins or the seven classes into which the community is divided: Datt, Chibbar, Vaid, Mohan, Bali, Lau and Bhimwal" (Ibid, 1976).

Moreover, one of the wives of the Fourth Imam of the Shias was a Sindhi lady who gave birth to Zaid, a prominent personality of the Shia world. An Indian by the name of Ziad Hindi was persecuted and hanged along

with Zaid. Many of the kinsmen and direct descendants of the Shia Imam, when threatened with persecution, migrated to the Punjab and Sindh. These descendants of the Prophet having Shia faith settled down in the region, adopted the local language and dialect, and preached Shiaism through peaceful means. They were extremely respected and popular among the native people. From this period (7th-8th century) onwards a regular channel of communication was established between Sindh and the Punjab region of undivided India and Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and other Arabian regions and whenever the followers of the Shia faith were harassed and persecuted they used to flee their land and get shelter in India. Significantly, many Hindu rulers and chieftains treated them with utmost cordiality and respect and in some cases sacrificed their lives for their protection (S.H. Hanvi, 1962). Moreover, many new converts to the Shia faith used to travel to Arabia to attain education under various Imams of the Shias. Among the disciples of Imam Ja'far as-sadiq, the Sixth Imam of the Shias, whose tenure is considered to be the golden period of Shiaism, were several Indians such as Farj Sindhi, Khalad Sindhi, Eban Sindhi, etc.

It is ironical that, while the Shias were being treated with respect and given shelter by the non-Muslim (Hindu) rulers, they were being harassed and persecuted by the (Sunni) Muslim Sultans and rulers on account of their faith. Though, by and large, the whole of the so-called Muslim Period in India's history was characterized by strained relations between the Shias and the Sunni Muslim rulers, the regimes of Mahmud Ghaznavi, Firoz Shah III and Aurangzeb were most notorious as far as their treatment of the Shias was concerned. Murray Titus (1959), quoting from Futuh-at-e Firozshahi presents an example of how the Shias were
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treated during the reign of the 'pious' Muslim rulers: "Some Shias, also called Rawafid, had endeavored to make proselytes. They wrote treatises and books, and gave instruction and lectures on the tenets of their sect, and traduced and reviled the first chiefs of our religion. I seized them all and convicted them of their errors and perversions. ... Their books I burnt in public, and so by the grace of God the sect was entirely suppressed." This is how the ruler himself relates the manner in which the Shias carried on their work and the way he dealt with them. Anoth glaring case is that of Syed Nuruallah Shustari, popularly known as

Shaheeed-e Salis (the Third Martyr) among the Shias. Syed Nurullah came to India from Shustar, in Persia, about the year 1587, during the reign of Akbar. He was well received by Hakim Abul Fateh Gilani on whose recommendation he was appointed by the Emperor to be the grand Qazi of Lahore. He accepted the appointment on condition that he would be permitted to give his decisions according to any one of the four legal systems of the Sunnis. As a matter of fact, he was suspected from the very first day by the orthodox Ulema of Akbar's court as being a 'dangerous' person in matters of doctrine, and he was closely watched. During his leisure hours as Qazi he wrote in defence of the Shia doctrines, and has left several important treatises. The most important of these was in Persian, the Majalis ul-Mumineen, which he finished while in Lahore in the year 1604. It is said that this book was copied by a man who had been employed by the Ulema of Jahangir's court. On the basis of the "heretical" evidence so secured he was condemned to death. He suffered 'martyrdom' by whipping because of activities for his faith in the year 1610, and was buried at Agra (U.P.) where his tomb is greatly revered by all Imamis (Ibid.). A great congregation of the Shias is held every year on his tomb and majlises are held.

Shias were sometimes persecuted, some other times pampered, but the Shia influence continued to penetrate into various spheres of life in India during the reign of Muslim rulers. As aptly put forward by Murray Titus (Ibid)

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"...the evidence of the spread of Shia influence among Sunnis is common, and it is probable that nowhere else in the world of Islam are the Sunnis so largely imbued with Shia ideas and customs as India and Pakistan."

It is also true that nowhere else in the world of Islam (except Iran, a predominantly Shia country, and, since the overthrow of Saddam, Iraq) are the Shias enjoying freedom to practice and propagate their religion more than in India."(159)

Commenting on the last quote by Murray Titus given above, I would have to say that Muslim Spain was very likely an exception, as we have seen in the previous chapter. We have seen that in Muslim Spain Shi'a tendencies apparently spread even to the Caliphs of Cordoba and certain taifa kings, and even to non-Muslims. Namely the Mozarabs or Spanish Christians subjects of the Muslim amirs, caliphs and taifa kings. Also, as we have seen, Shi'ism influenced the Catholic Church in Spain, particularly in reference to the Holy Week celebrations.

There are some who say that Shahrbanu was related by marriage (not by blood) to the Gupta Dynasty of India.(160) I am uncertain what to make of this. Shahrbanu's husband was Imam Hussein, who most certainly was not a member of the Gupta Dynasty. I suppose this indicates that some member of members of the Sassanian royal family intermarried with the Gupta Dynasty. Since Shahrbanu was herself a member of the Sassanian royal family, this must mean

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that some relatives of hers intermarried with the Guptas, but that she herself did not and was of no blood relation to the Guptas.

One of the great figures among the marsiya poets of Lucknow was Mir Muzaffar Husayn Zamir. Says Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi concerning Mir Zamir:

"Mir Zamir endowed his marsiyas continuity of theme, touching emotional expressions and dramatic dialogues. Mir Zamir's verses vividly depict the physical features and military talents of the martyrs of

Karbala. In depicting individual battles, Mir Zamir introduced elements of epic poetry into Urdu. The long introductions to his marsiyas describe various natural scenes with picturesque similes and metaphors. Formerly, marsiyas had been recited in musical tones called soz, but Mir Zamir used a popular rhythm called tahtu'l-lafz."(161)

With Mir Zamir, the Urdu marsiya of Lucknow achieved its final form, all the elements now being in place. We now turn to those who perfected this elegant, sophisticated form.

Under the patronage of the nawabs of the Khorasani dynasty of Avadh, with its capital at Lucknow, the Urdu Marsiya achieved a pinnacle of excellence, becoming one of the authentic jewels of Urdu literature.

As we said above, the Urdu marsiyas of Lucknow use the Musaddas stanza, which consists of six lines and uses the following rhyme scheme:

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A
A
A
A
B
B

The rhyme of each Musaddas stanza of a Lakhnavi Urdu marsiya is independent, i.e., it is not affected by the rhyme of the stanzas before or after it.

Though the metre is constant within the same marsiya, it may vary from one marsiya to another, i.e., there is no fixed "Marsiya Metre".

Perhaps the greatest of these Lakhnavi Marsiya poets was Mir Anis. Here is part of a tribute to Mir Anis by Amir Ali Ma'soomi. This is particularly significant because Amir Ali Ma'soomi was an Iranian, and therefore not a native Urdu speaker. Though Urdu contains many Persian words, it very much belongs to the Indo-Aryan rather than the Iranian branch of the Indo-European languages, so one who speaks and reads Persian does not automatically speak and read Urdu.

To Mir Anis:

Thou, greatest Eastern poet, sooner or later
Even Europe must acknowledge you as such (162)

Here is an evocation of the Urdu Marsiyas of Mir Anis:

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"Mir Anis drew heavily upon his ancestral traditions of masnavi composition. His similes and metaphors elegantly describe scenes of dawn and sun-set, the darkness of night, the verdure of plants, the bloom of flowers and the singing of birds. Some of these resemble similar scenes from the 15th and 16th century masnavis in Avadhi (vernacular Indo-Aryan language of Avadh, kingdom of which Lucknow was capital). Mir Anis transported the Avadh landscape to the desert of Karbala, to the great admiration of his audience. His vigorous depiction of battles, swordsmanship and spear throwing are similar to those of the Shah Namah of Firdausi, but his intuitive perception of the emotions of his heroes made his marsiyas unique. His eloquent phrases, similes and metaphors are superb." (163)

Below is an example from a marsiya of Mir Anis in which the poet analyzes the experience of a traveler in a strange place:

The traveller's life is full of difficulties.
There is no rest at night nor day, no ease.
He thinks of home in spite of anxieties
The dear loved faces dance before his eyes.
 The grief of absence fills him at all times,
 The cares of travel do not part from him.

Though with companions and the caravan,
Secret sorrows make him pale and wan.
And when in loneliness he thinks anon
Of home, his heart pounds loudly like a gong.
 Unknown fears beset him night and day,
 And follow at his heels all through the way.

If he is traveling with soldiers or with friends,
The traveler sleeps in peace till day ascends,
When dangers overtake him and fear sends
Nightmares, he keeps awake till the dark night ends.
 Thus many cares assail him one by one
 The most he dreads is being left alone.(164)

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Mir Anis begins many of his marsiyas with descriptions of night or morning or of the verdant green of the forests or the flowering of the garden or the song of the **bulbul** (Persian and Urdu for "nightingale"). These are mystical symbols which serve to counteract the gloom of Karbala, and are an example of the transplanting of the verdant Avadh countryside to the plain of Karbala.

When morning's caravan had crossed the night,
Appeared on the fringe of sky signs of light.

Marched from the heavens the stars in hasty flight,
Sounded calls to prayer from mosque and height
 The face of black night slowly vanished then.
 The whole wide world was filled with light and sun.

The moon went hiding and the morning came;
The birds began to sing, repeating God's name.
Fresh blew the breeze and cool, and nature's frame
Lit up, and cheered the heart and eye became.
 As men on earth, the angels in the skies,
 Were lost in wonder at nature's mysteries.

The red of twilight, sky of splendid sheen
The laden trees, the desert, the meadows green;
Pearls of dew on cheeks of roses keen,
The valley full of flowers, a wondrous scene.
 Released the roses' scent was all 'round there,
 Blew rustling gusts of cool, refreshing air.(165)

Such a morn, such starry shade, and such a beauteous
light,
If Moses saw this, he would swoon at the sight.
The flowers did their great Creator's art display,
Upon the trees were perched fine birds that sang their
lay,
 Eclipsed were flower gardens by the resplendent
 vale,
 The flowery jungles fresh, their perfume did exhale.

(5268)

The breezes balmy and cool, the waving in the lea;
The azure satin sky, was put to shame truly.
The nodding of the trees, the fragrant flowers, their
hue;
On every petal shone, each glittering drop of dew;
 Diamonds were as abashed, great pearls were
 eclipsed free,
 Wrote jeweled script, I ken even the leaves of
 every tree.

May we be a sacrifice for the Creator's Pen,
The ornamental art was on each page, I ken.
The gifted poet's intellect is crazed outright;
How can man's simple reason reach such a sublime height;
 The whole universe was dazed by the power of the
 Lord the Great,

He had enameled well, the heavenly vale, I state.

Such sheen, the level field, such charming spaciousness,
The peacock's cry, shrill notes of quail and partridges.
Such exuberance of flowers, and birds' sweet melody;
Cooling to the liver gave, the moving breezes free.

Full blooming verdant trees, were neatly dressed in
red,
The platforms of the trees, were florists' baskets
spread.

Such a verdant lea, such a lawn, such gusts of the
breeze;

Such lustrous dewdrops twinkling from the flowering
trees;

The branches nod and rise, repeatedly amidst the
bowers,

Sits on a tree a bulbul, among a thousand flowers.

The flowers of (Fatima) Zahra's garden, for water
thirsty were,

Were filled the cups of roses, with dew so pure and
rare.

(5269)

Around the cypress tree, the turtle doves now crowd;

Some pipe Haqq Sirvuhu, while other coo aloud;

Subhana Rabbana; was commonly heard this note;

All their devotional tunes and airs were now afloat.

Not simply roses did God's praises hum and sing,

Each thorn upon the point of tongue did praises
bring.

The ant raised up its hands and cried repeatedly,

Weak grain-bearers' supplies were sacrificed for Thee,

All 'round shouts of Ya Hyy and Ya Qadir were heard,

Orisons and prayers were in many places offered

Amazed were birds in the air, and in the forest deer;

The forest lions roared, close by marsh and moor.

The flowers of the Prophet's garden, amidst thorns stood
one side

Their heavenly odor filled the forest, far and wide;

World's ornaments they were, jewels of the Holy Dame;

This was the garden which did the Prophet plant-the
same.

*In the first tenth of the mourning month, it was
raided sad;
Amid the jungles ruined it was by the mutineers
bad.(166)*

At times Mir Anis uses nature to introduce or as a
counterpoint to battle scenes:

*When in the woods flashed forth that sword of fire,
Trembled the skies, took shelter from its ire;
Snakes left their caves; the tigers their grassy mires,
Cries for mercy filled the world entire.
The fishes were unsettled like the waves
The hearts of rocks too quaked in watery caves.*

*In Damascus' army rose a raging storm
Like waves its ranks were broken, lost their form,
Trapped were soldiers in this great maelstrom:
The beasts breathed not in terror of the storm.
Not only had the armies run away
The river itself changed course for dread of the
day.(167)*

(5270)

In the selection below, Imam Hussein is about to depart from
Medina on the journey which will end in tragedy at Karbala. Here
the Imam's son Ali Akbar bids farewell to his mother:

*Then holding to his robe, she cried distressfully,
"Fruit of my heart, promise to come back again,"
And, suppressing a tear, Ali Akbar replied:
"If death will give me the time, I will come again,
mother.
For willingly no one forsakes his dear ones;
But I am bound for the inn from which no traveler
returns."(168)*

Here Imam Hussein explains to his daughter Sughra why he
must go:

"May God restore you to health, my dear daughter!

The thought of his child's suffering is enough to sadden a father.

Soon I am to embark on a desert journey full of hardship and travail.

Only God knows what lies ahead for me;

My heart burns at your consuming fever, Sughra;

The agony of the languishing thought is consuming.

How can I be reconciled to leaving you behind in such a state?

But taking you along would needlessly risk your life.

My dearest child, you know it all too well;

But, parting is my fate in this helpless pass.

Separated shall I bewail and cry in anguish;

Journey's end will overwhelm me with pain."

Sughra replies:

"For such tender love I could lay down my life;

Who else will shower love and care on a dutiful daughter?

May my life be your offering! My health too will be restored.

My Lord's loving glance will cure all ailments.

When the world's Messiah casts a benevolent look,

Even chronic patients leap back to health."(170)

(5271)

Ali Akbar is also moved to tears at the parting, but

Sughra consoles him:

"Dear brother! Let not tears roll down your cheeks because of my solitude;

God willing, you will be returning to this city in happiness and health.

Though it be difficult to assume that you will see me alive again;

Remember, my life is an offering for yours, so do promise to return.

If the campaign prolongs write to me a letter, brother!

Truly, you will not forget me while you celebrate your marriage, brother!"(169)

Below is a complete Marsiya by Mir Anis:

MARSIYA

When the sun had completed the journey of night,
And the unveiled face of the dawn had appeared,
The Lord of the bowl-like sky looked towards the heavens.
Turning, that Lord called unto his companions:

"The final hour has come! Give prayer and praise to God!
Arise! Perform the duties of the dawn (dawn prayers)!"

Yes, Warriors! This day is one of strife and slaying!
Here today the blood of the family of Muhammad will flow!
The face of the beloved (child) of (Fatima) Zahra is bright
with joy!
For the night of separation has passed; the day of union has come!
We are those for whom the angels will grieve;
Yet for this day have we restlessly passed the nights
(of separation)!

This morn is that morn, the evening of which is blessed!
If one journeys from here, then this place is in Paradise!
Let the parched-throated ones reach the waters of the stream of
Kawsar in Paradise with honor!
May God write the names of all these martyrs among those who
faithfully perform his worship!
All of you are unique in this age! Let this clamor
arise:
Who arises from this world a martyr, departs successfully!"
(5272)

Hearing this, those devout ones arose from their bed;
Each one adorned in splendid garments.
All combed their beards, fearlessly;
Wrapping their turbans, they came unto the Lord of the Age,
Colorful robes upon their shoulders, loins girded for
battle,
Their clothing fragrant with musk and civet and perfume.

The virtuous relations of the king emerged from their tents,
Among whom were many of the beloved children of Kahyru-n-nisa
(Fatima Zahra)
The handsoem Qasim, the beauteous Akbar --
In one place -- the children of Aqil and Muslim and Jaafar!
The light of the faces of all these was upon the most- high
heavens!
A blossom consisting of eighteen suns was upon the earth!

Suddenly upon the sky the brightness of dawn appeared.
The Lord of the Age came and took his place upon the prayer-
carpet.
Behind the King of Men and Jinns were other prayer-carpets laid,

And the handsome Akbar gave his call to prayer with the voice of Imam Hasan.

Everyone's eyes overflowed with tears upon hearing his voice.

It was as though the voice of the Prophet himself fell upon their ears.

In a line behind the prayer leader, Imam Hussein, all of the relations of Muhammad and Haydar (Ali ibn Abu Talib)

There are eighteen youths, if you would count them.

But all were unique in the Age, pious, humble,

The followers of the pure Imam (Hussein), the enlightened of the world!

Everywhere beneath the heavens the **tasbeeh** (rosary) is of those very ones!

Those upon whom we pray - this clay (of Karbala, from which Shi'a rosaries are sometimes made) is theirs!

When the King of Mortals had completed the prayers,

Those thirsty youths came to join hands with him.

Some kissed the hand of the Emperor of Noble and Baseborn;

Some respectfully touched their eyes to his feet.

What brave hearts there were! What a rightly guided and joyous army it was!

Together they embraced one another, for it was a "festival of dying".

(5273)

That heaven-enthroned King sat upon the prayer-carpet,

When suddenly three or four arrows fell nearby.

Everyone turned and looked in the direction of the wicked army of the foe.

Abbas arose, weighing his matchless sword in his hand.

He was like the moth around the light of the lamp of the Imamate,

And he held held his shield over the Miraculous Lord.

Turning, the Master of the Age began to speak to Akbar (his eldest son):

"That might army of our enemies has girded up its loins in arrogance.

Go and say this within the women's tent, o life of your father!

Let the women take the children and remove themselves from the field!

Let no child be slain by an arrow through carelessness

I fear lest the throat of Asghar (Imam Hussein's infant son) be a target!

As that sky-throned King was saying this to his son,

Fizza called from the doorway of the tent, "O Master of Creation!

O! Where should the daughters of Ali take refuge?
Arrows have come falling even unto the cradle of Asghar!
All night long, suffocating in the heat, they have wept;
Only now have the children obtained cool air and gone to sleep.

Baqir lies fatigued; Sakina lies fainting somewhere.
The hot season - this heat - and this thirst -!
The darling little ones have gone to sleep weeping.
Where should these starving women go with the children from here?
For what fault do arrows rain down incessantly,
When the children yearn only for a cool breeze?"

Hearing this, the majestic Imam arose
And came up to the threshold as his companions and friends held
their shields for him.
He said, turning to them, "Now do we go for battle!
Gird up your loins for righteous struggle! Call for your mounts!
Let us look upon the spaciousness of Paradise!
Let your hearts rejoice.
Let us be finished with the task of the Nation quickly!"

(5274)

Saying this, the Lord of Sea and Land went into the women's
quarters,
While outside the tent preparations for battle began among the
lines.
The renowned Lord Abbas, having donned his cuirass,
Began to pace before the door like a lion.
From the reflection of his face lightning struck upon
the earth;
His sword was in his hand, his shield upon his
immaculate shoulders.

Going into the tent, that King saw this condition of the ladies:
Faces are pale, and the hair of their heads is dishevelled.
This is the prayer of Zainab: "O Almighty God,
May the beloved child of Khayru-n-Nisa escape from this strife!
May the children of the virtuous Shahr Banu remain ever
prosperous and happy!
May the part of her hair ever be filled with sandal-paste and
her lap with children!"

Going near the women, that sublime Lord spoke:
"Be not distraught! The prayers of all of you are answered!
The enemies are arrogant; they are in error, these despicable
ones!

*I myself shall go and show them the Path of Righteousness!
Now is not the time, Sister, for lamentation and sighing!
Bring forth the sacred things of the Prophet!"*

*That costume which the Prophet wore upon Miraj:
That did Zainab bring forth upon a salver unto the Lord of the Faith.*

He placed upon his head the turban of the Holy Leader (the Prophet)

He put on the immaculate robe of the sublime Prophet

Upon his breast the garment of the Prophet was well-fitting and correct;

His scarf was from Fatima (Zahra); his turban was that of the Prophet himself.

*When the Lord of the Age had finished donning these garments,
His sister (Zainab) embraced her brother and began to weep.*

She cried, "Woe! Today there is no Haydar and no Hasan!

From whence now shall this homeless one bring a mother for you?

Now is the departure of the handsome grandson of the Prophet!

I devote myself to you! Embrace your beloved child!"

(5275)

*When he saw Zu-l-faqar (the sword of Ali ibn Abu Talib),
he recalled Ali.*

Kissing the hilt, the Lord of the Faith wept bitterly.

*When he took the shimmering sword into his hand and balanced it,
Glory cried out to him: "I offer myself to your majesty!*

Victory and triumph be nigh! Ascendancy be near!

*May the beauty of this sword be yours; and may its blow be
the lot of the foe."*

*Here within the tent the Master of High and Low had finished
arming himself.*

*There outside the banner of the Lord of Mankind (the Prophet) was
readied.*

*With heads bared all of the female descendants of the Prophet
gathered around it,*

*And grasping the staff of the banner, the sister of the Imam
(Hussein) wept.*

Swords at their waists, shawls upon their shoulders,

The beloved children of Zainab came and stood

beneath the banner.

Hands joined in respect, Abbas came into the presence of the King.

*"Go unto our sister Zainab!" Thus spoke that pious Lord (lit.
Refuge of Religion).*

But Zainab came there bearing the banner gloriously.

Taking the standard. the king of the Throne of the Placae of God spoke:

"Her happiness is that which is the pleasure of the Five Holy Persons (Muhammad, Ali ibn Abu Talib, Fatima Zahra, Imam Hasan, Imam Hussein)!

Take it, Brother! Take the banner! This is a gift from our sister!"

Placing his hands upon the standard, the glorious Abbas bowed his head And touched his face to his sister's feet with respect.

Honoring him, Zainab spoke: "I am devoted to you!

Abbas, take good care of the beloved son of Fatima Zahra!

If today any way to peace should be found, then let us depart tomorrow!

Let us take your brother and get out of these tribulations!"

(5276)

Abbas replied, "As long as there is a head upon my body It is not possible that the army of the wicked should be victorious!

Even if a hundred thousand swords be drawn, I shall offer my breasts as a shield!

That the foe should raise their eyes and look upon Imam Hussein! What bravado! What insolence!

The son of the majestic lion (Abbas) is courageous!

Even if the foe be lions, then we shall tear out their eyes and hurl them away!"

Then suddenly little Sakina came and spoke:

"What is this throng? Where is my uncle Abbas?

May God bless him with the post of standard-bearer!

O people, let me but say farewell to him at least!

May God increase the glory of my beloved uncle!

I, too, would see the glory of the standard of Ali!"

Smiling, Abbas called to her, "Come, come here!

Your uncle adores you! Tell me how is your thirst!

Embracing him, she spoke: "Take my waterskin with you!

Now that you have received the standard, give me water to drink!

Give me no gift, nor give me reward!

I would sacrifice my life if you would give me one goblet of water!"

All of the female descendants of the Prophet wept upon her words,
And the son of Hasan (Qasim) came and said, "O Imam!
The Army of Syria (the enemy) is a multitude advancing!"
Imam Hussein said, "There is no cause to worry!
Now Abbas goes forth bearing the banner -
Wait! -After embracing my sister, I, too, go forth!"

Abruptly, the faithful Abbas took the standard and advanced toward
the foe.

All of the women of the Prophet's family ran towards the departing
army of Imam Hussein, bare-headed and barefoot.

The Lord raised his hands and said to each one:

"Take your farewells, O pure women of the Prophet Muhammad!

This is the morn of the night of separation!

Look upon your adored ones!

Together, look upon these setting stars (those about to go to
almost certain death)!"

(5277)

Lamenting, Zainab fell at the feet of the King;

Sharbanu, fainting, fell nigh unto her son (Ali Akbar);

Kulsum (Imam Hussein's youngest sister) fell quivering upon the
earth;

Baqir fell down here, and Sakina collapsed there.

The garden was desolated, each fresh flower went forth,

The banner went forth as a funeral procession emerges from
a house.

As the wind stops and then moves forward, the well-paced horse of
Imam Hussein advanced;

As the horse moved forward towards the plain, its breath
quickenened.

The troopers took the reins of their horses, and the standard
advanced.

The banner moved forward just as the cypress of the Garden of
Iram stands forth.

Just as the breeze of spring arrived bearing flowers,

Thus did the cavalry arrive at the garden of Karbala.

Suddenly arrows came towards Imam Hussein from the direction of
the enemy.

Spurring his horse, he, too, closed in for battle.

From this side the parched-throated companions of the King
emerged;

In legions did the leaders of the Army of Syria become headless!

Sometimes the sword rose above; sometimes it was below the horse-girths.
The fighting of each one was like the fighting of the Lord of the Camels.

Oh God! The fighting of the grandsons of Ali (Qasim and Ali Akbar)!
The short-swords of both were like the movements of Zu-l-Faqar!
Whoever stopped their blow with his shield, his shoulder was severed;
Neither was there any account of the wounded, nor any estimate of the slain.
So many riders did they slay in so short a time
That the horses of both of them were hidden beneath piles of corpses!

(5278)

Swords rained down from morning until noon;
The earth kept shaking; the heavens continued to shiver;
The angels trembled, folding their wings.
Then those battle cries were not heard, nor was there that same flash of swords.
The time of shields became the ascendancy of spears:
By the noontime, the end of Imam Hussein's army had come.

The grandson of the Prophet himself brought back the bodies
Of the slain
Lest the murderers get to cut off the head of any martyr!
"May God not grant even to the enemy such a parting from friends!"
Imam Hussein said, "Woe! Woe! All are separated from me!
Upon whomever such mountains of sorrow should fall,
should he not be bowed down under their weight?
If I live a hundred years, even then such a company may not be assembled again!"

The Lord of the Age came from the battle-ground to the doorway of the tent,
But from the severity of his thirst he had not the power of speech.
Laying his hand upon the curtain, he called out with great difficulty:
"Bring Asghar forth from the cradle, o sister!
Let us look once more upon that refulgent moon!
Let us look upon Akbar's infant brother!"

The descendants of Muhammad ran forth from the tent bare-headed;
Lamenting, Shahr Banu brought forth Asghar in her hands.
Taking the child, he seated himself upon the earth.
When he touched the baby's face with his lips, that beautiful
child awoke.

The knife of sorrow struck Imam Hussein's riven heart.
Imam Hussein seated Asghar upon his immaculate knee.

As the sublime King was attending to his child,
The evil Kahil lay in ambush on the enemy's side.
As that shameless one shot a three-pronged arrow,
Suddenly the neck of the little one became the target!
As the infant quivered in death, the Lord made a great
lament;
The innocent child was slaughtered in the very lap of the
King!

(5279)

When that infant child quivered and died,
Imam Hussein, lamenting, dug a small grave with his sword.
Having buried the child, that noble Lord called out:
"O pure earth! Be watchful of the honor of your guest!
Enfold him in your skirts, if you love Ali,
He who is the wealth of Fatima, he who is the charge of Ali!"

How may I express the heat of the day of battle?
I fear lest my tongue be set alight like the candle!
That scorching wind - beware! That heat - God preserve us!
The earth of the battlefield was red, and yellow the sky!
The people yearned for cool water upon the earth.
But it was as though fire rained down from the wind upon the
earth!

Stricken by the sun, the lions did not rise from their lair;
The deer did not put their heads forth from the thicket;
The mirror of the sun was gloom-overcast with dust;
The sky became feverish from the fever of the earth;
All the world lay distraught upon the earth because of the
heat;
If a grain of wheat or barley fell upon the ground, it
became roasted.

In that blazing sunlight the Lord of the Nations stood alone;
He had not the shelter of the skirt of the Prophet, nor the shadow
of the banner.
From his heart the flames of his sighs of grief arose constantly;

*His lips were blackened; thorns of thirst were in his tongue;
his back was bowed.*

*Since this was the third day without water for the guest
(Imam Hussein),
On every word his tongue stumbled from thirst.*

*The expert horsemen of the enemy sated their horses with water;
Camels came to the watering-place tethered in lines.
Again and again did water-carriers sprinkle water upon the earth
to settle the dust;*

*To give water to all living creatures was considered a
virtuous deed;
Only for the son of Fatima (Imam Hussein) was there a
dearth of water!*

(5280)

*Ibn Sa'id (the enemy general) spoke, "O sublime Lord!
Even now if you would but submit, here is a goblet of water!"
Husesein replied, "O wretched one!
The son of Bu Turab (Ali) knows such a river as the one you offer
to be dust!*

*You are a transgressor! You have no esteem for Islam!
Even if now this water you offer me were the water of
immortality, it is of no use to me!"*

*Saying this, as Imam Hussein glanced towards Zu-l-Faqar,
That tyrant Ibn Said trembled and drew back.
Then from the enemy lines arrows without number were fired at the
oppressed one;*

*The noise of the kettledrums of war reached beyond the sky,
Raising their spears, the cavalry arrayed themselves for
battle!*

Black banners were unfurled among the evil legion!

*Hussein came thus, as the eagle would come;
He came as the raging lion of the forest comes upon the
gazelle;*

*He came as the flashing lightning comes towards the clouds;
His horse ruced forward as the water courses down a slope!*

*Thus did his sharp sword flash upon that host,
As lightning strikes shivering upon the mountain!*

*The water-bearers, carrying their waterskins thence cried thusly;
"The battle is hot! The afternoon draws on!
Whoever be thirsty. let him cool his heart with water!"
The evil ones ran and fell upon the waterskins.*

What a blaze was kindled in that wicked world!
All drank; only Hussein yearned for water.

The water-sated ones hid here and there from the prowess of
that thirsty one.
That one sword of Ali's moved in a hundred thousand ways:
If it flashed at a foeman's crown, then it emerged at his saddle-
girth;
It did not stop because of shield, nor stone.
The Creator had endowed that sword with the power of
wondrous keenness;
Before it, a helmet was but the sphere of a bubble!

(5281)

Then did the outcry arise: "Mercy, o Hussein!
The prowess of Hussein is as the wrath of God!
The Euphrates is Hussein's; the riverbank is Hussein's!
The world is Hussein's; Divine rule is Hussein's!
He is was who saved the ship of Noah from the storm!
Now mercy - for the sake of the soul of Ali Akbar!"

Hearing Akbar's name, a spear of grief pierced his heart;
Tears filled his eyes and he reined in his steed.
Turning, the King of the Age called out to the corpse of his son:
"You did not live to see your father's fighting, O beloved of your
father!
Now these people make oaths of peace upon your soul!
Here! Now do I check Zu-l-Faqar!"

Striking his hand upon his knee in fury, Ibn Sa'id shouted this to
his army:
"How now, despicable ones? After victory, this defeat?
The promise-breaker is no ornament to heroes!"
Hearing this, a mighty champion roared like thunder:
He raised a shout, "I attack the Imam!
O Ibn Sa'id, write the victory in my name!"

Then did the Angel of Heaven cry out thusly: "Yea! -
In the name of God, o joy of the spirit of the Master of the
Arabs!"
The King of the Age settled himself straight upon his steed;
The two-edged sword of Ali arose, licking its lips
From the enemy lines that wretched champion advanced,
raising his battle-cry;

On Imam Hussein's side the mouth of Zu-l-Faqar watered in anticipation.

Raising his mace, the evil-doer came at the Lord.
Rage overcame the son of Bu Tarab (ali's son, Imam Hussein).
When Hussein planted his feet solidly in the stirrups and struck a blow,
Lightning struck upon the wrathful head of that villain!
Defeat lay in the wicked hand; victory in the virtuous hand!
With one blow the hand of the enemy champion flew and fell
many feet away.

(5282)

Came the voice of the Unseen: "Hail, Shabbir!
This sword was made for this hand - Hail!
This greatness, this prowess, this honor - Hail!
You have shown the influence of your mother's milk - Hail!
God has made you supreme over Creation!
Enough, the consummation of the fight for righteousness is
reached with your being!"

Saying, "I stand before Thee," The King sheathed the sword in its scabbard.
The army of the enemy turned back towards the battlefield,
Doomsday came upon the world!
Again did the rebellious one fit arrows to their bows;
Again after being furled in defeat the banners of the foe
were opened at the sign of victory!
Helpless, Hussein was surrounded by the oppressors!
Your Lord was encircled by myriad horsemen!

One grieving and helpless person among hundreds of thousands -Woe!
Woe!
This "respect" for the son of Fatima? Woe! Woe!
Those spears and the unprotected breast of Shabbir? Woe! Woe!
Those arrows dipped in poison! Woe! Woe!
Since the rebels of the enemy army were filled with rage,
They emptied their full quivers upon Hussein!

Now does Hussein fall from his steed - Woe, calamity!
The stirrup slips away from his pure foot - Woe, calamity!
His side is pierced by the dagger - Woe, calamity!
He slumped in unconsciousness, and the turban of the Prophet fell
from his head - Woe, calamity!

The Qur'an of the book stand fell from the saddle upon the earth!

The wall of the Kaaba collapsed with grief, the throne of God has fallen!

Bareheaded. the daughter of Ali turned back the curtain and came forth.

With trembling feet, bowed back, heart drowned in the blood of sorrow,

Striking her head in grief, she called out in all directions;

"O Karbala, tell me, where is your guest!

Mother, now the feet of this thirsty one do not rise!

Hold my arm and take me to his body!

(5283)

Now all the world is dark in my eyes!

O people, for the sake of God tell me the way to his body!

Where does the Sayyid (descendant of the Prophet) breathe his last? Where is our mother? - O!

In which direction is the place of the slaying of the Prophet's grandson?

The flames of my sighs come forth from my heart and soul!

Who is this who moans and takes my name?

Who gave this cry, "Sister, come not this way!

Indeed, now the journey (to the next world) is nigh! For the sake of God, go home!

Now the ship of the family of the prophet is sinking!

O Chosen One, save the ship of these unfortunate ones!

Do not abandon Hussein now in the wilderness of calamity!

O Fatima, conceal Hussein in the mantle of your protection!"

Thus while the daughter of Ali wandered bare-headed and beating her breast,

On the battlefield the throat of the light of the eyes of Ali was being cut.

Even though the evil ones forbade Zainab from going to the scene of Imam Hussein's death,

Nevertheless she ran thither, clutching her heart.

When in spite of this hindrance she reached the place of his murder,

She saw the head of Imam Hussein on the point of a spear!

Going beneath the spear, the grieving one cried out,

"O Sayyid, I sacrifice myself for your blood-drenched features!

Woe, woe! Brother, the blade of the knife has passed accross your throat!

You have forgotten your sister, O scion of the Lion of God (Ali)!

I am devoted to you - the House of Ali has been looted
at the 'place of the promise'.

Even yet do your lips move in the mention of God!

Brother, your sister greets you! Give Answer!

The daughter of Haidar cries out to you! Give Answer!

For the sake of the Prophet, give answer with your parched tongue!

How can this aretched Zainab live? Give answer!

Except death, there is no remedy for the pain of
separation.

Now there is nothing to aid me in the world!

(5284)

O! O! Why did your sister not pass away before you?

Brother, tell me what you suffered under the dagger!"

Then Imam Hussein's voice came to her from beyond the grave:

"Ask not what transpired with me!

A hundred thanks to God that what happened, happened for the
best!

Now that my head has been severed, there is release
from sorrow.

If there is any sorrow indeed, it is only the grief of
separation from you!

Now the wretched army of our foes will come to loot our home.

Say nothing with your tongue, except gratitude to the Creator!

When the tyrants will set fire to the tent.

You must care for my orpahned Sakina,

For that heartbroken girl is sick of her life.

Let no one bind her neck with the cord of slavery!"

Enough, O Anis, each joint of your body trembles with old age.

These few stanzas will remain in the world as my memorial!

What exalted stanzas have come forth from my pen even in old age!

They are words to delight the world, stanzas to please a sultan!

This season and this assembly of mourning is a
memeorial;

My stanzas are the emotions of old age; this is the
spring of the autumn.(170)

- FINIS -

Below is a selection from another marsiya of Mir Anis. Note
The epic-like quality and how once again Mir Anis transplants the

verdant countryside of Avadh to the dry, dusty plains of Karbala:

Now heed what happened on that awesome day of martyrdom-
What grief and sorrow and what tribulations then befell
Those thirsty, starving, steadfast souls devoted thus to
God,
Who sacrificed their precious lives in service to His
cause.

Each one of them was a faithful comrade without par!
There never will be such a lord nor ever followers
such!

(5285)

When on the eastern sky the faint white streaks of dawn
appeared
And birds began to sing in chorus their sweet praise of
God
(Imam) Hussein emerged for morning prayers resplendent
like the sun,
Diffusing radiance all around across the wide, vast
plain.

The Truth shone forth thus from his bold
countenance all around,
The dawn aside, the moon itself looked pale with awe!

The cool, refreshing breeze across that plain at break
of dawn!
These waving trees and palms, enraptured by that scene
divine!
Across the emerald, spreading green, the dew had
settled pearls!

The sight itself did revel in that verdant delight!
And when the zephyr blew in from across the silent
plain, the sound of buds, as they split open could
be clearly heard!
The **bulbul's** [Persian and Urdu: nightingale]
melodious notes, the fragrance fresh of flowers!

In hyacinth's curls the heart was caught, the senses
were enmeshed!
Some ring-doves, perched in box trees, sang "Yah u! Ya
Hu! Ya Hu!
On cypresses some ring doves called out, "**Ku! Ku! Ku!**
Ku! ["Where! Where! Where! Where!" in Persian, Urdu and
Welsh. Recall exactly the same image used by both

Persian and Welsh poets and also in Iranian **ta'ziyeh** or
"Passion Plays".]

*It was the time of their devotions, for His love they
lived*

*And praised and eulogized their gracious Deity
divine!*

*That leader true of both worlds stood at the place
of prayers-*

(5286)

*The other side beat battle drums, this side called forth
for prayers!*

*Such true, devoted men whose speech was steeped in
scripture's texts!*

*Such fighters for the cause of Truth, the very soul of
faith!*

*So thoroughly devout, they were distinguished even
among the saints!*

*Devotees true who bowed in prayers amidst the
flashing swords!*

*O God, what wonderful comrades they were, what warriors
bold!*

*What superb horsemen, they themselves! What matchless
steeds the rode!*

*All praise and honor they deserved, by virtue of great
deeds-*

So far outnumbered, yet so steadfast in self-sacrifice!

*They suffered from such searing thirst, the soul
strained hard to leave,*

*And yet they patiently bore hardships with parched
throats and dried lips.*

While one was equal in devotion to Salman of Persia,

Another equaled in contentment Abu Dhar's insight.

One matched in his veracity Ammar, the truthful, bold,

Another, Hamza-like courageous or like Ashtar brave!

*Muhammad's close devotees must have been such as
they!*

Such men will not be born again to wage a Holy war.

Although a storm of such disasters struck to crush them
dead,
They died-their heads struck off-their feet steadfastly
held the ground!
They held their heads high in that storm, with regal
dignity,
Like a sword held high in the hand of a hero warrior,
dauntless, bold.

In all these great adversities, complain they never
did,
The giver of drink divine gave them such dignity!

(5287)

These men of noble conduct, their devotions duly done,
Stood up and donned their armor, prepared, eager to die.
And when Hussein was seated on his horse to give
command,
Abbas stepped forth and unfurled the great standard of
Hussein

Whose fragrance filled the air and then pervaded
Paradise-
The breeze in which it fluttered reached Empyrean's
lofty height!

Abbas, the standard bearer of Hussein and Ali's son,
True chivalry's strength, faith's light and loyalty's
trust, illustrious prince
Of noble Ja'afar's virtues pure and valiant Hamza's
deeds

All metaphors of moon and sun in praise here fade away.
By virtue of such merits he won all that glory great,
The standard aptly went with him as merit goes with
right
No cypress, straight and tall, could boast of such
a stately form.

And Ali's very image were his noble, manly looks,
His battle-cry struck mortal terror in the lion's heart.
He reached the stream yet thirsted with chivalrous self-
control!

And for the sake of others who were thirsty as Hussein,
The standard-bearer acted as a bhishti (water boy)
too!
That great and generous hearted man fulfilled all
loyalty's trust;

(5288)

So justly called the Prince of Martyrs, loyal right-hand man!

They call Hussein "God's guiding light", Abbas, "the guide to him".

The valiant and the brave call him "the trusty sword of God".

The standard-bearer and his chief-their brotherly love well-known

One was the right path's light, the other gas light's captive moth!

Then there was youthful Akbar, with those qualities so rare,

His handsome face so fresh and fair, far brighter than the moon,

Narcissus was left wonder-struck to gaze at him, abashed!

So full of grace and gentleness in life, so brave in death!

To see his fair and handsome countenance ringed by black locks was

To see Muhammad in his glory on Ascension Night!

And Hasan's son (Qasim), like Canaan's Joseph, matchless in good looks,

The source of solace to Hussein and Hannan's life and soul;

Possessing Ali's strength and valor, Hasan's graciousness!

Embodiment of Hasan's nature, Hasan's good looks, Hasan's mien!

Although the armor weighed upon his spare and boyish frame,

He wore it with such princely grace, it went so well with him!

Oh that forbidding, awesome air of Ali's daughter's sons

Their wavy locks around their shining faces, lion-like;
Their short swords resting on their shoulders, like the
crescent moon;
Though still not past their boyhood, they held Rustam in
contempt!

And as they rode there, back and forth, between
those confronted camps,
They caused such great confusion in the midst of
the enemy's ranks:

(5289)

Their sleeves rolled up, all eagerly prepared to join
the fray;
That same old awesome air of Ali and forbidding mien,
With bright red faces like the tiger's "tiger burning
bright!"

Determined so to fight and overthrow the enemy's ranks:
Though murderous spears strike left and right and
arrows thickly rain,
Let swords be soon unsheathed and let the battle
soon commence!

And suddenly war drums rolled, the war clouds thundered
so
That mountains trembled, earth quailed and the forest
shook;
Shields rose like bank upon bank of clouds, swords
flashed like lightning and
Death showed its hideous visage in that awful noise and
din

The sergeants in the other camp let out their
battle cry
Here in the ranks of Islam they exclaimed, Ya Ali also

The heralds shouted strong encouragements, "Brave ones,
go forth!
Display your skill with spears and lances and your
horsemanship!
You hold the stream, surround these starving, thirsty,
solitary souls!
Step forth you warriors from your ranks, you lions take
the field!

O Rustams! Give a good account of yourselves in the
fray!
You face the children of brave Haidar on this awful
day!"

(5290)

The Sadat (plural of Sayyid) shouted, "Help! O King of
Heroes- we beg your help
O revered one of religion, O revered one of faith!
The venerated Prophet's source of strength and right-
hand man!
It is the hour to help! O pride of Solomon's glory,
help!

For three days we have starved and thirsted and our
strength is gone!
We seek from you all strength and steadfastness
against such odds!"

"O may we not so much as say a word, complaining of
Our thirst! O may we bravely bear, while starving, spear
thrust wounds!
And even if, bear death, we get no drink, we waver not
But give your son our full support and so may we all
die!
And while our bodies rest beside the body of Hussein,
O may our severed heads be raised on spear-points
with his head!"
Then all at once the enemy's serried ranks
converged on them

All like a mass of dense black clouds that gather around
the stars
Or like the pitch dark night that falls to veil a clear,
bright day
A hail of darts and arrows rained down on the thirsty
band-
The Prince of Martyrs (Imam Hussein) smiled and then
looked at his brother while
His faithful comrades watched him apprehensively
with grief
Abbas submitted, "Our brave men await, all
zealously,

(5291)

Your word while facing volley after volley, swords in hand.

We came not uninvited yet these cruel, violent hordes
Care not! If you so please, permit us now to strike at them

And push these scoundrels back! While we hold back in silence, they

Thus transgress against us, advancing with impunity."

Hussein replied, "I willingly await my martyrdom,
I have no warlike vain desires, nor vain valor's pride.

I had no wish to fight them but they forces this battle on us.

We fight back since they harass us with neither cause nor right.

Let all this cruel, Hell-bent horde come up to slaughter me

For I am well prepared that they behead me for the cause of Truth."

Permission granted, those brave warriors spurred their steeds and charged-

Like swooping falcons, one by one, they fell upon the foe.

Oh what a battle! What dextrous strokes! And what self-sacrifice!

A single charge by them would put in headlong flight those hordes!

They soon struck off clean every over-reaching hand,

And heads and headless corpses rolled across the blood-stained sand.

The awful conflict continued from morning until noon
And with the dead and dying all the battlefield was strewn,

The dispositions and formations of the foe were soon

All overthrown. So died with glory Ali's valiant ones
So large a force has seldom seen such conflict with so
few-

Whoever fought, they thought that it was Ali
fighting them!

How valiantly did Qasim, Akbar and Abbas fight!

(5292)

While some cried out for mercy here, there some cried
out for help!

When struck, some cried out helplessly, "The world has
come to its end!"

And thus those valiant martyrs fought and died so
gloriously,

Though they be not here, in this world, Empyrean is
their place

For to this day their names live on in this created
world.

Toward the afternoon that garden was, by Autumn
wind

Laid waste, and leaf by leaf and flower by flower laid
bare, despoiled-

The son was parted from the father, brother left
bereaved

And (Fatima) Zahra's son was bent with grief, the
strength of his right hand gone!

So by that afternoon Hussein was all alone, forlorn!

The valiant who had come with him from his home in
Hejaz,

Lay on the sand there, slain by spear thrusts, in
everlasting sleep.

Fresh flowers, cut down, withering without water in
the sun,

Far from their homes they died; they got no shroud nor
coffin there;

The desert sun beat down upon them, no covering sheet
was there

Nor shade above! What terrible, unjust times had come to
pass!

Their leader looked so weighted down with such great,
poignant grief

His face, all wan and pale; his blood-shot eyes,
filled with tears of blood-

Now sorrowing for his brother, now in anguish for
his son,

(5293)

Now anxious that the bodies of his friends be not
trampled;
And now he would advance to fight, and now he would stop
short,
And now he would stand up, and now by grief he would be
bent.
The heartless foe would shout at him, challenging him to
fight

And saying, "Come and show the metal of your
father's sword,
The dead will not come back to life to face our
spears and swords,

Once we have severed your head, then our task is nearly
done!

We have a promise of reward from the son of Ibn Saad
himself

And also we have orders to set afire your tents!"

Hussein said: "Come, sever my head from my body; I am
prepared to die.

I neither shrink from fighting nor from sacrificing
my life!

My warriors are all dead, I have no friend nor
helper now-

You hold both town and wilderness, I am a passer-by!

So pillage, plunder, burn and kill, if that seems good
to you!

O Muslims, you know that this is your Prophet's holy
house!"

"Alas! I do not wish to show my face to anyone,

Your brother goes to die, O Zainab! Show him your sad
face;

But neither bare your head nor beat your face nor
wail nor cry,

Forget me and remember only God, most great and high."

(5294)

"O sister! God is pleased with those who suffer
patiently-
With patience all the hardships here turn into blissful
ease.

O sister! Follow here your patient mother's (Fatima's)
way of life.

But I repeat, Take care of my Sakina when I am
No more-she has been brought up tenderly. Protect
her from
All harm-take off her ear-rings lest she suffer
injuries!"

"Convey to Zain al-Abidin this last message of mine when
he revives:

You were unconscious when Hussein came and went back to
die

O dearest son, be not perturbed, imprisoned though you
be!

Endure, with trust in God, all torments on your way to
Sham (Syria).

The boat is caught in raging currents and such
storm-tossed waves!

And saying this, he turned his steed towards that
host of Sham (Syria)

The ladies' cry of lamentation went up from the tent,
And as he charged across the battlefield towards the
foe,

The hearts and bodies of those hardened soldiers quaked
with awe;

His recitation of heroic (epic) verse astounded them:

"There are some ladies in these tents, of the
Prophet's holy house,

Their high place and position is well-known to all
the world,

(5295)

*They have no guardian, no protector now besides myself,
So when I die, only spare a tent for them, for they, as
you know,
Are the Prophet's progeny and worthy of respect from
you,
Let them shelter where they may, and, in all seclusion,
weep."*

*If I write what those enemies then said in reply to
this,
The very heart and core of the very stones would
melt away with grief!*

*Hussein's heart, with forbodings sank, he could endure
no more,
And heavenwards he looked with thoughts all high,
sublime and pure;
A heart that is bursting with pain, in tears it may find
relief,
He went to shed tears at the entrance of the Prophet's
Holy Family's tent.*

*And then he called aloud, "O Zainab and O Umm-
Kulthum!
Hussein, this suffering, sole survivor bids you
farewell!*

*This evil host must seek to kill me now and I must die.
If innocent Sakina be unconscious due to thirst,
Revive her and tell Zain al-Abidin, who is ill with
fever, that I*

*Now go to die and never shall return to meet you all.
Then from behind the curtain, Zainab, watching him,
replied,
"O Zahra's (Fatima's) son! May my own life be
sacrificed for yours*

(5296)

Come! Let us with my mantle wipe the dust from your sad face."

Hussein said, "O dear sister! All my comrades are now dead:

And even he whom you brought up, for him too I have wept-

I have just lost a dear son like my Ali Akbar, the hero."

*"I am Muhammad's grandson," boldly he proclaimed,
"Know who I am, for I am known to our Creator as well!
I have no fear of being wounded, nor of being killed.*

For three days in this terrible heat I have been thirsty and

Here not a moment's ease nor comfort have I known, yet I Do not complain, enduring all these torments patiently."

*"I am the son of Ali who on Judgement Day will slake
Your thirst with Kawther's drink, who conquered
Khaibar's great stronghold,
Whose dauntless courage won for him Badr's battle
as well;*

The son of him to whom the Prophet gave his daughter's (Fatima's) hand;

He also got the Prophet's holy throne (minbar, pulpit) and crown (turban) and sword;

On the Prophet's shoulders he achieved Ascension's honors high."

This flow of fine oratory had not yet reached its final phase

When arrows began raining down all at once on Ali's son;

Hussein unsheathed his sword and kissed its hilt, then he called aloud, "Beware! For now the sword of Ali flashes forth-

(5297)

Ali, the victor of Hunain and Siffin, I am
His son- so form all your ranks to stop me
for now I advance!"
The Zulfaqar (Ali's sword) unsheathed,
flashed forth and struck disaster on
That host; Emyreab's firm foundations shook
as Doomsday dawned;
Truth's triumph and faith's victory advanced
to greet Hussein;
The glory of great martyrdom too followed in
his wake;

While awful majesty stepped forth to kiss his holy
feet,
Ascendant fortune walked respectfully in front of
him.
He rose in the saddle and his steed pricked up his
ears
And raised his head and looked towards that host to
charge it;
While straining at the rein he curved his
neck, his tail he raised.
Then proudly he broke into a canter, turning
now to the right

And now to the left, as lightly as the morning
breeze and with
The ease with which a peri (fairy) flies, he passed
through hostile ranks.
The Prince of Faith fought one hundred thousand
mounted men all alone,
Without a shield, fearlessly he faced the pikemen's
lines,
Like Ali he too fought against the
transgressing tyrant's hordes;
One cannot fight against two but he fought
against such odds;

*If anyone triumph over thousands, then it was
He only who was the heart and soul of Ali-his great
son!*

*Three days of thirst and hunger he endured, yet
fought God's foes-*

*His throat was parched, his mouth and lips all dry
with searing thirst;*

*The fresh green plants had all dried up in
the burning desert sun;*

*The heat of the scorching wind was such that
even stones would melt-*

*While stones and gravel glowed like embers on the
ground beneath,*

*Above, the red hot sun or shadows of the upraised
swords!*

*He fought them like a lion on the plain and by the
bank;*

*While fighting, never did he hide his face behind
the shield;*

*The sword of Ali never failed in slashed,
precise and clean-*

*It severed heads from bodies with precision
and dispatch;*

*In the raising of an eyebrow or the twinkling of an
eye,*

*In one swift stroke it cleft the foe into two equal
parts.*

*His eyes possessed the awesome gaze of the lion's
fearful glare;*

*His steed had all the speed and swiftness of a
thunderbolt;*

*Death's terrible countenance was mirrored in
his flashing sword;*

*His hand possessed the strength and power of
the Hand of God (a title of Ali)!*

No wretched mortal could stand against his mighty
stroke-

His strength came from the nourishment he got from
Fatima.

Ask of Hussein about thirst's torment in the
battle's heat!

Ask of that host about the valiant he fought all
alone!

Ask of that awful plain about the tremors
with which it was shaken!

Ask of the angel Gabriel concerning that
sword's might strokes!

The father there fought alone and the son there
fought alone-

And only Karbala and Khaibar witnessed such a
storm!

Oh, may we be a sacrifice for Ali and Hussein=
With their style of sorties, sallies and assaults,
same strength, same sword!

In Khaibar's battle Ali captured Khaibar's
citadel,

And at Karbala Hussein dispersed that host's
formations many times!

As one might expect! He was the son of Muhammad's
daughter.

There was a difference-Hussein had thirsted for two
days!

From that vast host the cry was heard, "O Lord,
have mercy now!

We have seen what destruction your swift, dextrous
strokes have wrought!

We have received due punishment for fighting
against you!

You who do good even to those who are evil
and do you harm!

We throw down now our swords and in repentance tie
our hands!

So now forgive the failings of these people of your
creed!"

An unseen caller's voice was heard to say, "O most
sublime!

What superhuman courage after starving for three
days!

O grandson of Muhammad and O Leader, son of a
Leader!

Your name is inscribed on the guarded tablet
for all time!

You are no more to fight against these brutal
hordes damned to Hell!

Now is the time to fulfil all that you have pledged
to God!"

On hearing the words of that voice, Hussein held
back his hand

And spoke, "This humble offering of my head,
accept, O God!

It would be a joyous 'Eid if evil-doers
slaughter me!

Where is the cruel Shamr? Let him unsheathe
his dagger now!

The Lover true is he who is prepared to sacrifice
himself!

My triumph and my victory rest only in God's holy
will!"

And saying this he calmly sheathed his sword,
resigned to die.

Then to his steed he made a sign and told him to
halt.

The loyal steed reluctantly halted and then
stood still

From all around they began showering arrows
on Hussein-

By spears he was encircled as is the rose by its
thorns;
The Prophet's grandson was surrounded by blood-
thirsty swords.
His body was transfixed as those arrows rained down
upon him.
And then that heartless, howling horde thrust
spears into his sides.
They slashed his head with swords; his
forehead bled from wounds;
His bright and noble countenance turned gory
red with his blood;

His body and his coat of mail were cut into
fragments;
His turban's coils, when cut, became uncoiled and
stained with his blood.
The guards along the river bank thrust at him with
their spears;
Where could a forlorn soul find repose amidst those
upraised swords?
His body was covered with more than a
thousand wounds
Which made those who beheld him quake with
terror and despair;

His holy countenance, sacred like the Book (the
Qur'an), soaked all over in blood!
His body slashed into as many parts as there are in
the Book!
The reins slipped from his hand, his feet slipped
from the stirrups;
Now, he sat up and now he bent over, weak from loss
of blood;
While blood flowed freely from the wounds and
gashes in his sides.
There was no one to aid him in that lonely,
helpless state;

Alas! no respite he got from those cruel saber strokes!

These ceaseless efforts aimed to bring the ka'aba crashing down!

Then (Fatima) Zahra's voice was heard to cry, "Alas, my son Hussein!

My lonely, forlorn, sad and sorely suffering son, Hussein!"

At the door of the tent Zainab cried, "My brother, dear Hussein!

Oh! Who can save you from these swords and bring you back safely?

Do you hear our mother's lamentations, full of heartfelt pain?

Oh! May I come and stand beside you and give you support?"

And when he could stay in the saddle no more, faint with wounds,

The star of God's Empyrean fell upon the dusty earth;

And after a while when Ali's son regained consciousness and arose,

The cruel Ibn Anas thrust a spear into his chest-
The spear-point transfixed his chest to exit from his back,

His sister, watching from the tent, emerged, bareheaded, and barefoot.

And as the accursed mercenary withdrew the bloodied spear

The Prince of Martyrs bowed his head in gratitude to God.

The Hell-bent, brutal Shimr unsheathed his dagger and advanced-

The heavens shook, the earth quaked on seeing such vile, odious acts.

How can I say how Shimr put the dagger to his throat-

It was as if he had trampled on the Holy Book itself!

His (Imam Hussein's) sister, Ali's daughter, then covered her face and cried

"O my beloved brother, you are being slaughtered while

I watch so helplessly!" And then she heard the cry, "Great God!"

She fell, face downward on the ground and swooned from grief,

And when she arose again and ran, she saw an awful sight-

The head of the Holy Prince of Martyrs, raised upon a lance!

And there she stood beside that lance, lamenting bitterly,

"O great Hussein, my martyred brother, they rejoice while I

Can barely see from shock of grief, all the world has darkened!

I could not reach you in these sad, last moments of your life!

Oh, look at me how I am caught up in his calamity

I stand with my head bare in the midst of these fierce and faithless foes!"

Ants, you cannot write more of Zainab's lamentations now!

The body of Hussein lay there, unburied, in the sun;

Alas, the Prophet found no peace in his resting place!

His holy progeny imprisoned and his house burnt down!

How many homes were left ruined and desolate by the death of Hussein!

Thus, the Prophet's progeny never prospered after Him (Imam Hussein).(171)

- FINIS -

(5304)

Let Mir Anis speak for himself:

*This fame of mine for the beauty of my
Words is really for the reason that I
Praise the illustrious Imam. What
Am I, what my voice, what my recitations?
Master, this all is the honor of being
Your servant.(172)*

*The great rival of Mir Anis as an author of marsiyas was his
contemporary, Mir Dabir, whose style is very different from that
of Mir Anis. Says Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi:*

*"Mir Dabir's choice of words, similes and metaphors
are scholarly, dignified and majestic. His quotations
from Qur'anic verses and hadiths are profound and help
to make his marsiyas learned, but they are hardly lucid.*

*During the lifetimes of Mir Anis and Mir Dabir,
their admirers were divided into two irreconcilable
groups. After they had both died, these differences
hardened, although Mir Anis and Mir Dabir had always
respected one another."(173)*

*Below is a marsiya by Mir Dabir. Note that the style is
somewhat different from that of Mir Anis:*

MARSIYA

*What tiger's advent is this that the battlefield
trembles?
The heart of Rustam quakes beneath his shroud!
Each palace of the monarchs of the age is trembling;
All of these aside even the ancient sky is shaking!
 Seeing the son of Haidar (Ali) sword in hand
 Gabriel trembles, huddling in his wings!*

(5305)

*Hastening his steed, Abbas came;
Playing the trumpet of "To Whom the Kingdom", he came;
Awakening the sleepers with the praise of God, he came;*

Striking all with one sword-stroke of his glance, he
came;

Without a bowstring, drawing the bows of his
eyebrows,
Without hands, stretching forth the spear-points of
his eye lashes!

The historian has written that one bold unbeliever
Was present in the ranks of the enemy army since the 7th
day of the month of Muharram
Brass-bodied, stone-hearted, false and evil of mind,
Having won many battles, he had hoisted many heads upon
his lance-points.

With him he had a villainous army; he had his own
drums, he had his own banner.
He was on his way to Syria to seize some estate.

When Fate brought him to the battlefield on the evening
of the seventh,

In private did Umar (the enemy general) tell him this:

"Now we, too, must fight the Sayyids;

There on Imam Hussein's side there are only a few members of
the Prophet's family; on our side is all of Creation!

We have no fear of Abbas, nor of Qasim, nor of Shabbir,
But our two hundred thousand men fear the Sword of God."

The warrior said trembling, "I, too, have qualms.

Who is the "Sword of God?". Umar said, "Abbas!"

The warrior said, "How can you have hope of victory?"

Umar replied, "For many days now that tiger has been thirsty.

We, too, are valorous, we fear no one;

Yet the soul leaves one's body from fear of Abbas,
son of Ali!"

When Abbas, the heroic standard-bearer, came upon the field,
Umar ibn Sa'd quietly told that unbeliever this:

"That tiger's coming whom you fear, he has come!"

From afar the warrior raised his head toward Abbas;

He looked, then said trembling to that deceitful army,
"You are foxes! Do you make me fight with the tiger of
God?"

(5306)

Thundering like the clouds, the warrior came forth,
Speedily, accoutred with the weapons of war, did he come
forth;

Abandoning life at every step, he came forth;

And before him his kettledrum, too, came forth playing;

Like Tuhmatan (Rustam), he was victorious over the
people of the world,
The earth sank wherever he set his feet.

Sometimes he waved his spear vertically, sometimes
horizontally;
Reciting war-verses, he devastated the garden of eloquence;
Many generations of the dead did that tyrant dig up;
He said, "Terror of me has rent the hearts of tigers!
Neither is Rustam a match for me, nor is Sohrab!
My title is Marhab ibn Abdu-l-Qamar!"

At this time Marhab made four attacks,
But not even one blow struck that member of the Prophet's
family!
Each limb of Abbas' body was adroit, like the heart and the
eye.
Marhab's sword was helpless, the enemy was unavailing.
When, enraged, he drew his sword upon that pure face,
The sword drew an "alif" with its finger upon the earth.

The coward hid his face with his shield
And drew his Indian dagger from his waist.
His dagger struck from that side, and Abbas' sword from this
At that time from fear the wind could not pass between them!
O God, the skill of the sword of the standard-bearer
(Abbas)
Slew the tempered steel of that blood-thirsting dagger!

When Abbas' sword had cut through the dagger, it did not stop
at Marhab's shield;
When it did not stop at the shield, it struck straight upon
his head;
When it struck straight upon his head, then did it reach his
breast and waist;
When it was at his breast and waist, then did it strike the
heart and liver;
When it was at his heart and liver, then did it reach
his saddle-skirt;
And when it was upon his saddle-skirt, then was Marhab
slain.

(5307)

Coming close to the curtain of the women's tent, the sister
of the King (Zainab) called,
You have been victorious over the enemy - all hail! I am
devoted to you!
Now do I say that I was watching all this battle!
With one blow by Abbas has the accursed one been slain!
At Khaybar did Ali, the Hand of God, slay someone named

Marhab;
Now the son of Ali, the Lion of God has slain another
of the same name!"

As Imam Hussein was sorrowfully saying this to Zainab,
Suddenly Sakina (young daughter of Imam Hussein) heard the
news of Abbas' victory.

She cried, "I am devoted to you! - Good, my Fizza,
Go quickly, greet my uncle Abbas!

Do not grieve him by speaking of our thirst and
suffering,

But remind him that he should not forget us!"

As Fizza went towards the battlefield to greet him,
Suddenly did Abbas see her coming

And called, "Go back! I am aware of your coming!

Tell Sakina that I remember her, by God!

I know that the girl's heart dies of thirst;

The slave of your father (Imam Hussein) comes bringing
water!"

Every ring of the chain mail on the bodies of the enemy army
became water through fear:

Were they alive in their armor, or were they corpses in their
shrouds, so frightened of Abbas were they?

Having pruned the tongues of the enemy daggers in their
mouths (sheaths,

With just his one sword, Abbas severed all the enemy swords
on the field!

The Lion of Haidar (Abbas) entered into the ocean of the
army of the foe;

Like boiling clouds did he come upon the bank of the
river!

(5308)

The guardians of the river advanced to the assault,
Wearing tightly fitting armor upon their breasts like the
scales of fishes,

With rustless daggers drawn like the billows,

The water-bearer (Abbas) said, "When is war permitted over
water?

You are the guardians of the river; yet in you is
ignorance of the Faith!

Like a bubble, there is no sight in your eyes!

*I have need of but one skin of water from this river!
Let me fill it! Make no objection nor quibble!"
The tyrants replied, "Passage of this river is perilous!"
The hero replied, "Yes, if this be your intention, then take care!*

*Here, stop my spear and spark-raining lightning
Stop my steed! Stop my sword, if you can!"*

*Saying this, he laid spurs to his nimble steed;
Flashing like a lightning bolt, that swift horse began
Throwing sparks from its shoes upon the heads of the evil
ones!*

*Was it a flood of destruction, or was it a calamitous storm?
The eyes of the enemy blinked when they saw that charger
in a rage;
When their eyes opened again, they saw Abbas and his
horse passing through the river!*

*Abbas then opened the mouth of his parched waterskin;
Bending low, that Master of the age began to fill it.
From afar the foe made him the target for their arrows.
And at that moment did the spirit of the Hand of God (Ali)
Come and kiss Abbas' shoulder.
The spirit of Ali said, "O how happy you make me, Son!
You fill the skin with water for my grand-daughter,
Son!"*

*When the beloved of the Lion of God (Ali) came forth from the
river,
There was an uproar among the foe that: "That tiger is
carrying off water!"
Then did those instigators of tyranny block the way;
Thus did they honor the water-bearer of Sakina!
They caused the graves of the Prophet and Haidar and
Zahra to shake!
The points of those spears which they had - they made
them meet in his liver!*

(5309)

*Then the bhishty (water-bearer) (Abbas), having placed the
waterskin upon his severed arms,
Like a tongue, he took its drawstring completely into his
mouth.
Suddenly several arrows struck him one after the other -
One upon the waterskin, one in the eye, and one upon the
mouth.*

*Water flowed from the waterskin, and blood coursed from
his body;*

Abbas fell from his horse, and the waterskin from his mouth.

Fallen, the standard-bearer (Abbas) cried with wounded lips,
"Let someone tell the thirsty that the water-bearer has been slain!"

By chance did the King of the martyrs (Imam Hussein) hear this cry,
And he said to Zainab, "See, now there is no one left of ours!

The throat of Asghar (Imam Hussein's infant son) has been pierced, the heart of Akbar (an older brother of Asghar) as well!
My arms, too, are broken, and my back as well!"

Zainab said, "It is true; all have died, Brother!
The death of Abbas has destroyed all our family, Brother!
Now are Hamza (uncle of the Prophet) and Haidar gone, Brother!

We who remain have now entered the assembly of the ruler bareheaded,

I have realized that I am fallen into the fetters of calamity;

Now I am not in my own home; I stand bareheaded in the midst of strife!"

Suddenly a voice came, "O beloved of Fatima (Hussein)!
Come speedily, for now my corpse is being trampled!"

Zainab said, "The fortunate Abbas lives!

You must go! Here I loose my hair in prayer for his recovery!"

The King (Imam Hussein) said, "The uncle of Sakina stands on the lip of the grave;

Has anyone slain by the enemy army yet escaped?"

(5310)

With the aid of Akbar, the Lord (Imam Hussein) went to the river,
At times conscious, at times unconscious; sometimes swooning,
sometimes lamenting.

It is written that thus were the limbs of the water-bearer sundered

That one hand was found at the slaying-place itself, one at the edge of the stream.

When the son of Zahra (Imam Hussein) arrived beneath a tree upon the battlefield,

The King (Imam Hussein) saw one hand yet quivering.

*Kneeling down, the noble King said this thing to Akbar;
O beloved son, take up Abbas' severed head! This hand is of my own
arm!"*

*Holding this hand to his breast, the Heir of the Sayyids
Reached the corpse of the excellent Abbas*

*Woe! His shoulders were seen to be severed by the swords
of the foe;*

*Bareheaded, the spirit of the Hand of God (Ali) appeared
at Abbas' head.*

*Impulsively the King placed his forehead upon the forehead of
Abbas;*

Setting his lips upon Abbas' lips, he said, "O woe and pain!

This arrow - this eye? And this spear - this heart?

O delight of my eyes, O joy of the heart!

Say something from your lips, my tenderhearted brother!

Abbas, Abul-l-Fazl! Standard-bearer! Brother!

*In that moment of dying, when Abbas heard the lamenting of
the Leader,*

*With the intention of showing respect, he propped himself up on
his severed shoulders.*

*Then he tried to pull back his feet, that they might not be
pointing toward the Lord.*

The King spoke: "Do not trouble yourself, O my devoted one!"

Abbas addressed him, "I lie with legs extended."

The Lord said this, "I stand at your head!"

(5311)

*Here where Imam Hussein stood beside Abbas was this misfortune;
there in the women's tent was this tumult.*

*The female descendants of the Prophet stood at the door with bared
heads,*

*There was anxiety among them as to why the Leader had not brought
back the corpse of Abbas.*

The son of Abbas was standing outside frightened;

His body trembled like the glittering sun;

His heart was rent like the collars of orphans.

This was the uproar the Leader found when he came back bearing the empty waterskin and the standard of Abbas.
Clutching his breast, the Leader of Nations came into the tent,
And around the banner the women gathered with dishevelled hair.
The King said to Zainab, "Sister, we have come plundered of our most precious treasure, Abbas!

Zainab, you are the protectress of the orphans of your brother!

Zainab, you are the arranger of the mourning for the standard-bearer!"

Silence, Dabir, now, for you have not the strength for poetry!
The heart of the panegyrist (Dabir) is sundered by the dagger of sorrow!

This marsiya of mine is means enough of attaining forgiveness on the Day of Judgement.

In just one week did I compose this marsiya.

Upon you, O Dabir is the special favor of the Helper of God
(Ali)

All this beneficence is due to your praise of the son
of Ali!(174)

- FINIS -

Below is what is called a **Salam** in Urdu literature; it is similar in content to a Marsiya, but the prosodic structure is different. The Urdu **Salam** of Lucknow is not strophic, but is rather a variant of the monorhyme **Ghazal**, which passed from Persian to Urdu, as we see below in this demonstration of the rhyme scheme of the Lakhnavi Salam:

(5312)

A

A

B

A

C

A

D

A

This Salam is also by Mir Dabir:

SALAM

Greetings! (Salaam!) O beauteous tomb of (Imam) Hussein!
Light of Truth, dust of healing, place of (Imam) Hussein!

Intercede for me with your Lord (Imam) Hussein!
That (Imam) Hussein may remember me at Karbala!

The highest throne of Heaven is but a carpet for his
feet!
Beyond this world is the palace of (Imam) Hussein!

He did not go again to the Ka'aba nor to Yathrib (Medina);
In what evil, ill-omend hour did (Imam) Hussein come to Karbala!

All of the beloved of the Sayyid women perished;
O Sky, whom should (Imam) Hussein console?

When his 18 year old son (Ali Akbar) perished,
(Imam) Hussein came back to his tent clutching his
heart with grief.

Shahr Banu said softly to Zainab:
"Why has (Imam) Hussein not brought my son Ali Akbar from the
battlefield?"

The King spoke: "In order to sacrifice him for the
cause of the Shi'as.
Bring Ali Asghar too, that (Imam) Hussein may take him to
Karbala."

(5313)

Even today from the grave of (Imam Hussein's daughter) (Fatima)
Sughra there comes a voice:
"How, then, O people of Medina, has Imam Hussein returned home?"

O Sky, you have shown Imam Hussein the corpse of Ali Akbar!
Well have you fulfilled the desire of (Imam) Hussein!

On the 40th day of mourning Zainab said at (Imam) Hussein's tomb:
"Now whither shall this sister go, O (Imam) Hussein?"

Even in thirst was the spirit of Imam Hussein refreshed;

The giving of thanks to the Creator was the miraculous power of
(Imam) Hussein!

In order to bear witness to the thirst of all,
Even now on the banks of that river is the bhishti (water-carrier)
of (Imam) Hussein.

From the death of Ali Akbar this agony arose in Imam Hussein's
heart
That he cried out, saying: "O Ali Akbar!"

One day (Fatima) Sughra said to her grandmother:
"Today (Imam) Hussein came to me in a dream.

In both his hands there was a tiny corpse (Ali Asghar)
Soaked in blood from head to foot was (Imam) Hussein

Upon him and upon the corpse as well did arrows fall;
Silently did (Imam) Hussein stand, with bowed head.

I asked: 'Sire, when will you come back to us?'
Looking upon my face, (Imam) Hussein was ashamed.

Weeping, he said: 'I have not even this much time
That (Imam) Hussein may even wrap your brother in a shroud!'"

Have no concern for the tempest of the Day of
Judgement, O Dabir,
For my boat is the love of (Imam) Hussein! (175)

Fatima Sughra was Imam Hussein's daughter who had been left
behind in Medina because she was ill at the time, and so was not
present at Karbala. Note the occasional use of symbolic rather

(5314)

than literal truth; Shahr Banu, as we have said before, died some
time before Imam Hussein's martyrdom at Karbala.

Imam Ali Zain al-Abidin, the 4th Imam, son of Imam Hussein
and Shahr Banu, was present at Karbala, but was not slain that day
because he was badly ill. It is important NOT to confuse Imam Ali
Zain al-Abidin with his brother Ali Akbar, nor with his much

younger half-brother Ali Asghar. Ali Asghar was an infant at the time of his death at Karbala.

I hope I have given the reader an idea of the spirit of the Marsiyya poetry of the splendid and noble city of Lucknow, which will always hold a special place in my heart.

Certainly the Marsiyya achieved its highest development in Lucknow and in the Urdu language. However, as we have hinted earlier, the Marsiyya is peculiar neither to Lucknow nor to the Urdu language. Below Annemarie Schimmel deals with the Marsiyya in the region of Sind and in the Sindhi language. In this essay, we shall again be reminded of Haidar Amoli's words: "Shi'ism is Sufism, and Sufism is Shi'ism".

"When I traveled in Upper Sind in 1961 I saw a high pole with flags in the small town of Ratodero, and became aware for the first time, that the Shi'a element in Pakistan, and particularly in the province of Sind, in the Lower Indus Valley, is still comparatively strong. The last independent rulers of Sind, the Baluch Talpurs, were of Shi'a persuasion, and some of the
(5315)

leading families who had come from Iran also professed this creed. Besides, the extreme veneration of the sayyeds was always apparent in Sind, whether the population was officially Shi'a or not. Literary evidence shows that in previous centuries the celebrations in Muharram on the famous burial ground Makli Hill near Thatta were typical features of religious life in Sind, and the strenuous Naqshbandi theologians of the then capital, Thatta, such as Makhdum Muhammad Hashem (d. 1763) composed treatises against these "unislamic" customs (once again, Puritans of Islam, crypto-Manichaeans like their Protestant equivalents). It is small wonder that the Sindhi language, too, has produced a considerable number of Marsiyya. I have not yet come across "Ta'ziyeh" in the

true sense of the word as "passion play", although further research may produce some examples. ... Neither can Sind boast of anything similar to the Marsiyya in Urdu, which developed first in the Deccan, where King Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah, around 1600, wrote the first simple threnodies on the martyrs of Karbala, and was then developed by the great eighteenth century poet Sauda, to reach its apex in the hundreds of Marsiyyas by the Lucknow poets (Mir) Anis and (Mir) Dabir in the nineteenth century.

The first written poems in Sindhi go back to the sixteenth century; they consist of short poems by mystics. Classical literature reached its apex in the eighteenth century with Shah Abdul Latif of Bhit (d. 1752). It is during this century that we find the first poet who devoted himself exclusively to Marsiyya writing in his mother tongue. He is, as Ghulam Muhammad Gerami has shown in a fine article, Thabit Ali Shah (1740-1810). He performed the pilgrimage to Karbala, and wrote in Persian, Urdu, and Sindhi. To be sure, even before him some scattered Marsiyya can be found in Sindhi, for instance in the work of Makhdum Abdullah Thattawi, a member of the leading religious family in Thatta, and in the poetry of Sayyed Haydar Shah and Maulvi Ahmad Chinan Faqir; but Thabit Ali concentrated upon his art more than any of his predecessors. He himself claims: "The Marsiyya had previously no root in Sindhi, and whatever was there was not famous." This poet's greatness in this field was readily acknowledged by his compatriots.

We should, however, not forget that there was also a Marsiyya tradition in Persian in the country: the

(5316)

works of 'Allama (1682-1782), of Muhammad Mu'in Tharo of Thatta, who had composed a rubaiyat commemorating the martyrs of Karbala, and Muhammad Muhser Thattawi (1709-1750) are worth mentioning. The latter, a devout Shi'a poet, introduced the form of tarj-i-band for the Persian Marsiyya in Sind. He was probably the first artist to use the form of salam for the martyrs, a form which later became popular with the Sindhi poets. Muhsen, who called himself "the bewildered nightingale of the garden of Hussein", has composed a twelve-band Marsiyya; one of his qasidas dramatically describes how the boat of Mustafa's family has been drpwned in blood, the black cloud of infidelity had waylaid the sun, and the candle of the Prophet was killed by the breeze of the Kufans. All these themes are taken up by Thabit Ali Shah, who used the form of salam, but also that of

suwari, "riding song", which was to become widely used by the Sindhi poets to describe how the beloved offspring of Mustafa and Murtaza went out riding to his fate. ... Sometimes we find in his poetry dramatic forms, such as the introduction of the complaining radif: hay hay hasrat wawayla! ...

Sindhi Marsiyyas are usually filleed with Persian and Arabic terms and expressions, but Thabit Ali Shah has also produced a pure thet Sindhi salam, without any loanwords, in which he addresses the beloved child of al-Batul, who died from thirst: ... he thus set the model for the following poets who used the Marsiyya form: there are only a few powerful lins byacel Sarmast, he enthusiastic late eighteenth century writer, his spiritual successor, Bedi of Rohri (d. 1872). We fid the fo used by Mir Hsan, Shh Naser, Mirza Baddhal Beg Khwja NaserAl and particularly Mirza Qalich Beg, the geat tanslator and novelist (d. 1929). Ven more famous is the prince from the Talpr famiy, Abdul Hussein Sang, a riend of Mirza Qalich Beg. These authors follow the Persian-Urdu taditon rather thn the Sidhi one by incorporating Persian metres intheir oems, ilclasicl Sindhi uses indigenous metres. Sagis marsiyyas follow the established models; salam and suwari can be found, and his suwari achieves a distinguished connection with the fact the Hasan and Hussein once used to ride on their grandfather's, the Prophet's, back; a theme lovingly used by the folk poets of Sind.

Sometimes Sangi indulges in strange images, trying to surpass his models:

(5317)

From the arrows' rain the most holy body became
like a sieve,
And the blood came out of the body as spring
Rain falls. ...

But he has also used a motif that leads us into the more mystical interpretation of the martyrdom of the Imam

The prince has made his mi'raj on the ground
of Karbala,
The Shah's horse has gained the rank of Buraq ...

And in another suwari he sings:

Today the Shah of Karbala has mounted his
horse, just as though Mustafa were mounting
Buraq today. ...

In the same Marsiyya, written in the classical form of Musaddas, he promises his listeners:

Who weeps here, he will make him laugh there,
for the sake of the Imam you will become
justified.

When one becomes worthy of the Divine state
Duality becomes distant, and then one reaches
Unity. ...

Here we reach the point where the Marsiyya is connected with mystical poetry proper: the experience of martyrdom is the experience of meeting God. Sangi's verses remind the reader somehow of the way in which some Turkish poets in the Bektashi tradition would compare the fate of Hussein ibn Ali in the battlefield of Karbala with that of Hussein ibn Mansur al-Hallaj, who found the fulfillment of his mystical love on the gallows. Dr. Farhadi has shown how Mansur Hallaj, Shams-e Tabrizi, and Mullah Jalal al-Din (Rumi) are woven into a strange relationship in one of the Persian Ta'ziyeh plays. In both Husseins the secret of Divine love, which means affliction, becomes apparent.

It is in this tradition that we have to place the most touching poem in honor of the martyrs of Karbala
(5318)

in the Sindhi language: it is Sur Kedaro by Shah Abdul Latif, Kedaro being the old folk melody used for threnodies and dirges for those who have fallen on the battlefield. Shah Abdul Latif's poetry precedes that of Thabit Aki Shah, and he has set models in other poetical forms for the generations to come. In Shah's Risalo, which consists of some thirty chapters, each centering around one topic of traditional tales which are mystically interpreted, and sung in a specific melody, Kedaro describes in six chapters the sufferings of the children of the Prophet. Shah Abdul Latif uses the traditional motifs but combines them with the mystical path which is, to use Rumi's term, a path in blood: thus the tragedy of Karbala is interpreted as the manifestation of the highest Divine Love. It seems that a partial translation of the Sur will show the character of the poetry best. It should not be forgotten, however, that the poetry of the Risalo is meant to be sung, hence, expressions may be found which are due to alliteration, internal rhymes, and

other poetical requirements without being necessarily connected with the exact meaning of the sentence.

Shah begins with the descriptions of Muharram:

The moon of Muharram was seen, anxiety
About the princes occurred.
The One Allah may know what He pleases
To do. (I, 1)
Muharram has come back, the Imams have
not come back
O Lord, bring me together with the princes of
Medina!

The sigh is repeated in the following lines (3, 4), and then the poet gives a colorful description of how the princes of Medina have "gone out from Medina", sending men to fetch all the necessary implements; but what will be the end?

The Mirs have gone out from Medina: they
Have not come back
Dye the clothes in black, brother dyer!
(I, 7)

(5319)

From here Shah Latif reaches his central statement when he sings:

The hardship of martyrdom, hear, is the
Day of happiness [or: wedding; shadi],
Yazid has not got an atom of this love,
Death is rain [of grace] for the children of
Ali. (I, 8)

The term "rain", which is used so often in these verses, is the rain of mercy, rain being the sign of Divine grace and mercy, as was alluded to in the Qur'an, and as Shah Latif himself has said so often in his grand hymn in honor of the Prophet, in Sur Sarang, the "Rain-song".

The hardship of martyrdom is all the joyful
Rainy season,
Yazid has not got the traces of this love,
The decision of being killed was with the

Imams from the very beginning. (I, 9)

That means, this martyrdom had already been accepted by them at the covenant of alast, just as the other heroines of his mystical poetry, such as the loving and longing Suhni and Sassui, had accepted death in the way of love from the very beginning of creation. Verse 10 repeats this idea in different wording, and then the poet continues:

The hardship of martyrdom is all coquetry
[naz]
The intoxicated ones [rend] understand the
secret
Of the case of Karbala. (I. 11)

Here the terminology of naz and rend leads the listener immediately into the tradition of Persian mystical poetry.

The closing wa'y, a poem with a refrain, complains that everything beautiful has gone due to the departure of the princes:

(5320)

Today the princes of the faithful have left
Medina and gone,
They have left Medina and gonem who are gone
Out of Medina
Woe, woe, they have gone out of Medina!
Sun, moon - toward Mustafa they have all
gone,
Woe, woe! weakness has fallen without them,
The stars have gone away! ...

...The second chapter describes once more how the princes have gone out with drums, falcons, axes, daggers, and other war implements, and how they have pitched their tents on the plain of Karbala (II. 4).

Killing with Egyptian swords do they show
their heroism and
Certainly Bibi [Fatima] has borne such heroic
Darlings. (II. 5) ...

...The activity of the "lion-like sayyeds" is described in powerful images:

Having cut with swords, they made heaps of
carcasses -
Heroes become there confused, seeing Mir
Hussein's attack. (II. 6)

Seeing this display of heroism,

The earth trembles, shakes, the skies are in
Uproar.

But then, Shah concludes, this is more than normal fighting:

This is not a war, this is the manifestation
Of Love. (II. 7)

(5321)

From here he can easily turn to the central theme of his whole poetry, and of mystical poetry in general:

The Friend kills the beloved, the lovers are slain,

For the elect friends He prepares
difficulties,
God, the Eternal without need - what He
wants,
He does. (II. 10)

God loves to afflict those whom He loves - just as the hadith says: "The most afflicted ones are the prophets ... Mystical poetry in Iran, Turkey, and Muslim India has often dwelt upon this aspect of suffering as the true manifestation of love, remembering Hallaj's daring word, "Happiness is from Him, but suffering is He Himself." Whether it be Hallaj's great commentator Ruzbehan Baqli in his Sharh-e Shathiyat, or the Sindhi poet Sachal Sarmast, they know that God comes to test those who love Him by showering afflictions upon them,

and one of the most touching expressions of this knowledge is Sachal's poem in which he enumerates all the martyrs of love, from Noah and Abraham to his own near contemporaries in India, such as Sarmad, the "heretic" poet of the Mughal court, and Shah Inayat of Jhok, slain by the representatives of the Delhi government. But all these heroes knew, again, that one hadith qudsi promises the martyrs of love: "Who My beauty kills, I am His blood-money." And this conviction gives them strength to endure the most cruel afflictions.

Shah Abdul Latif closes this chapter with a wa'y in which he once more sings of the battlefield in the plains of Karbala, an area without water, without rain, but:

From the side of fate, the black clouds of
grief

Have come

Seeing the hardship of Mir Hussein, the
prophets

Have cried bitterly,

Angels, skies, earth tremble, from above the
Throne came sobbing.

(5322)

The following chapter goes into a more detailed description of the final battle, and Prince Hussein is described as the bridegroom:

With flower embroidered dresses, O man, be
Prepared for the wedding! (III, 10)

And he is admonished to walk forward. Shah uses here an allusion to how a Sindhi wedding is celebrated. The bridegroom has decorated his horse, and, we may conclude, he rides to his fatal battle proudly, decorated, and embellished, in the company of his faithful friends as if he were a real bridegroom, meeting his bride and experiencing union. The fact that the anniversary of the death of a saint is also called *urs* (wedding) looms large behind this imagery: death is the mystic marriage. And the one who has "given his head in the arena has honored his eleders" (III. 14).

The fourth chapter turns first to the treacherous Kufans: the Kufis have written a paper, taking an oath by God:

We are following you, you are our King,
Come once here that the throne may be handed
Over to you. (IV. 6)

But "The Kufis in Karbala did not give water to drink",
and the Prophet is implored for help. The old motif of
the bird that came to the Prophet's tomb is elaborated
here:

The morning bird has come in the morning,
Traveling,
To the sanctuary of the Prophet it
complained:
"The heroes have been slain, get up, Mir
Muhammad Arabi!"
The morning bird has come yesterday from
Karbala:
"I am sullied by blood, the situation is
confused,
The bridegrooms have been annihilated, the
friends of Mir Hussein!" (IV, 9, 10)

(5323)

And the way is a sad complaint about the Imams who have
remained all day in the desert and have sent a little
crane to their grandfather to tell him the sad news.

In the following chapter, Shah regrets that Mir
Hasan is not with Mir Hussein, otherwise he would come
like a moth to be with his brother; then, the poet goes
into the story of Hurr, who joined the faithful, coming
from the army of Yazid:

Hurr has come, manly,
"I am a lover of fire, a butterfly,
A moth,
The messenger of the Lord, the Prophet,
Your grandfather should be content
With me,
This honorable secret, bridegroom, I ask
It from above!" (V, 6)

For "Hurr's right guidance has come from pre-eternity", and the Qur'anic verse "God does not burden a soul with what it cannot endure" is quoted for him (V, 7). His beard has become red from blood and his turban shines like the moon in the fourteenth night in the place so that his mother on doomsday will smile. "Bravo to the hero who has given his head into pieces!" (V, 9)

The use of the word **pirr**, "place, arena" is certainly important, for it also designates, in Sindhi, the **-imam barah**, and this is the most fitting expression for a Muharram event. In the following lines, the poet connects the shining turban of the hero with the light verse of the Qur'an, whose manifestation is seen here on earth, and likewise with the Qur'anic saying "Their signs are in their faces" (Surah 48:29). These words are the pearl strings for the hero whose face is reddened by blood. Ali himself will wipe away the drops of blood, and the Creator will forgive every sin as exchange for the blood thus shed.

The wa'y once more takes up these themes, and ends with the note that even:

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Duldul, the Shah's horse, had a red caparison. And now the battle is over. Everyone, including the faithful Duldul, is covered with blood, and Shah Latif begins his last chapter by admonishing the vultures not to pluck out the eyes of the martyrs, which are like stars. Once more he remembers that the beloved heroes did not stay in the fort of Kufa, but rather sacrificed their heads, for they "are fighting for God's sake" (Sura 5:59), that is the work they do:

The houris bind rose chains, flower
decorations
For the martyrs. (VI, 10, 11)

They have reached the place of mystical union, and the word *sahra* once more points to the wedding ceremony, when the bridegroom wears the colorful cover over his face.

First the brothers, secondly the nephews,
thirdly

The dear darling friends ...
All of them have gone out from Kufa, and reached
Paradise.
Paradise is their place, overpowering they
Have gone to Paradise,
They have become annihilated in God, with
Him they have become He.
Lord, show the face of those with grace! (VI, 12)

That means, they have attained the highest mystical
state, that of fana fi Allah, and have been united with
Him, becoming He (**hu**). The ideal of mystical Islam is
clearly expressed here.

Once more Shah Abdul Latif takes up the more
popular motif of weeping for Shah Hussein:

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Three communities have wept for Hasan, for
Mir Hussein:
Men in the house, animals in the wilderness,
Angels in the height,
Birds have beaten themselves: the beloved
ones
Have gone away!
Allah! Give victory to the princes, true God!
(VI, 14)

And he concludes:

Those who have no pain of Hasan and
Mir Hussein,
The Creator, the powerful Lord, will not
forgive them. (V, 15)

And closes with a wa'y that calls for constant weeping,
although again he admits that:

What has happened to the Imams: God Himself

Has created it.

It seems to me that Shah Abdul Laitfi's *Sur Kedar* shows a most fascinating blending of folk tradition and high mystical experience. On the one hand, Imam Hussein is seen, as in hundreds of poems, as the martyr, fighting in the service of God, a martyr whose fate should be duly mourned by everyone. Those who do not pity him will not be forgiven, and although the sad fate of the Imam was predestined from the day of alast, still, animals, men, and angels weep for their sake, and their departure - the departure of the lighted stars - has left the world in darkness. On the other hand, Hussein becomes the model of the loving mystic who follows the pre-eternal call for love and willingly takes upon himself suffering and death in order not only to reach Paradise as the bridegroom reaches the festive wedding place, but rather to become completely annihilated in God. The two trends are closely intertwined in Shah's account of the events of Karbala, but we may not be wrong to assume that the mystical aspect of the suffering was more important for him than the external one: Imam Hussein becomes, once more, a
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spiritual brother of the martyr mystic Hallaj, and also a spiritual brother of and model for the heroines of Shah's Sindhi folk tales: it is no accident that the tragic story of the loving Sassui is once told in the melody "Hussein", which was usually sung for Muharram dirges. If I were asked which lines of *Sur Kedar* seem most revealing to me, I would choose the remark:

In their martyrdom was all the coquetry of Love:
Some intoxicated people may understand
The mystery of the case of Karbala." (176)

Below we give a brief overview concerning the celebration of Muharram in different places in the Subcontinent.

"The cold-blooded massacre at Karbala on the tenth of Muharram of Imam Hussein, the grandson of the Holy Prophet Muhammad and the son of Ali (ibn Abi Talib) and Fatima, along with his relatives, companions, and friends, is observed all over the world wherever Muslims live. However, the manner of its observation differs from place to place. India, which has a very large population of Muslims, is famous for the great zeal with

which the martyrdom of Imam Hussein is observed by Muslims and Hindus (and Catholics) alike. This observance, however, is not at all like the Iranian practice, which centers in the ritual theatre (or Passion Play), the Ta'ziyeh. In this unique dramatic presentation, performers and spectators alike participate in the reenactment of the tragedy of Karbala. The word ta'ziyeh has a different connotation in India, referring NOT to the theatre, the drama presented on its stage, but to an actual object, a small reproduction of the tomb of Imam Hussein. This is carried in Muharram processions, accompanied by various symbolic devices which illustrate the Karbala legends.

The practice of **Ta'ziyeh-dari** (Ta'ziyeh Ceremonies) was first introduced in India by Timur-Lang. The Mughal Emperors firmly established it as a custom, which gradually became popular with the masses. The parade, or procession, became a spectator event, evoking great interest and religious fervor. Here the ta'ziyeh, since it is a replica of the tomb of Imam Hussein situated at Karbala, commands the utmost respect from Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

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The making of the (Indian) **ta'ziyeh** has developed into a fine art over the centuries. They differ in their overall design and size, each city having its own peculiar version. One can easily distinguish the ta'ziyeh of Delhi from those of Lucknow, Hyderabad and Calcutta, etc. Even in the same city no two are likely to be identical. There are many varieties of ta'ziyeh. Those which are permanent are kept throughout the year for **ziyarat** (pilgrimage) are called **zareeh**. They are generally made of wood and metal with gold and silver plating. Every historical, or big **imambarah** (shrine) has its own zareeh. Usually ta'ziyeh are made of bamboo sticks, ivory, paper and other beautiful pieces of art work and handicraft. Sizes also vary. Some are small and some are five to six metres high. They are also made of newly grown wheat or barley and other similar plants which give them added beauty. I have seen in hilly areas ta'ziyeh made of branches of trees and decorated with leaves and flowers. All such ta'ziyeh are buried at the termination of the procession on Ashura day or on **Arba'iyn** (observance forty days after death) which will be described below.

The **Rowzeh-Khani** and **Nuhe-khani** (dramatic narration of the life, deeds, suffering, and death of the Shi'ite martyrs and the dirges) came to India from Iran. In earlier days, practically all the **Nuhe-khani** were done

in Persian, and even now the compositions in this sweet language [I have heard it said among Muslims of north India that: "Arabic is learned (because it is so difficult to learn for someone who grew up speaking an Indo-European language, Persian is sweet, and Urdu is polite"] form an important part of the recitations. It is also an historical fact that various Ulemas (learned religious leaders), traders, artists, poets, and writers migrated from Iran to India from time to time, and made India their home. The Indians were very impressed and influenced by their culture and system of Azadari (mourning for the Martyrs) which took deep roots in all parts of the country. One can still hear the famous Persian **Nuhe** during Muharram

Yousef-e gulgoun ah Ali Akbarem
Gum shudeh dar Karbala ah Ali Akbarem.

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The great Sufis who migrated to India also added to the observance of Muharram and **Ta'ziyeh-dari** and laid much stress on **Azadari**. The following quatrain of the revered Sufi saint of Ajmer, Hazrat Khajeh Miunuddin Chistie Gharib Nawaz, has gained international and everlasting fame. ...

...In India, Lucknow is the centre of **Ta'ziyeh-dari**. It took deep roots during the rule of the Shahan-e Oudh. In addition to small imambarahs (**Azakhaneh**, or houses of mourning), three big imambarahs were built by the Oudh kings, i.e., **Asafaddaula**, **Husainabad**, and **Shah Najaf**. The Karbala of **Talkatorn**, **Dargah of Kazamain** are also historical imambarahs.

During Muharram, **ta'ziyeh** and **zareeh** form the main part of the celebrations. From the first of Muharram, practically all the **azakhanehs** are decorated with **alams**, **ta'ziyeh** and **zareeh**. **Majales-e Aza** (mourning assemblies) are held in big imambarahs. In certain parts of the country non-Muslims also conduct Ta'ziyeh celebrations and hold Majales-e Aza during Muharram and Arba'iyin. On the seventh of Muharram, there are processions of **mehndi** (a zareeh which symbolizes the marriage of Qasim, the son of Imam Hasan, with Fatima Kubra, the daughter of Imam Hussein, in Karbala, followed by **Zuljanah** and **alams**. Though the procession of mehndi occurs in practically every part of India, yet in Lucknow, it has its own historical background. This mile-long procession

includes **tabarrukkat** (food or drink offered to persons attending different Muharram rituals) which in olden days were brought by the Oudh rulers (or **nawabs**). It is embellished by rows of elephants, horses carrying black banners, and army bands. The procession passes through the main streets of the city and is attended by thousands of persons. On the ninth of Muharram the entire night is spent in **marsiyyeh-khani** (elegiac recitation) and **Nuhe-khani** (dirge singing) in the imambarahs. In other words, a **shab-bidari** (night vigil) is observed. On the tenth of Muharram, ta'ziyeh are taken out in processions which gradually proceed towards the local Karbalas with Zuljanah and alams and with **Matam** (**sineh-zani** or breast-beaters) and **Nuhe-khani**. The ta'ziyeh reach the Karbalas by the evening and are buried before sunset. After sunset, **Majles-e Ghariban** (supper of the displaced persons) is held. **Azadari** (mourning in Lucknow continues till the eighth of (the month of) Rabiul Awwal. During this period processions of

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ta'ziyeh go out from different imambarahs on different dates which have been assigned to each imambarah by ancient custom. Again, the observance of Araba'iyn is not less important than the observance of Muharram. On this day, as on the tenth of Muharram, the processions of ta'ziyeh accompanied by Zuljanah and alams are taken out on a large scale and proceed to various Karbalas with Matam and Nuhe-khani. In the evening, these ta'ziyeh are buried with Fateheh-khani.

In Lucknow, the eighth of Rabiul Awwal is the most important day. It is the last day of mourning. The traditional zareeh is taken out in procession early in the morning. As this holiday is not observed in all the cities, most people from towns and villages come to Lucknow to participate in the procession, and so it becomes the biggest assembly of the year. The formation of the procession is the same as that of the tenth of Muharram or Araba'iyn.

Delhi, capital of India, is not in any way second to Lucknow in the Muharram celebrations. Here also there is a ta'ziyeh procession on the ninth and tenth of Muharram, Arba'iyn and the seventh of Rabiul Awwal. It goes out from the city and reaches the historical Karbala of Aliganj in New Delhi by evening.

The Arba'iyn is also observed at **Dargah-e Shah-e Mardan**, Aliganj, where a big crowd attends the **Majlis-e Aza** addressed by prominent speakers of various faiths and religions, and renowned Ulemas. After the Majlis-e

Aza, a procession of ta'ziyeh, Zuljaneh and alams starts from this **Dargah** and ends at the Karbala Aliganj. **Dargah-e Shah-e Mardan** is an historical monument and has what is believed to be the footprint of Imam Ali (ibn Abi Talib) in one of its shrines.

The Muharram celebrations of Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras are also worth mentioning. There are old historical imambarahs where majales are held and processions of ta'ziyeh are taken out.

Hyderabad again is a city of Imambarahs and Azakhanehs tastefully decorated with zareeh and alams. **Hazrat Bibi-Ka-Alam** is taken out in a huge procession. The ta'ziyeh of Hyderabad is also famous. In Hyderabad and also in Bombay many Iranians have settled down, and have rightly added to the success of **Ta'ziyeh-dari**.

Matam is also performed on burning coalfires in Lucknow, Delhi, Madras, Calcutta, and other parts of the country. Our Hanafi brethren and Sufis also celebrate with ta'ziyeh, hold Majales-e Aza to

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commemorate the memory of the **Shahedan-e Karbala** (Martyrs of Karbala), but do not do **sineh-zani** like Shi'a Muslims.

The Government of India extends all help and patronage to maintain law and order and to make the ta'ziyeh procession a great success.

Some former Hindu Maharajas of India also took an active interest in **Ya'ziyeh-dari**. The former Maharaja of Gwalior used to take part in an official ta'ziyeh procession, walking with the procession barefooted.

Among the Hindus who observe Muharram in a big way are the **Mohyal Brahmins**. They have the surnames of **Datt** and **Vaid** (descendants of the ancient Indian sage **Bharadwaj**), **Chhibar** (descendants of **Bhargava**), **Bali** (descendants of **Parashara**), **Mohan** (descendants of **Kashyapa**), **Lau** (descendants of **Vasishtha**) and **Bhimwal** (descendants of **Koshal**). **Mohyals** have a prominent place in the annals of India and in the affairs of Arabia, Central Asia, Persia and China.

When they were in Arabia, it was commonly sung about the Datts:

Wah Datt Sultan
Hindu ka Dharam
Mussulman ka Imam
Wah Datt Sultan
Adha Hindu, Adha Mussalman.

Mohyals were never forced to embrace Islam. On the other hand, fraternal bonds evolved between the Datt Chief, Sultan Rahab, and the descendants of the Prophet Muhammad, Hasan and Hussein. According to tradition, Mohyals were allies of Imam Hussein in **Jang-e Karbala** (battle of Karbala). Later, Sultan Rahab and the Mohyals avenged the defeat at Karbala. Consequently, the descendants of the Prophet, i.e., the Sayyeds, continued to show great reverence to Mohyals as dauntless defenders of humanity.

After avenging the defeat of Karbala and extending their influence to Iran and Afghanistan they reentered India, through the northwest and the Arabian Sea, spreading out in the Indian states of Punjab, Sind, Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal and Madhya Pradesh.

On their way home from Arabia, the Mohyals established a Brahmin dynasty in Kabul also, where, according to Sir A. Cunningham, they reigned from about (5331)

AD 860 to AD 950. Even today Mohyals residing in Kabul are called Diwans (ministers).

Sir T.P. Russel Stracey, a British historian, has acknowledged that the martial instincts of the Mohyals, cherished and confirmed by the noblest traditions, would countenance nothing subversive of discipline. And the annals of the Mughal, Maratha, Sikh, and British governments record no instance of treachery as far as this community is concerned.

For over ten years I have delivered lectures in Jammu on the tragedy of Karbala during Muharram and Arba'iyn, and I always noticed the womenfolk of Datt Brahmin offering **chadars** (**reedas**, i.e., pieces of muslin cloth) in memory of Zainab and Kulsum. The Hussein Brahmin march in the ta'ziyah procession up to the local Karbalas and return home after paying their homage to the Shahedane-Karbala.

Hindu and Sikh poets of great repute like Pandit Amar Nath sahir, Munshi Sheshcsander Talib, Malkush-shoara Ufaq Lucknowi, Gopinath Amam Lucknowi, Sardar Darshan Singh Duggal, Professor Javed Vashisht, Rajkavi Inderjeet Singh Tulsi, Pandit Labhoo Ram Josh, Pandit Arsh Malsiani, Kunwar Mohinder Singh Bedi Sehar, Professor Talok Chand Mehroom and many others have given us materpieces of elegy and poems on the tragedy of Karbala, and their work forms an important part of the literature.

I can confidently say that in India Ta'ziyeh-dari has gone a long way to advance the gospel of National Integration and Fellow-feelings.

I may also make mention of some historical religious shrines where pilgrims come to pay homage from all over the country, and where ta'ziyeh processions are held to celebrate Muharram and Arba'iyn. The Tomb of Shahed-e Sales Nurullah Shahed

Sustari in Agra, the Tomb of Shahed-e Rabey in Delhi, the **Najaf-e Hind Jogipura**, **Hussein Tekri-Jaora Taragarh-Ajmer** and **Ali-Maula-Ka-Pahar** (Mountain of Hazrat Ali), Hyderabad, are some of them.

Procession of **tabuts** (representing a bier or coffin) are also held on the twenty-first of Ramazan to mark the martyrdom of the Faithful - Hazrat-e Ali. Such tabuts also form a part of ta'ziyeh processions in Muharram and Arba'iyn.

In India, the local culture has added to the success of **Ta'ziyeh-dari**. We have borrowed many new ideas and specimens of arts to make Ta'ziyeh-dari more
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attractive. The non-Muslim speakers and poet have also greatly added to our success, and are an important part of our celebration. Their speeches and poems are published in book form. The Government of India has also published an excellent book Muharram in Two Cities - Lucknow and Delhi, which contains pictures of ta'ziyeh processions and important imambarahs of the two cities and full details of the Muharram and Arba'iyn celebrations. ...

...An **alam** represents the banner of Imam Hussein's army and is considered to be the most important symbol of mourning. The alams are of different colors and sizes with golden or silver tops (**Panjeh**). ...

...A **mehndi** is just like a ta'ziyeh; mehndi is a Hindustani word used by the bride during marriage. ...

...A **Zuljaneh** is the representation of the faithful horse of Imam Hussein. ...

...Elephants, camels, and horses form the front portion of the procession carrying alams and black banners, the signs of mourning and grief. These banners are carried in the front section of the procession, as

are *ammaries*, which represent the seats with **purdah** in which the harem of Imam Hussein traveled to Karbala. ...

...**Tabuts** represent the biers or coffins of Imam Hasan, Imam Hussein and Hazrat-e Ali Asghar, the six-month-old son of Imam Hussein at the time of his martyrdom. The *tabut* of Hazrat-e Ali is also taken out in procession on the twenty-first of Ramazan. Other features of processions may be **burraq**, which represents the flying horse of the Prophet Muhammad the **kafani**, a cloth tied on the heads of the children to receive the blessings of Imam Hussein; drums and **naqqaras**, which in some places are played in mourning tempo in front of the *ta'ziyah* procession."(177)

As in Iran, among the Shi'as of the Indian Subcontinent there are groups which organize and patronize Ashura commemorations.

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these groups are called **guruh** (plural: **guruhan**) in Persian and Urdu. David Pinault has done an extensive study of the *guruhan* among the Shi'as of Hyderabad.(178) **Guruh** in the sense in which we are using the word, is usually translated "guild". However, in both Iran and the Indian Subcontinent, though the *guruhan* may indeed be composed of people of the same craft or trade, this is not always nor even usually the case. Therefore, the translation of *guruh* as "guild" is misleading. The exact equivalents of the *guruhan* are the **cofradias** of contemporary Spain.

The **cofradias** may be composed of men of the same trade, but this is not usually the case, and the relation of the *cofradias* to Holy Week is exactly the same as that of the *guruhan* to Muharram or Ashura.

Whole books have been written on the Iranian Taz'iyehs or "Passion Plays" alone, and the literature on other aspects of Muharram or Ashura in Iran and the Indian Subcontinent is vast. Above we have attempted to give the reader an overview, a general idea.

During my military service, a fellow soldier - who became a Catholic - told me:

"You Catholics have a healthy attitude; you never assume something is sinful simply because it is fun."

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Certain fellow soldiers of Calvinist faith accused me of being a blatant hypocrite, because on the one hand I seemed so pious and rigidly moral, yet was such a **bon vivant**, such a lover of good food and wine. I explained that enjoying life is not a sin. The above-mentioned Calvinist attitude is one of the many evidences of the Manichaeian base of Calvinism.

Much more recently on a television commercial someone described a make of automobile as being so much fun to drive that it was "sinful", and a food product described as being "almost sinfully delicious". At first I was totally confused; how could something be "Almost sinfully delicious", how could an automobile be so much fun to drive that it is "sinful". A few years later I heard Charles A. Coulombe make the same observation, i.e., thinking to himself:

"How can something be "sinfully delicious"?"

Then, like Charles A. Coulombe, I remembered my history. On October 27, 1999 I attended a lecture sponsored by the Taft Museum of Cincinnati, Ohio. Following the lecture, refreshments were served. A lady sitting accross from me said that one of the pastries was:

"Sinfully rich and delicious."

On a recent trip to the supermarket I saw a brand of raisin

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and oatmeal cookies named "Sinful Selections", because they are "sinfully delicious", and an herbal tea called "Sinfully Cinnamon".

How could cookies and cinnamon be sinful?

There is a certain type of Calvinist who constantly condemns almost everything imaginable as "Pagan". This demonstrates to what extent the intellects and spirits of Calvinists are poisoned by Nominalism, rendering them unable to see beyond a name, to distinguish between differing names and underlying substance. Charles Coulombe answered one of said Calvinists by saying:

"Pagans breathe; therefore you should stop breathing."

It is obvious how pervasive the Calvinist or Puritan heritage has become in USA, especially since the victory of the North in the War Between the States or US Civil War.

Some years ago I was bitterly attacking the decade of the 1960s as a time of sheer, blithering idiocy, mindless, sheeplike conformity, "big mouth and no brain" and moral depravity. The person with whom I was conversing thought for some time about how to defend the 1960s, and at last could only say:

"Well it was colorful."

Those who justly complain that (especially Northern) U.S.A. is a drab and colorless place, lacking **joie de vivre** (which,

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compared with Spain it most certainly is) have the Judeo-Manichaeen Puritan heritage to blame for this.

Though Southern USA was founded by Catholics, crypto-Muslims (Moriscos from Spain) and High Church Anglicans, the North was founded by Calvinist Puritans, the famous "Pilgrim Fathers", who were **NOT** pilgrims and certainly **NOT** my fathers or ancestors. Since the North won the US Civil War, the Calvinist Puritan heritage is pervasive, even to the extent that some people consider American history as beginning with the foundation of the New England colonies by the Puritans, ignoring earlier Spanish and British colonies in the South as being "not truly American". Here it is bluntly stated: only Puritans are "real Americans": crypto-Muslims, Catholics and High Church Anglicans need not apply. I was reminded of a Confederate song, "The Cross of the South":

Oh say can you see through the gloom and the storm
That shines through the darkness, that pure constellation
Like a symbol of love and redemption is formed
As it points to Heaven, the Pope and the nation
Tis the Cross of the South which will ever remain
To light us to freedom and glory again

How peaceful and blessed was America's soil
Till betrayed by the guile of the Puritan Demon (one of the
guises of the "Anti-Traditional Demon", Satan's faithful
minion, of whom we have spoken earlier)
Which lurks under false virtue and springs from its coil
To fasten its fangs in the life blood of free men
So boldly appeal to each heart that can feel

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To crush the vile Puritan viper 'neath liberty's heel
Tis the Cross of the South which shall ever remain
To point us to freedom and glory again.

In the spring of 1863, in the middle of the US Civil War, and Englishman, Lieutenant Colonel Arthur J.L. Fremantle of the Coldstream Guards traveled extensively in the Confederacy. At that time, the commander of Confederate forces in Texas was General Magruder, who was fortunate to have such gallant and brilliant subordinates as Colonel Santos Benavides of the Texas Rangers, commander of Confederate forces along the Rio Grande.

While in Texas, Lt. Colonel Fremantle was fortunate enough to meet General Magruder:

"I had a long and agreeable conversation with the General (Magruder), who spoke of the Puritans with intense disgust, and of the first importation of them (to America) as 'that pestiferous crew of the "Mayflower".' (179)

Edward A. Pollard noted;

"There could be no congeniality between the Puritan exiles who established themselves upon the cold, rugged and cheerless soil of New England and the Cavaliers who sought the brighter climate of the South, and drank in their baronial halls in Virginia confusion to Roundheads and regicides."(180)

Admiral Raphael Semmes, who commanded the Confederate warship "Alabama", was a Catholic gentleman from Maryland who detested Puritans, Roundheads and regicides. Admiral Semmes was indeed a "Maryland Catholic", devout, loyal to the Stuart Crown and to his beloved South. He wrote:

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"Virginia and Massachusetts were the two original germs from which the great majority of the American population sprung: and no two peoples, speaking the same language and coming from the same country, could have been more dissimilar, in education, taste and habits, and even in natural instincts, than the adventurers who settled these two colonies. Those who sought a new field of adventure for themselves and the affluence of their posterity, in the congenial climate of the Chesapeake (Bay), were the gay and dashing Cavaliers, who, as a class, afterward adhered to the fortunes of the Charleses (Stuart Kings), whilst the first settlers of Massachusetts were composed of the same materials that formed the "Praise-God-Barebones" Parliament of Cromwell. These two peoples seemed to have an instinctive repugnance, the one to another."(181)

In 1984 at Disney's Epcot Center in Florida there was an historical display which claimed Massachusetts' Plymouth Plantation as the beginning of American history. When someone pointed out that there were Spanish settlements in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and New Mexico and an English settlement in Virginia some decades before the arrival of the so-called

"Pilgrim Fathers" and foundation of the Plymouth Plantation, Rick Rothschild, manager of the Epcot center, replied:

"The establishment of these settlements does not mark the beginning of the flight and fight for freedom. The Pilgrims' arrival (in Massachusetts) does, and the pursuit of their ideals (witch burning, slave trading and selling wooden nutmegs, no doubt) was what began to delineate the new nation of America."

To this day Connecticut is called "The Nutmeg State", because New England Yankees were so famous for selling wooden

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nutmegs. Before the US Civil War, the Confederate General A.P. Hill was a well-known mathematician and an author of a math textbook used in grammar schools. In at least one of the "story problems" in said textbook, the problem is stated thus:

"If a Yankee sold this many wooded nutmegs and made so much profit, how much profit would he make if he sold this many more?"

A nation of witch burners, slave traders and sellers of wooden nutmegs no doubt.

To Rick Rothschild only Yankee Anglo-Saxon Protestants of Calvinist background are "real Americans": Catholics, High Church Anglicans and crypto-Muslims need not apply.

I wish to thank the columnist Sam Francis for the above information.

Here is a New England sea chantey (song) of the early 19th century:

*Come all ye young sailors who follow the sea
Way, hey, blow the man down,
Fill up your glasses and listen to me
Give me some time to blow the man down*

*Captain Ball was a Yankee slaver,
Way, hey blow the man down,
He traded in niggers and loved his Saviour.
Give me some time to blow the man down.*

The transatlantic slave trade was lucrative indeed; to give a rough idea, in West Africa a slave could be purchased for trade goods worth about \$20, and later sold in the Americas (north and

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South) for about \$1,000. Where there is money to be made, nothing can stop a Yankee.

The New England Yankee slave traders took rum to West Africa where they traded it for slaves, then took the slaves to northern Brazil or the Caribbean Islands and traded them for molasses, which was taken to New England and made into rum, and the cycle began anew. This was the famous "triangular trade". Fanueil Hall, one of Boston's most famous landmarks, was built with money made in the transatlantic slave trade. One of the leading institutons of the famous "Ivy League", Brown University of Providence, Rhode Island, was originally endowed with money made in the transatlantic slave trade, and still bears the name of the man who first endowed it, one of the most notorious of the New England slave traders. The silence concerning the New England Yankee slave traders is deafening; apparently, to the Yankee WASP establishment, Yankee (particularly New England Yankee WASPs)

WASPs can do no wrong. Indeed, the cynicism of the New England Yankee WASPs beggars belief; as long as they were making fortunes in the slave trade, they saw nothing wrong with slavery. However, once the transatlantic slave trade had ceased to be so profitable, the New England Yankee WASPs turned their self-righteous, hypocritical fury on the South. I ask the New England Yankee WASPs

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who are so ready to demonize the South: Who brought the slaves to America?

My favorite scene from the novel The Last Hurrah by Edwin O'Connor and the film made from it is when the Irish Catholic mayor of Boston is obligated to visit an exclusive Yankee club. When the mayor enters the door of said club, he wrinkles his nose and says:

"I smell the bilge of the Mayflower."

The French Royalist Prince de Polignac came to America to fight on the Confederate side in the War Between the States, (US Civil War) eventually rising to the rank of Major General in the Confederate Army. Early in the war the Prince de Polignac commanded a band of wild Texans, who idolized him because of his military talent, personal bravery and rigid code of honor.

The Confederate Colonel James J. Pettigrew was a highly cultured, refined and well-traveled gentleman. Colonel Pettigrew

loved and admired the Spanish, because their culture closely resembled Southern culture. Colonel Pettigrew thought that Northern Europeans were more like Yankees (Northerners) in their crass materialism and love of centralized government.

It is obvious that General Magruder, Admiral Semmes, Edward A. Pollard and James J. Pettigrew were very proud (as I myself am)

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that their ancestors did **NOT** come to America on the "Mayflower". It should also be noted that it was the Puritans and their descendants, the New England Yankees, and **NOT** Southerners, who brought the slaves to America. No Confederate flag ever flew over a slave ship.

In the French weekly L'EXPRESS, Eric Foner, Professor of History at Columbia University, speaks of the US Civil War and its causes.

L'Express:

Less than a century after its creation, the United States exploded: the South seceded, the Civil War began. It would be the bloodiest conflict in all American history. It is commonly said that said war was waged in order to abolish slavery. Is this true?

Foner:

The War of Secession (US Civil War), a great crusade to abolish slavery? This is a legend! To believe that said conflict was waged for humanistic principles is an historical error. In reality, if slavery was a factor in poisoning the relations between the states (and there were a great many other factors which contributed to this), and caused the South to secede, the North most certainly did NOT enter the war to free the slaves. ...

L'Express:

In the North, did no one care about the slaves?

Foner:

*There was an abolitionist movement, but abolitionists were a small minority: after more than thirty years of effort, not one slave had been freed; in fact, the number of slaves did not cease to grow
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(through natural increase). The abolitionists were frustrated less by the open hostility of the Southerners than by the indifference (and often the hostility) of the Northerners. In the North, there existed a virtual conspiracy of silence on the issue. The two political parties agreed to leave the question to the discretion of the states. The Northerners were as racist as the Southerners (often more so), that is the reality!

...

L'Express:

Lincoln, the famous Lincoln, the emblematic figure of that period, did he not wish to free the slaves?

Foner:

No. Contrary to a persistent myth, this never was his (Lincoln's) intention. Like others who condemned slavery in principle, he was a racist. He wished to preserve slavery where it already existed, but to keep it from spreading to other states, in order to preserve the prosperity of the North.(182)

James J. Pettigrew of North Carolina, a highly educated and well-traveled Southern Gentleman, colonel in the Confederate Army during the War Between the States, was a fierce Anglophobe. He considered Englishmen to be "super-Yankees", "snobbish, supercilious, narrow and conceited. He considered England to be

ruled by a class with all the bourgeois flaws and none of the aristocratic virtues.(183) Echoing the French Counterrevolutionary thinker Joseph de Maistre, who defended aristocracy by saying that if it were abolished, then nothing would be left except "the odious hierarchy of wealth" in which money would become the

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measure of all things, Colonel Pettigrew noted that in northern USA, England and northern Europe, the social cohesion provided by birth, rank and intellect had given way to "the odious hierarchy of wealth", and that an extravagant and tasteless consumption was the main characteristic of the leading classes.(184) So, in place of gentlemen or hidalgos, we have yuppies. Colonel Pettigrew also noted that the vaunted "democracy" of England and northern USA was really a plutocracy. However, let no one suspect from our attacks against plutocracy and bourgeois values (or anti-values) that the Carlists, Arthur Machen, Colonel James J. Pettigrew and myself have or had the remotest sympathy with Marxism. Like the Carlists, Arthur Machen and myself, Colonel Pettigrew would have very much agreed with these words of Ali Shariati:

"Democracy and Western Liberalism - whatever sanctity may attach to them in the abstract - are in practice nothing but the free opportunity to display all the more strongly this (materialist) spirit and to create all the more speedily and roughly an arena for the profit-hungry forces that have been assigned to transform man into an economic, consuming animal.

So it is perhaps not in jest that it has been said:
'Is not Marxism more bourgeois than the bourgeoisie?'"

Well, it is jesting, which, from the point of view of humanism is an actual fact.

The Jacobins and Liberals of the 18th century favored the bourgeoisie as a CLASS: Marx wished to establish a SOCIETY, in which the values of the bourgeois class would be common to the whole society."(185)

At a right-wing rally in Madrid, a French Royalist told me:

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"Capitalism or bourgeois plutocracy is a disease, and it causes the production of antibodies, such as Communism and Socialism. These antibodies are so extremely poisonous that they are even more toxic and lethal than the disease itself."

Due to certain words expressed in his speeches, the fact that Marx was thoroughly pro-Yankee, and so many European Communists came to USA to fight on the Yankee side in the US Civil War, there have always been those who suspect that Lincoln was a Communist. The coalition that made up the "Radical Republicans" or "Black Republicans". Lincoln's party, included not only abolitionists, northeastern plutocrats, anti-catholic "Know Nothings", it also included Communists.(186) In the bloody riots in New York during the summer of 1863, the rioting workers carried placards which said: "Jefferson Davis is our friend" and "Down with the Union". That Marx and his minions should have taken the side of capitalist exploiters and war profiteers against the workers they pretended to champion is certainly no surprise.

As Edmund Burke said, "The Devil was the first Liberal", or, as Robert Burns and William Butler Yeats would say, "The Devil was the first Whig".

Let no one think that I have the least sympathy with Marxism. As I said before, Marxism and liberal capitalist plutocracy are two sides of the same debased, bourgeois, materialist coin; the human prototype or archetype of both is the same, the pharmacist

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Homais in the novel Madame Bovary by Gustave Flaubert or Ebenezer Scrooge in the novel A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens. It should surprise no one that during the War Between the States Marx and his minions were loyal supporters of the northeastern plutocrats who cynically took advantage of the war to make fortunes and even more brutally exploit their workers.

Confederate Colonel James J. Pettigrew was very much anti-Anglo-Saxon. Partly, no doubt, this is an ethnic bias of one of Irish and French ancestry; Colonel Pettigrew leaves no doubt that he detested Anglo-Saxons as an ethnic group. However, he also left no doubt that his anti-Anglo-Saxonism was mainly cultural. Colonel Pettigrew made it clear that the Old South was not Anglo-Saxon, thus anticipating by nearly 150 years the observation of Florence King that a Southerner may or may not be (most are not) Anglo-Saxon by ancestry, but to the degree that he is Southern, to that degree he is not culturally Anglo-Saxon, as the culture of the Old South was not Anglo-Saxon. Pettigrew defined Anglo-Saxonism as:

"An unjustified assumption of superiority by the English-speaking peoples, the criteria for said superiority resting upon the disposition to place a money value upon everything." (187)

Though the term WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant) had not yet been coined in his day, in contemporary parlance, Jame J. Pettigrew said that, whatever his ancestry, insofar as he is

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Southern and not "Yankeefied" or a scalawag,, a Southerner is **NOT** a WASP, because the culture and mode d'etre of the South, particularly the Old South before the US Civil War, sometimes called the Antebellum (which in Latin literally means: "Before the War") South was not and is not WASP.

The English colonists who came to the Old South were "Cavaliers" or "Royalists", most certainly **NOT** "Roundheads" or "Puritans", those whom Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederacy, referred to as "deracinated regicides". Even this "Cavalier" or "Royalist" English element was overwhelmed and submerged by other elements, i.e., Celtic, ancien regime French, and Spanish, including Morisco.

In our own day, Florence King has repeatedly reiterated that, whatever his ancestry, in so far as he is Southern and not "Yankeefied" or a scalawag, a Southerner is **NOT** a WASP,, because the culture and mode d'etre of the South is **NOT** WASP; Ms. King has dealt with this at length in her long essay "WASP, Where Is Thy Sting?".

Having an English father and a very Southern mother, Ms. King is in an ideal position to know; her autobiographical works are filled with tales of cultural conflicts between WASP and Southern. In most of her attitudes, Ms. King is almost exaggeratedly Southern, thoroughly non-WASP.

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Among the many types of "ethnic jokes" which circulate in USA, there is a category called "WASP jokes". In said jokes, the WASP is always a Yankee, generally a New Englander. In effect, these WASP ethnic jokes are making the same point as Colonel James J. Pettigrew and Florence King.

Ever wonder why the international gourmets say that the US states with the best cuisine are Louisiana and South Carolina?

In a recent interview, the almost incredibly beautiful Bulgarian actress Nina Dobrev, who now lives in Atlanta, Georgia where a television series in which she is the female lead is being filmed, was asked how she liked Atlanta. She at first called it "Hotlanta" (anyone who has been to Atlanta in summer is familiar with its scorching, humid heat), saying that, being from Bulgaria, she was not accustomed to such extreme heat. However, she made a point of noting that in Georgia the food is very good, and the people are very warm, friendly and hospitable. I have never been to Bulgaria, and so am not familiar with Bulgarian women, though someone once told me:

"Bulgaria has the most beautiful women in the world; look at the noble Thracian features."

If Nina Dobrev is an example, no argument is possible. It appears that Nina Dobrev has acquired the famed "magnolia dripping Southern charm", both on stage or in front of the camera, and in real life as well, for which the women of the South are justly

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famous, though, for all I know, it may also be typical of Bulgarian women (would not surprise me). In any case, in the said television series, Nina Dobrev is very convincing in her role as a Southern Belle, much more so than was Vivian Leigh as Scarlett O'Hara in the film "Gone With the Wind", but then, in both the novel and the film, Scarlett O'Hara was very far indeed from being a model Southern Lady, (in fact, she was not a lady at all), though her mother and her sisters played the role as Southern Ladies (and a very demanding role it is) very well.

Ever wonder why, in proportion to its population, the South has produced more "Miss Americas" and "Miss USAs" than any other region, and by a large margin? The answer to both the above questions is simple: the South is not WASP, and never was. Among other things, WASP signifies ugly women and bad food.

In the Gettysburg Campaign, when General Lee's army invaded Pennsylvania, the Confederate soldiers commented about "These ugly Yankee women". As we noted above, Colonel James J. Pettigrew was totally enchanted by the women of Andalusia. Many Southerneers were charmed by the women of Mexico, as was the famous Jim Bowie,

inventor of the bowie knife. The Confederate General A.P. Hill noted:

''Tis a fact that the ladies of Mexico are beautiful, and oh how beautiful!''.

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Confederate General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson always called his wife, who was a most lovely Southern Belle, *esposita*, which in Spanish means "little wife". These are the same men who spoke of "these ugly Yankee women" when General Lee's Army invaded Pennsylvania.

As we said above, Colonel Pettigrew detested the English, nor did he like the Germans, whom, he said, reminded him of Yankees.

Though he loved Italy for its beautiful women and good food, Spain was the country which Colonel James J. Pettigrew loved most.

I lived in Spain for very much longer than did James J. Pettigrew, hence I know said country far better than he did, and could make observations which he could not. However, I wish to note here that I am in complete agreement with Colonel Pettigrew's observations on Spain, so far as they go.

Colonel Pettigrew loved Spain as a place where religious and chivalrous values still reigned, where personal honor rather than wealth was the measure, where tradition rather than faddism ruled and where localism was intense and centralized government detested.

Colonel James J. Pettigrew was in Spain some time after the First Carlist War and shortly after the Second Carlist War, which was confined to Catalunya and is generally known by the Catalan name **Guerra dels Matiners**, and some years before the Third Carlist

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War. Though he must have heard of other Carlist heroes, such as the Andalusian Miguel Gomez and the Catalan Ramon Cabrera, known as the "Tiger of the Maestrazgo", it was the Basque Tomas de Zumalacarregui whom Pettigrew extravagantly praised and whose name he repeatedly invoked during the War Between the States.(188)

There can be no doubt about Colonel James J. Pettigrew's identification with Carlism. Carlism was originally a dynastic quarrel; in the First Carlist War those who fought under the Carlist banner were a somewhat diverse group, being united only by a hatred of the ideology of Liberalism and the French Revolution.

Carlism as an ideology was only firmly codified during the Third Carlist War by the charismatic figure of Carlos de Borbon y Austria-Este, "king of gentlemen and gentleman of kings", known by Carlists as "Carlos VII" or simply "don Carlos".

Not many years ago, Juan Landalusi (whose surname indicates Morisco and/or Hispano-Muslim ancestry, being obviously derived from "al-Andalusi", meaning in Arabic "the Hispano-Muslim" or "the Spaniard") codified the Carlist ideology in a sizable book titled: Asi Pensamos (How We Think).

However, even in the First Carlist War the Carlist motto was:

Dios, Patria, Fueros, Rey, (God, Country, Regional and Local Autonomies, King), and it was this motto and its implied ideology which attracted large masses to the Carlist banner. The name

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Comunion Tradicionalista (Traditionalist Communion) expresses the heart of Carlism. Carlism is ultra-Catholic, its stands for tradition over faddism, and the defense of religious and chivalrous values against crass materialism. It also favors the country over the city, the guild and the craftsman and the small producer over big business, aristocracy over plutocracy. Carlists agree with the Welsh (and therefore Celtic) poet Arthur Machen when he listed the following as the enemies of the spirit:

"Big business, plutocracy, industrialization, science, philosophical naturalism, Liberalism, democracy, Puritanism, Protestantism, atheism, Socialism and Communism."(189)

Carlism is also anti-statist, bitterly opposed to the modern type of "python" or "octopus" state, which tries to absorb everything. One is reminded of the words of Friedrich Nietzsche in his major work Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Chapter "Of the New Idol":

"There are still peoples and clans somewhere, but not with us, my brothers: here there are states.

The state? What is that? Well then! Now open your ears, for now I shall speak to you of the death of peoples.

The state is the coldest of all cold monsters. Coldly it lies, too; and this lie creeps from its mouth: "I, the state, am the people."

It is a lie! It was creators who created peoples and hung a faith and a love over them: thus they served life.

It is destroyers who set snares for many and call it the state; they hang a sword and a hundred desires over them.

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Where a people still exists, there the people do not understand the state and hate it as the evil eye and sin against custom and law.

I offer you this sign: every people speaks its own language of good and evil: its neighbor does not understand this language. It invented this language for itself in custom and law.

But the state lies in all languages of good and evil; and whatever it says, it lies - and whatever it has, it has stolen.

Everything about it is false; it bites with stolen teeth. Even its belly is false.

Confusion of the language of good and evil; I offer you this sign as the sign of the state. Truly, this sign indicates the will to death! Truly, it beckons to the preachers of death!...

...'There is nothing greater on earth than I, the regulating finger of God'-thus the monster bellows. And not only the long-eared and short-sighted sink to their knees!

Ah, it whispers its dismal lies to you, you great souls! Ah, it divines the abundant hearts that like to squander themselves!...

...It would like to range heroes and honorable men against it, this new idol! It likes to sun itself in the sunshine of good consciences-this cold monster!

It will give you everything if you worship it, this new idol; thus it buys for itself the lustre of your virtues and the glance of your proud eyes. ...

...I call it the state where everyone, good and bad, is a poison-drinker: the state where universal slow suicide is called-life. ...

...Only there, where the state ceases, does the man who is not superfluous begin: does the song of the necessary man, the unique and irreplaceable melody, begin."

Spain is a country in which Anarchists are relatively

abundant. Marxists and Social Democrat types accused me of being an Anarchist. Now, obviously, there are unbridgeable differences between myself and the Anarchists. However, I cannot and do not deny my affinity with them. The Anarchists and myself agree on

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three crucial points: we are all anti-Communist, anti-bureaucrat and opposed to the "python state" or "octopus state" whatever it may be called. In other words, the Anarchists and myself are anti-statist as well as anti-Communist.

Leftists at times accused me of being a Nazi,. I pointed out the absurdity of saying that I was a member or sympathizer to something called "National Socialist German Workers' Party", of for which "Nazi" is the abbreviation or shorthand. A communist admitted:

"Yes, you are anti-Nazi all right, but for the wrong reasons."

An Anarchist answered:

"Most of his reasons sound good to me. I never understood why you communists are anti-Nazi, you are so similar to the Nazis (or National Socialists)".

Benjamin Constant said:

"The interests and memories which spring from local customs contain a germ of resistance which is so distasteful to authority that it hastens to uproot it. Authority finds private individuals easier game; its enormous weight can flatten them out effortlessly as if they were so much sand."

Carlism defends the intermediate institutions between the

individual and the state. Obviously, Carlism is anti-centralist, favoring the rights of the region, the municipality, the parish, the clan, the family and the person against the central government. Of course, social engineering is anathema to Carlism.

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Though it may owe something to French counterrevolutionary thinkers such as Joseph de Maistre and Louis de Bonald, in fact Carlism is a thoroughly Spanish product, deeply rooted in the soil of Spain, the most Spanish of all ideologies. One can see why Colonel James J. Pettigrew identified with Carlism.

*The Carlist emblem is a shield with the castles of Castile, the lions of Leon, the red and gold stripes of Catalunya and Aragon and the pomegranate of Granada on the breast of the Habsburg double eagle. Even in the First Carlist War, Carlists tended to look with nostalgia to the time of the Habsburgs. As his name indicates, Carlos de Borbon y Austria-Este was a Habsburg on his mother's side, and in his time the Austrian march "Under the Double Eagle" became almost official among the Carlists. In his biography of Carlos de Borbon y Austria-Este, the Carlist militant Jaime del Burgo begins by saying that don Carlos was *mas Habsburgo que Borbon*, "more Habsburg than Bourbon", considering this to be very high praise. It is no wonder that Otto von Habsburg and his family are very popular in Spain.*

However, the above-mentioned emblem is very complex and involved. The most common Carlist banner was and is simply a red

Cross of St. Andrew (sometimes called the Cruz de Borgona or "Cross of Burgundy" in Spain) on a white background.

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For several months at the beginning of the War Between the States, the then Colonel James J. Pettigrew served under General Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard in the garrison of the important port of Charleston, South Carolina.(190) General Beauregard and Colonel Pettigrew became personal friends as well as comrades-in-arms. This is important, because it was General Beauregard who designed the Confederate battle Flag.(191) It is now perfectly obvious why General Beauregard used the St. Andrew's Cross when he designed the Confederate Battle Flag, why the flag of the State of Alabama is identical to the Carlist banner (recently some protested against the flag of the State of Alabama because it bears too close a resemblance to the Confederate Battle Flag), and why the flag of the State of Florida is a Carlist banner with the shield of the State of Florida in the middle. The Carlist connections of the Old South are now perfectly clear. It might also be noted that the Old South had much commerce with Catalunya, then a strongly Carlist region. During the Carlist Wars a Liberal (pronounced "Lee-bear-ahl", Spanish version of Whig) general most bitterly lamented that "The Carlists swim like fish in the sea" among the rural population of Catalunya. The Old South was the main source of cotton for the Catalan textile industry. Colonel

James J. Pettigrew's biographer, Clyde N. Wilson, calls Pettigrew "Carolina Cavalier". While the above is no doubt

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appropriate, "Carolina Requete" might be yet more appropriate; after all, Colonel James J. Pettigrew invoked Tomas de Zumalacarregui far more than he invoked Prince Rupert.

On entering Spain, James J. Pettigrew wrote:

Spain! Noble, romantic Spain! Adieu pretty landscapes, meandering brooks and verdant prairies, luxurious couches and artistic meals! Adieu to the circean enticements of Europe! Adieu to a civilization which reduces men to machines, which sacrifices half that is stalwart and individual in humanity to the false glitter of centralization (echoes of Nietzsche), and to the luxurious enjoyments of a manufacturing, money age! Welcome dura tellus Iberia! Welcome to your sunny plains, your naked mountains, your hardy sons and your beautiful daughters, your honored cities, sacred by the memorials of a dozen rival civilizations and your fields watered by the chivalric blood of as many conquering races!" (192)

Note how James J. Pettigrew seems to echo Lord Byron in his poem "Lachin y Gair"

Away, ye gay landscapes, ye gardens of roses!
In you let the minions of luxury rove;
Restore me the rocks where the snowflake reposes,
Though still they are sacred to freedom and love;
Yet, Caledonia, beloved are thy mountains,
'Round their white summits though elements war;
Though cataracts foam 'stead of smooth flowing fountains,
I sigh for the valley of dark Loch na Garr.

Ah! There my young footsteps in infancy wander'd;
My cap was the bonnet, my cloak was the plaid;
On chieftains long perish'd my memory ponder'd,
As daily I strode through the pine-cover'd glade;
I sought not my home till the day's dying glory
Gave place to the rays of the bright polar star;
For fancy was cheer'd by traditional story,

Disclos'd by the natives of dark Loch na Garr.

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*Shades of the dead! Have I not heard your voices
Rise on the night-rolling breath of the gale?
Surely the soul of the hero rejoices
And rides on the wind o'er his own highland vale;
Round Loch na Garr while the stormy mist gathers,
Winter presides in his cold icy car:
Clouds there encircle the forms of my fathers;
They dwell in the tempests of dark Loch na Garr*

*Ill-starr'd, though brave, did not visions foreboding
Tell you that fate had forsaken your (Jacobite) Cause?
Ah! Were you destin'd to die at Culloden,
Victory crown'd not your fall with applause;
Still were you happy in death's earthly slumber,
You rest with your clan in the caves of Braemar;
The pibroch resounds to the piper's loud number,
Your deeds on the echoes of dark Loch na Garr.*

*Years have rolled on, Loch na Garr, since I left you,
Years must elapse ere I tread you again:
Nature of verdure and flowers has bereft you,
Yet still you are dearer than Albion's (England's) plain,
England! Thy beauties are tame and domestic
To one who has rov'd o'er the mountains afar;
I sigh for the crags that are wild and majestic!
The steep frowning glories of dark Loch na Garr.*

*Change the Scottish Highlands to Spain and Jacobite to
Carlist and it is clear that Byron and Colonel Pettigrew say the
same thing.*

*The poem "Lachin y Gair" reveals George Gordon Lord Byron as
a Highlander of the gallant Clan Gordon and a Jacobite. This is
in violent contrast to the effeminate English fop which Anglo-
Saxon literati present as the portrait of Lord Byron.*

As William Butler Yeats said:

*We Celts, born into that ancient sect
But thrown upon this filthy modern tide*

And by its formless spawning fury wrecked.

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James J. Pettigrew loved all Spain. However, dealing with a country so diverse and with such great differences between the regions, it would be inevitable that he would prefer some regions over others.

One might suppose that Colonel James J. Pettigrew's favorite region would have been Old Castile, land of the epic and of Spanish Catholic Mysticism and land of the hidalgo par excellence, or, perhaps, Navarra, the Carlist region par excellence. Not so. Those regions of Spain which James J. Pettigrew loved most were those in which the Muslim impact had been most powerful: Andalusia and Valencia. Lavish was Pettigrew's praise of Andalusia:

"Elsewhere in Europe (outside Andalusia) there was little to compensate for the moss-draped (live) oaks, the sweet-smelling magnolias, the flowering vines of my own home: for the sensitive honor running at times to extremes, which is yet the main-spring to the character of a gentleman: for the enthusiasm, sincerity and gentle nature of our own beautiful women (The "Southern Belle" or "Southern Lady" again)."(193)

"Andalusia is the only part of the world that gives me an idea of what Paradise must be. ... Of Andalusia a very respectable Heaven might be made with a few alterations. To the fertility and warmth of our own country, it adds an entire exemption from malaria and its attendant ills."(194)

Colonel James J. Pettigrew's biographer, Clyde N. Wilson, observes:

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"Andalusia was the (American) South, without yellow fever and malaria, without slavery and the Negro, without any encroachments of Yankee Puritanism and materialism - paradise indeed!"(195)

I believe that Mr. Wilson's observation is correct as far as it goes. However, Mr. Wilson has never lived in Andalusia, and I can assure him that Colonel James J. Pettigrew Had reasons for loving Andalusia and all Spain of which Mr. Wilson, through no fault of his own, can have no inkling.

On leaving Spain, Colonel James J. Pettigrew said:

"Alas! Romantic Spain, I shall never see thee again. By the bye I have not a portion of heart remaining as large as a pea. The whole is left in Andalusia; the earthly Paradise."(196)

The above contains some hyperbole; as we shall see, Colonel Pettigrew did indeed plan to return to Spain, and would have done so had not war intervened.

As one might expect, Colonel James J. Pettigrew became fascinated by Muslim Spain.(197) Most unfortunately, his concept of Muslim Spain was influenced by Washington Irving, but he most certainly had plans to correct this. Colonel Pettigrew's great ambition was to write an accurate history of Muslim Spain. In order to do this he planned to learn to read Arabic, study Islam and visit various Islamic countries, at the very least North Africa. Most unfortunately, the War Between the States (which Southerners tend to call "The War of Northern Aggression"), in

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which he was killed in action, prevented Colonel James J. Pettigrew from fulfilling his ambition; at the time the war broke out, he had only acquired a reading knowledge of Arabic.(198) Colonel James J. Pettigrew was killed in action in July, 1863, a few days after the battle of Gettysburg. The following selections from songs of the US Civil War come to mind:

*There is a battle raging somewhere
And its thunder shakes the ground
Terrible silence when it's over
Only death makes such a sound.*

*Young men will stumble and fall in the dust
And their bangles and spangles
And bright golden buttons
And bright golden buttons will turn into rust.*

One finds it easy to believe that that the Yankee bullet that killed Colonel Pettigrew must have been guided by the "Puritan Demon" of the song.

With his superior officers General Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard and General Robert E. Lee, one must mourn Colonel Pettigrew and lament that he never lived to fulfill his lifetime ambition of writing a history of Muslim Spain, and not only because he was such an ideal person for the task.

Books in English on Muslim Spain are still relatively few in number, and were even more so in the 19th century. Washington Irving was one of a very small number of people who wrote in

English who dealt with the subject of Muslim Spain. Though Romanticism had awakened an interest in Muslim Spain in Spain itself, in Washington Irving's time on a very few Hispano-Arabic documents had been translated and published. Washington Irving read no Arabic, and had to depend on what was available in Spanish and Latin. Also, he had very little knowledge of Islam, and never visited an Islamic country, nor had he much knowledge of pre-Islamic Spain.

As his fascination with Spain and especially Muslim Spain shows, Washington Irving, though a New Yorker, was in many ways psychologically a Southerner, as is shown by his love for Spain, a country which was anathema to a real Yankee; his well-known work Legend of Sleepy Hollow eloquently expresses his contempt for New England Yankees. Legends of the Conquest of Spain and The Conquest of Granada are reliable enough, and are very well written, though because of their scholarly nature they could never reach a wide readership.

Because of his inability to read Arabic, and because in his day so few Hispano-Arabic documents had been translated and published, Washington Irving's knowledge of Muslim Spain was both very spotty and very superficial. This does not detract from his researches, though it severely limited their scope.

However, Tales of the Alhambra is not a research work; it is

a work of fiction and fantasy, and, unlike Washington Irving's researches, it did indeed reach a wide audience. In Tales of the Alhambra and most especially in the introduction to the same, Washington Irving expresses his own overall concept of Muslim Spain, which was almost entirely wrong. Because so few books on Muslim Spain have been published in English, and because Tales of the Alhambra reached a wide audience, Washington Irving's concept of Muslim Spain became the one generally accepted in English-speaking countries, especially USA. My grammar school and high school history textbooks faithfully parroted Washington Irving's introduction to Tales of the Alhambra, and its influence was still predominant in the history Textbooks at the University of Miami of Ohio. Only at the University of Granada in Spain did I escape the influence of Washington Irving, did I learn the truth about Muslim Spain.

I have heard Washington Irving reviled because of the gross inaccuracies he wrote concerning Muslim Spain. However, it must be noted that Washington Irving was a good, honest man; he was so badly mistaken at times because in his day so few Hispano-Arabic documents had been translated from the original Arabic, or, if they had, they had not been published, and so were not accessible to Mr. Irving, who had to depend on material available in Latin or Spanish, which meant that he was, to a great extent, forced to

rely on guesswork. The only alternative which Washington Irving had was to learn to read Arabic, a daunting task.

Had Colonel James J. Pettigrew achieved his lifetime ambition to write a history of Muslim Spain, the erroneous concepts propagated by Washington Irving would no doubt have been corrected in the public mind. Colonel Pettigrew had learned to read Arabic at the time the US Civil War broke out, so he could have read documents inaccessible to Washington Irving. Also, Colonel Pettigrew planned to study Islam and to visit Islamic countries, as we have said. Once he had seriously begun research on Muslim Spain, he would certainly have realized that a knowledge of pre-Islamic Spain was also essential for the task.

Colonel Pettigrew wrote very well, and, besides purely scholarly works, would no doubt have written works on Muslim Spain accessible to a wide audience as well as to specialists. How much that was totally irreplaceable was destroyed by the War Between the States and its aftermath! How the Puritan Demon must have danced with glee!

In recent years there has been much interest in the very early Spanish colonization of what is now southeastern USA, leading to research and archaeological excavations which have already produced surprises and may yet produce new understandings

and interpretations of the history of USA, particularly in relation to the question as to why the South was - and to a degree still is - so radically different from the North, so different that the War between the States (called the "Civil War" in Northern USA, the Guerra de Secesion, "War of Secession" in Spanish) was less like real civil war than a war between two nations whose cultures and mode d'etre or modes of being were not only different but opposed and antagonistic.

When speaking of Morisco pioneers in Southeastern USA or the Old South, one is on far shakier ground than when speaking of New Mexico; in the Southeast it is even more difficult than in New Mexico to distinguish between what is specifically Morisco and what is simply Spanish; after all the Moriscos were Spaniards, something which must never be forgotten. Also, much was overlaid by later British and French colonization, and very much was irrevocably lost or destroyed in the U.S. Civil War and its aftermath.

Though the question of Morisco pioneers in the Southeast is far more nebulous than in relation to New Mexico, yet, as we shall see, its importance to American history may be far greater. Even as late as 1790, "Moors (Muslims) from Spain" were reported living in South Carolina and Florida.(199) At such a late date, these

"Moors (Muslims) from Spain" could only be descendants of Moriscos among the first Spanish colonists of the Southeast who had somehow managed to preserve their Muslim religion after at least two centuries in America under Spanish, British, and finally American rule. To what degree said "Moors from Spain" were believing, practicing Muslims and to what degree their identification with Muslim Spain was no more than a family tradition there is no way to know. Since 1790 is such a late date, and the years between 1790 and 1861 (when the War Between the States began) were peaceful and prosperous years in the South, it may be supposed that said "Moors from Spain" retained their Hispano-Muslim or Morisco identity until the U.S. Civil war of 1861-65. Thus, the last vestige of Spanish Islam was, like so much else, finally obliterated by the U.S. Civil War and its aftermath, another victim of the campaign of "cultural genocide" and "cultural subjugation" waged against the South by the victorious Yankees during the period called "Reconstruction". No doubt the Puritan Demon danced with joy.

There is one fascinating possible trace of the Morisco pioneers of the Old South. "Stand Watie", as he was known among whites because of his stalwart character, was an Amerindian of the Cherokee tribe and a Brigadier General in the Confederate Army. Stand Watie was the last Confederate general to surrender, so he

richly earned the name "Stand" or "Stand Firm". Stand Watie also had a Muslim name, i.e., "Abdullah ibn Ramadan". It would seem possible that his ancestors were converted to Islam by Spanish Morisco pioneers of the Old South. However, there is another possibility. Though Stand Watie is most associated with Indian Territory, now the state of Oklahoma, in fact he was born in Georgia. In the photos it is obvious that he, like many people in the South, was of mixed white and Cherokee blood. So, the white part of his ancestry may have been Morisco. As we said above, there are notices of "Moors from Spain" in southeastern US as late as 1790, only a few years before the birth of Stand Watie. To what extent - if any - Stand Watie was a believing, practicing Muslim or to what extent this was a merely family tradition there is no way to know, as he never wrote an autobiography.

In the Confederate Army, no distinction was made between whites and Amerindians. That an Amerindian could have been a general in the Union (Northern) Army was simply unthinkable. The Confederacy was far ahead of the North in granting equal rights to Amerindians. In contrast to the North, in the Confederacy the Amerindians enjoyed virtual equality with whites. Those who say that the Confederate Battle Flag is a symbol of racism [sic] please take note. After the Northern victory, the rights which the Confederacy had granted the Amerindians were revoked. The

Northern victory was even more disastrous for Amerindians than it was for Southern whites.

The hypothetical Muslim pioneers of the Southeast were among the formative elements in the culture, or, more accurately, *mode d'etre* of the Old South.

The great affinity between Spain and the Old South is obvious to all, not only to General James J. Pettigrew and Alfonso Paso, of whom we shall speak later. While a student at the University of Granada, I bought a copy of the Spanish translation of the novel *Gone With The Wind* by Margaret Mitchell for the family with whom I lived. They all said that, except for the names, all of the white characters of said novel seemed to be Spaniards. Spaniards who know about the War Between the States are pro-Confederate almost to a man. This is true even of left-wing Spaniards. Obviously some things run deeper than political ideology.

In New Mexico the Moriscos among the first Spanish colonists were from Granada. On the other hand, the Moriscos among the first Spanish colonists in the Southeast were from Catalunya and Valencia. Catalan and Valenciano surnames are very common in much of the Southeast; to someone not thoroughly familiar with Spain, Catalan and Valenciano surnames do not appear to be "Spanish" at all, but rather French, Italian or even German or Anglo-Saxon.

The women of Valencia are famous for their beauty, for their fine features, large, luminous eyes and rosy cheeks. As the Spanish song says:

Valencia! Tierra de frutas, de flores y amor
Valencia! Tus mujeres de la rosa todas tienen el color
Valencia! En la Huerta Valenciana encontraras a tu amor

Valencia! Land of fruit, flowers and love
Valencia! Your women all have the color of the rose
Valencia! In the land of Valencia you will find your love

Many consider the women of Valencia to be the most beautiful in all Spain, which is saying a very great deal indeed. How much of their famed beauty do Southern belles owe to Valenciano ancestors?

In the second person, English does not distinguish between singular and plural; "you" serves for both. However, such is not the case in French, Castilian ("Spanish"), Catalan or Valenciano, in which the second person singular and plural are distinct. Many Spaniards when they learn to speak English find it awkward not to distinguish between singular and plural in the second person. Therefore, they invent their own second person plural, saying "you all". Thus, the famous Southern expression "you all" or "y'all" is the result of French, Spanish, Catalan and Valenciano substrata in the spoken English. Many other examples could be given, such as the expression "corn pone" or "a pone of bread" from the French

pain, Spanish, Catalan and Valenciano **pan**. There is also the tendency to refer to influenza as "grip", from the French **grippe** or the Spanish **gripe**. The slang verb "gripe", meaning "to complain" no doubt is of the same origin. In the American South, the word "fold" as a verb does not exist; Southerners use "double" as a verb in place "fold". In Spanish and Catalan, the word for "to fold" is **doblar**, which literally means "to double"; there is no special word for "to fold". Collard greens, a staple of Southern cuisine, is a vegetable otherwise used only in Spain and Portugal.

Qur'anic fragments have at times, though infrequently, been found in the Southeast, perhaps most recently in South Carolina. It is generally assumed that said fragments were brought from Africa by slaves, which may be true. However, if one thinks for a moment, it would have been far easier for a Morisco from Spain to smuggle a Qur'an or a fragment thereof to America than for a slave, and a Qur'anic fragment would have a much better chance of surviving weather, rot and war in a trunk in the attic of a farm house or plantation house than in a slave cabin.

Dr. T.B. Irving has noted Mudejar and Morisco elements in Spanish colonial architecture in Florida. Traditional architecture of coastal South Carolina and Georgia has a very Spanish, even Mudejar or Morisco look. This is usually attributed

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to the proximity of Spanish Florida and to close contact with the

Caribbean, including Cuba, Puerto Rico and Santo Domingo. However, the above refers not only to outward appearance; said architecture is Mudejar or Morisco even in its most basic techniques of construction.

In Muslim Spain building blocks were often made of earth mixed with branches, straw, sea shells, brick dust, pottery shards, bones and lime.(200) This type of construction was - and maybe still is - used in coastal Georgia and South Carolina, though due to differences in soil and climate less earth and more oyster shell was used than was the case in Spain. In Southeastern USA, this type of construction is called tabby, which word is obviously an Arabism; the triliteral root TAB occurs in many Arabic words having to do with building or construction. As we said before, building was a typical trade of Mudejares and Moriscos.

Some say that some Southern folksongs, such as the lovely "Salangadou" have Hispano-Muslim tunes, though today the words are in French and/or English. This is a nebulous area indeed, and we mention it only in passing.

The Southern folk song, "The Cherry Tree Carol" is a close paraphrase of part of the Surah of the Qur'an titled "Mary", with a cherry tree taking the place of the date palm.

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Rice cultivation was introduced in Spain during the Muslim

Period, and became very prevalent in Valencia, where rice became the basis of the cuisine, as it is to this day. However, the cultivation and eating of rice did not spread much beyond Valencia. Today the eating of rice has spread to all Spain, but this is recent.

Rice growing appears in the coastal areas of Georgia and South Carolina at a very early date indeed. In the 16th century Moriscos from Valencia were the only Europeans who knew how to grow rice.

In 1610, many unassimilated Moriscos of Valencia were allowed to remain simply because they were the only ones in all Spain, indeed in all Europe, who knew how to grow rice. It would seem that only Moriscos from Valencia could have introduced rice growing to Georgia and South Carolina at such an early date. It was from Georgia and South Carolina that rice cultivation was introduced to French Louisiana. Most of the rice dishes popular in the Southeast are obviously of Valenciano or Murciano origin.

One aspect of the culture of the Old South which survived the U.S. Civil War and its aftermath is the famous "Rebel Yell". This is an eerie, blood-chilling war cry, best known for its use by the Confederate armies in the War Between the States, though it antedates said conflict and survives to this day. There is no

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doubt that the Rebel Yell was - is - a very effective psychological weapon. As the Confederate song says:

*We will give the Yanks a beating
They'll all be retreating
When they hear the Rebel Yell.*

It is often said that it was some time before the Yankees learned to control their feet when they heard the Rebel Yell.

*It is commonly assumed that the Rebel Yell derives from an Amerindian war whoop. There may be some truth in this, though not much: the Rebel Yell often - though not always - begins with the rapid "yip-yip-yip" typical of Amerindian war whoops. However, the Rebel Yell is **not** a whoop. Whoever heard of a "Rebel Whoop"? We must look elsewhere for the origins of the Rebel Yell.*

Many Roman sources speak of the eerie, blood-curdling Celtic war cries, which froze even the stalwart hearts of the Roman Legionnaires and indeed was the last sound heard by many thousands of them. This same eerie war cry later became familiar to the English at Stirling Bridge, Prestonpans, Bannockburn, Inverlochy and a host of other battlefields. In the dark forests of Northwestern Spain the men of Napoleon's Grande Armee, valiant and staunch as they were, trembled when they heard the same eerie Celtic war cries heard by the Roman Legionnaires in these same forests so many centuries before.

This fearsome, eerie Celtic war cry survives to this day in

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*Northwestern Spain, where it is called by the very Iranian-sounding name **Aturuxo** (pronounced "Aturusho"), and may be heard at certain celebrations and festivities. The Aturuxo is indeed*

erie; it is usually transcribed "eeee-huuu-huuuu-huuuuu", rise rapidly in both volume and pitch, then drops off suddenly. A Southerner might almost believe that he is hearing a Rebel Yell when he hears the Aturuxo. Almost, but not quite. In contrast to the Rebel Yell, the Aturuxo is almost unarticulated, that is, the tongue, lips and teeth play almost no role, though the vocal cords vibrate. Something is still missing.

Arabs are familiar with what is called "ululation". Non-Arabs who have seen the film "Lawrence of Arabia" or seen newsreels of the liberation of Kuwait in the Gulf War have heard ululation.

Though it hardly varies in pitch or volume, ululation bears more than a slight resemblance to the Rebel Yell.

All the pieces of the puzzle are now in place; the Rebel Yell is a combination of a Celtic war cry and the Arab ululation. Thus, there are two possible theories as to how the Rebel Yell was born, keeping in mind that they are not mutually exclusive, that there may be some truth to both:

- ❖ 1.) The Rebel Yell originated in Muslim Spain when the Celtic war cry indigenous to Spain combined with the ululation brought by Arab immigrants. This war cry later died out in
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Spain itself, but before this occurred it was taken by Moriscos to America, where it survives to this day as the "Rebel Yell".

- ❖ 2.) The Arab ululation was brought to America by Moriscos, where it combined with the Celtic war

cry brought by colonists from Ireland, the Scottish Highlands, Brittany and Northwestern Spain.

Thus, the famous "Rebel Yell" is a heritage of Morisco pioneers of the Old South.

*When all the evidence, including notices of "Moors (Muslims) from Spain" living in Florida and South Carolina even as late as 1790, is added together, the case for the presence of Moriscos from Catalunya and Valencia among the first Spanish colonists in what is now Southeastern USA is very strong indeed. It is obvious that Moriscos from Catalunya and Valencia played a vital role in the formation of the Old South, its distinctive **mode d'etre**, mode of being or mode of understanding life, whose existence was noted by Alfonso Paso. Was James J. Pettigrew aware of this, - however dimly - and does this account for his fascination with Muslim Spain?*

Thus, the Morisco pioneers of the Old South had an unquestionable if incalculable influence on American history, and who is to say that its influence will not be on the rise again someday? After all, it is an indigenous American alternative to the crassly commercial, consumerist, plutocratic, materialist and Benthamite ways of the North, land of the "Puritan Demon". For

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more than 130 years it has been said: "The South will rise again". Perhaps it will, and not merely as a "scalawag", a Yankee who speaks with a drawl. As someone commented to me:

"There is something about the Confederate Cause that grabs the emotions."

*Strong we are, and brave
Like Cavaliers of old we fight
Our heritage to save*

*Hurrah, hurrah
For Southern rights hurrah*

*Hurrah for the Bonnie Blue Flag
That bears a single star.*

Few have so eloquently captured the pathos of the Lost Cause as Fr. Joseph Ryan, a Catholic chaplain in the Confederate Army and later a parish priest in Mobile, Alabama in his poem "The Conquered Banner":

*Furl that banner, for 'tis weary
Round its staff 'tis drooping dreary;
Furl it, fold it - it is best;
For there's not a man to wave it,
And there's not a sword to save it.
And there's not one left to lave it
In the blood that heroes gave it;
And its foes noe scorn and brave it;
Furl it, hide - let it rest!*

*Take that banner down, 'tis tattered;
Broken is its staff and tattered;
And the valiant hosts are scattered,
Over whom its floated high.
Oh, 'tis hard for us to fold it,
Hard to think there's none to hold it,
Hard that those who once unrolled it
Now must furl it with a sigh!*

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*Furl that banner, furl it sadly;
Once ten thousands hailed it gladly.
And ten thousands wildly, madly,
Swore it should forever wave
Swore that foeman's sword should never
Hearts like theirs entwined disssdever,
Till that flag should float forever
O'er their freedom or their grave!*

*Furl it! For the hands that grasped it,
And the hearts that fondly clasped it,
Cold and dead are lying low;
While around it sounds the wailing
Of its people in their woe.*

*For, though conquered, they adore it
Love the cold, dead hands that bore it!
Weep for those who fell before it!
Pardon those who trailed and tore it!
But, oh, wildly they deplore it.
Now who furl and fold it so!*

*Furl that banner! True, 'tis gory,
Yet 'tis wreathed around with gloey,
And 'twill live in song and story
Though its folds are in the dust!
For its fame on brightest pages,
Pinned by poets and by sages,
Shall go sounding down the ages
Furl its folds though now we must.*

*Furl that banner, softly, slowly,
Treat it gently; it is holy,
For it droops abive the dead;
Touch it not, unfold it never;
Let it droop there, furred forever,-
For its people's hops are fled.*

Union soldiers were called "Yankees", hence the name "Billy Yank", while Confederate soldiers were called "Rebels", hence the name "Johnny Reb". Military historians have said that

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Napoleon would have given his right arm for a division of "Johnny Rebs". How much would Napoleon have given for the Stonewall Brigade, Hood's Texicans and the cavalry of J.E.B. Stuart and Nathan B. Forrest?

Perhaps the above was summarized in a popular song of a few decades ago:

*You fought all the way, Johnny Reb, Johnny Reb
You fought all the way, Johnny Reb.*

With the possible exception of the Stonewall Brigade, perhaps no Confederate infantry unit was more renowned than the 5th Texas, known as "Hood's Old Brigade" or "Hood's Texicans", from General John B. Hood, its commander for most of the war. The 5th Texas Brigade was composed very largely of Spanish speakers (hence the nickname Hood's Texicans) and Irishmen. When General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia invaded Pennsylvania during the Gettysburg campaign, many Pennsylvanians chided the "Johnny Rebs" for their ragged uniforms. An Irishman of the 5th Texas replied:

"In Texas we never wear good clothes when we go hog killing."

In one Pennsylvania town a woman was wearing a blouse with Union colors. An Irishman of the 5th Texas commented:

"Lady, I would change clothes if I were you. Hood's men are mighty good at storming breastworks when there's Yankee colors on them."

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It is said that Confederate General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson once asked General John B. Hood:

"General Hood, how is it that Texans, the most independent-minded in a whole army of irascibles, consent to follow a Kentuckian such as yourself?"

To which Gen. Hood could only reply:

"General Jackson, I have never understood that myself."

As we shall see, Texans, "the most independent minded in a whole army of irascibles" also consented to follow the French Royalist Prince de Polignac, because he proved himself to be a valiant and honorable gentleman.

One more word. The image of moonlight, live oaks festooned with Spanish moss, mocking birds (an American member of the nightingale family), roses, honeysuckle and magnolia blossoms so dear to Southern literature and folklore powerfully evokes the image of moonlight, Mediterranean cypresses, nightingales, roses, orange blossoms and jasmine so beloved of Hispano-Arabic poets. Colonel James J. Pettigrew would have understood and been delighted. As Lesley Blanch said:

"... that heady draught of romanticized melancholy which only the East knows how to distill, and which, once tasted by the West is forever craved." (201)

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Muslim Spain well knew how to distill romanticized melancholy; so did the Old South.

During the English Civil War of 1641-47 the New England colonies - stronghold of Puritanism - were solidly Roundhead.

Virginia and Maryland, then the only British colonies in the South (there were Spanish colonies in what is now Georgia and Florida) were just as solidly Royalist or Cavalier. Only the Dutch colonies in what is today New York and New Jersey prevented the New England colonies on one hand and Virginia and Maryland on the other from fighting in a dress rehearsal for the US Civil War of 1861-1865.(202)

When Charles II was a fugitive, decrees were issued in his name in Virginia. Colonel Richard Lee (ancestor of Confederate General Robert E. Lee) was dispatched to the Netherlands to invite Charles II to set up his throne in Virginia. At his coronation, Charles II wore a robe of pure Virginia silk.(203) Surely slavery was not an issue in this case, though slavery had been officially legalized in Massachusetts, but **NOT** in Virginia or Maryland. To this day, Maryland is called "The Cavalier State", while Virginia's name of "Old Dominion" derives from its resolute loyalty to Charles I during the English Civil War. During the War

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Between the States, the analogy of the Southerners (or Rebels) as Cavaliers and the Northerners (or Yankees) as Puritans or Roundheads was a commonplace, as we have already seen, and is recalled in many poems and songs such as "Ye Cavaliers of Dixie".

Here is a selection from the poem by Kate Brownlee Sherwood

in honour of the gallant Confederate (Southern) General Albert Sidney Johnston, killed during the US Civil War at the battle of Shiloh in 1862. The poem is titled simply:

"Albert Sidney Johnston":

*I hear again the tread of war go thundering through
the land And Puritan (or "Roundhead") and Cavalier are
clinchng neck and hand
'Round Shiloh Hill the furious foes have met to thrust and
slay.(204)*

*The Confederate (or Southern) cavalry leader J.E.B. Stuart
(what an appropriate surname!) was called "The Last Cavalier".*

*The Confederate song "The March of the Southern Men"
has the same tune as the Jacobite sang "Marching Through the
Glen", and its words are very largely a paraphrase of said
Jacobite song.*

*Said the Union (Northern) Major General William T. Sherman of
the Confederate Cavalry:*

*"They are splendid riders, first rate shots and
utterly reckless, the most dangerous set of men which
this (US Civil) War has turned loose upon the world."*

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*In the US Civil War, the Texas Rangers certainly exemplified
General Sherman's words. They guided their horses using only their
feet, something which they had learned from the Comanches and
Kiowas, and went into battle with a revolver in one hand and a
sabre in the other. Each Texas Ranger carried two revolvers, a
double-barrel shotgun and a carbine, giving him fifteen shots*

without reloading, formidable firepower for the time, and, as General Sherman noted, they were first rate shots. After each battle, Texas Rangers commonly left two or three times their number of Yankees dead on the battlefield.

Finally, here is a Confederate song in honor of all Confederate soldiers, of whatever rank, cavalry, infantry or artillery:

O battle flag of Dixie, long triumphant wave
Wherever storms of battle roar or victory crowns the
brave
The cavaliers of Dixie in women's song shall go
The fame o' your name when the storm has ceased to blow
And battle tempests rage no more
Nor the bloody torrents flow, nor the bloody torrents
flow
Nor the iron hail in floods descend, nor the bloody
torrents flow.

The Cavaliers of Prince Rupert, the Marquis de Montrose, Alasdair MacDonald and Ralph Hopton in the English Civil War of 1641-47 and the "Rebels" or "Confederates" of generals Robert E. Lee, Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard, J.E.B. Stuart, John Hunt Morgan, Stand Watie (also known by his Muslim name

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Abdullah ibn Ramadan) and Colonels Santos Benavides and James J. Pettigrew in the US Civil War of 1861-65, and, yes, the anti-Taliban forces in Afghanistan all fought against the same "Puritan Demon", an aspect of the "Anti-Traditional Demon".

There is a close parallel between the English and New England Puritans on the one hand and Wahhabism, and, most especially the)

Taliban regime in Afghanistan, whose basis is Wahhabism, on the other hand.

❖ 1.) Both Puritans and Taliban claimed to be the only "pure" (from whence the name "Puritan") representatives of the religions they claimed to embrace, though both merely appropriated the name, otherwise having virtually nothing in common with said religions.

❖ 2.) Both the Puritans and Taliban condemned or at best ignored and belittled the philosophical, artistic, aesthetic and mystical aspects of the religious tradition of which they claimed to be the only "pure" representatives; thus both present a mutilated, impoverished and truncated version of the the religious tradition of which they claim to be the only "pure" representatives.

❖ 3.) Both the Puritans and Taliban invented all sorts of rules which have no basis in the religious traditions of which they claimed to be the only "pure" representatives.

❖ 4.) The Puritans wantonly destroyed priceless and irreplaceable masterpieces of medieval art and architecture. The Wahhabis wantonly destroyed Shi'a shrines in Iraq, many of which were masterpieces of Safavi art and architecture. Taliban wantonly destroyed masterpieces of Buddhist art.

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❖ 5.) Both Puritans and Taliban forbade even the most innocent of amusements, such as kite flying.

❖ 6.) The Puritans forbade virtually all holidays and festivals, even including such Christian holy days and Christmas and saint's days. Taliban forbade virtually all holidays and festivals, including the ancient Persian "Now Ruz" holiday, Shi'a holidays, such as Ashura, and even holidays celebrated by both Shi'as and Sunnis, such as 'Eid.

❖ 7.) There is a close parallel indeed between the English Catholics, persecuted by the Puritans, and the Shi'a of Afghanistan, persecuted by the Taliban.

❖ 8.) Close indeed is the parallel and the resemblance between the Puritan oligarchy in Massachusetts, and Cromwell's tyranny in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland on the one hand, and Taliban on the other hand.

Wahhabism is an aberration of Islam; Taliban is an aberration of Wahhabism, so Taliban is an aberration of an aberration. Some have said that Taliban was "trying to turn back the clock". Maybe so, but Taliban was not trying to turn back the clock to any place or period in the history of Islam. Yes, Taliban was "trying to turn back the clock", but to turn it back to Cromwell's tyranny in England and the Puritan Oligarchy in Massachusetts.

Several times in his book Islam Between East and West (Indianapolis, Indiana, 1985), Alija Ali Izetbegovic, President of Bosnia, says that Islam is intermediate between Judaism and

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Christianity. This is by no means completely false, but is so oversimplified as to be misleading. A more accurate continuum would be the following: **FIRST**, Judaism, **THEN** Protestantism, Wahhabism, Taliban and al-Qaeda, the "intellectual children of Wahhabism", **THEN** Sunni Islam, **THEN** Shi'a Islam **AND FINALLY** Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Christianity. Protestantism,

Wahhabism and its "intellectual children" are really Judeo-Manichaeic-Nominalist cults with no relation to either Christianity or Islam save appropriated or "hijacked" names.

John Walker Lindh, - whom Michael Savage so accurately called "Rat Boy" - the U.S. citizen captured fighting alongside Taliban, is often condemned as being "un-American". However, this is most unjust, as he is the most 100 per cent American of all, a true son of the so-called "Pilgrim Fathers of New England", for whom "Cromwell's fools" would be a more accurate definition.

By the standards of many, including the above-mentioned Rick Rothschild of the Epcot Center, John Walker Lindh, "Rat Boy", is the most 100% American of all, because he is a latter day Puritan. No doubt some of John Walker Lindh's ancestors came on the "Mayflower". John Walker Lindh said that he was fighting for Taliban because it is the only "pure" Islamic regime. This is the language of Puritanism; only a Puritan mentality could consider Cromwell and the Puritan Oligarchy in Massachusetts as

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"pure" Christian regimes, and only a Puritan mentality could consider Taliban as a "pure" Islamic regime. John Walker Lindh claimed he "converted to Islam", but he really converted to nothing; he merely reverted to English and New England Puritanism under a different, more exotic name.

In the November 19, 2002 issue of the conservative American biweekly "National Review", Stephen Schwartz says:

"Before Jacobinism (of the French Revolutionaries), Leninism, (Mussolini's) Fascism, Stalinism, Japanese militarism and Hitlerism (or National Socialism) there was Wahhabism."

The above is true enough so far as it goes, but is Incomplete. I would revise or amend it thusly:

"Before Wahhabism, Whiggery, Jacobinism, Marxism, Leninism, Mussolini's Fascism, Stalinism, Japanese militarism, Hitler's National Socialism, Maoism, and Ba'athism, there was Manichaeism or Catharism and Calvinist Puritanism."

Before Abdul Wahhab, Robespierre, Marx, Lenin, Stalin, Tojo, Hitler, Mao Zedong, Kim Il Sung, Pol Pot, Enver Hoxha, Slobodan Milosevic and Saddam Hussein, there was Oliver Cromwell.

Before Abdul Wahhab, Voltaire, Marx, Mussolini and Hitler there was John Calvin, before John Calvin there was Mani, founder of Manichaeism.

Mr. Schwartz himself would seem to be in full agreement with my revision or amendment, because in the same essay he says:

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"The Wahhabi's anti-Ottomanism resembled (in some respects) the Protestant rebellion against the Papacy, and some have seen in it an explicit emulation of the Protestant Reformation."

Wahhabism bears no resemblance to Anglicanism, and not much to Lutheranism. However, as we have noted before, the resemblance between Wahhabism and its offspring Taliban on the one hand and Calvinist Puritanism on the other is so close as to be uncanny. Abdul Wahhab was not the Luther of Arabia, and much less the Henry

VIII, but he was most certainly an Arabian combination of John Calvin and Oliver Cromwell. Whether or not Abdul Wahhab was directly or indirectly influenced by Calvinist Puritanism is an open question; the resemblances are many and close, and the thing is by no means impossible. It is often believed that the British Raj in India goes back only to Victorian times. However, the beginnings of British expansion in India go back to the times of Elizabeth I, well before the period of Puritan dominance. So, there were many British ships in the waters around the Arabian Peninsula before the time of Abdul Wahhab. However, there is no positive proof that Abdul Wahhab knew of Calvinist Puritanism, and, as we said before, Christianity and Islam are very similar, so that whatever is found in one will very likely be found in the other, including the same aberrations. Ergo, the close resemblance between Calvinist Puritanism on the one hand and Wahhabism and Taliban on the other by itself does not prove that Abdul Wahhab

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was directly or indirectly influenced by Calvinist Puritanism, though there is nothing which precludes said possibility.

So, we have Abdul Wahhab as John Calvin, Abdul Aziz ibn Saud as Oliver Cromwell, and Osama bin Laden as John Brown.

Puritanism, whether found in a Protestant (there is no such thing as "Catholic Puritanism" or "Eastern Orthodox Puritanism") or a Sunni Islamic (there no such thing as "Shi'a Puritanism") milieu, is a heresy and an aberration, a combination of Jewish

influence, Nominalism and Manichaeism, which, at base, is alien and hostile to both Christianity and Islam. In this sense, Nominalism and Manichaeism are cancerogenic substances and Puritanism and Wahhabism are the cancers.

Puritanism, whether Calvinist or Wahhabi, is indeed the "Puritan Demon" of the Confederate song, it is utterly evil, utterly dishonest and fraudulent, claiming to be the only "pure" representative of the religious tradition to which it attaches itself like a malignant parasite, while in reality it presents a truncated, mutilated and impoverished version of said tradition by denouncing the philosophical, artistic, aesthetic and mystical dimensions of Christianity and Islam. As Archbishop Laud, Edward Hyde Earl of Clarendon, Herman Melville and finally Oswald Spengler took great pains to point out, Puritan movements have a dynamic which logically and inevitably leads to atheism and

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nihilism. The Cavaliers of the English Civil War, the Jacobites of Ireland and Scotland, the Vendeeans and Chouans of France, the Carlists of Spain Confederates of the US Civil War and those who fought against the Wahhabi inspired Taliban and al-Qaida (Osama bin Laden is a Wahhabi) in Afghanistan all fought against the same "Puritan Demon".

It is to the eternal honor of the Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church and Shi'a Islam that they have always

vigorously and uncompromisingly resisted and rejected Nominalism and Manichaeism and their offspring, i.e., Puritanism, whether Calvinist or Wahhabi.

Perhaps I had better clarify some terms. The term "Eastern Orthodox" is inclusive, and refers equally to Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, Serbian Orthodox, Bulgarian Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox, Syrian Orthodox, etc. The more exclusive terms given above refer to the various national Orthodox churches, each with its own patriarch and using various liturgical languages, i.e., Byzantine Greek (Greek Orthodox), Church Slavonic (Russian, Serbian, Bulgarian Orthodox), Old Armenian (Armenian Orthodox Church) and Syriac (Syrian Orthodox Church).

Frithjof Schuon has deftly refuted the so-called "Protestant Reformers" and the Puritans of both Christianity and Islam, who are called "Wahhabis" and "Taliban" in an Islamic context, those who claim to be the only "pure" representatives of

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Christianity or Islam as the case might be, but in reality are more Manichaeism and Nominalist than anything else:

"The Buddha, despite certain appearances, was not a "reformer" in the current sense of the word - which implies heterodoxy (Manichaeism in the case of the Calvinists and Puritans of Christianity and the Wahhabis and Taliban of Islam) - and could not be such; all that weighs with a reformer in that sense is to bring back the religion to which he adheres, or thinks he adheres, to its "primitive purity"; this task he tries to accomplish by rejecting essential elements, rather like a man who, wishing to refer a tree back to its root, would saw off all its branches and even its trunk. The would-be reformer, whose idea of "purity" is entirely

external and in no wise transcendental, fails to perceive that the branches normally and legitimately contain the root and even the seed and that the sap is the same throughout the tree down to the smallest shoot and that every organism has its laws of growth determined not only by its own particular nature but also by its medium of expansion; such a person forgets that time as such is irreversible and that qualitative differences of temporal cycles necessitates readaptations, for any given tradition, in a more explicit or more differentiated sense just as happens with the tree, analogically speaking, the branches of which are more complicated than the trunk."(205)

Archbishop Laud, Herman Melville, Oswald Spengler and Hilaire Belloc among others have noted that Puritan movements, wherever found, have a dynamic which logically and inevitably leads to atheism and materialism. I once commented that the Calvinists and Puritans tried to reduce Christianity to its bare bones, forgetting that bare bones are dead.

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During the War Between the States, (US Civil War), there were a number of cases in which Union (Northern) troops from New England burned Catholic churches in the South, Jacksonville, Florida, and Jackson, Mississippi being notorious cases. Anti-Catholic "Know Nothings", so prevalent in the North, were rare in the South, where they were considered to be "white trash". Also, there was far more anti-Semitism in the North than in the South. Judah P. Benjamin, the Secretary of Treasury of the Confederacy, was a Sephardic Jew. The Union General (later President) Ulysses

S. Grant was so anti-Semitic than he ordered all Jews to be expelled from his military district.

In 1870, five years after the end of the US Civil War, Senator George Hoar of Massachusetts (the stronghold of Puritanism), sponsored a bill to force the South to accept a unified educational system forced on it by the Federal Government.

In defense of his bill, Senator Hoar said:

"(It) will compel the (Southern) states to do what they will not do", and would have the effect of: extinguishing Catholic education and to form one homogenous American people after the New England Evangelical (Puritan) type."(206)

In other words, to be "American" means to be a New England Yankee Puritan WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant; I once said, "Of WASP only the "W" applies to me, and "ASP" is the name of a poisonous snake"; in the "melting pot" everyone becomes a New

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England Yankee Puritan WASP. Obviously Senator Hoar's campaign of cultural genocide against the South was not wholly successful; however, it did succeed to a very large extent.; even many who consider themselves to be "unreconstructed rebels" and the most militant of Southerners have been marked and mutilated by the Yankee campaign of cultural genocide against the South known as "Reconstruction". Any Southerner who is a Protestant or a secularist is to a great extent a scalawag, brainwashed by Senator Hoar and his ilk. The so-called "Protestant ethic" is the epitomy

of "Yankeeism" or "The Yankee Ideology", and the antithesis of Southernism.

I am proud to remain an "unmeltable ethnic". It is said that "hyphenated Americans" or "unmeltable ethnics" are not real Americans, because they have left part of themselves (perhaps the most important part) on the other side of the Ocean. In other words, America is a WASP nest. However, the so-called "real Americans" or "unhyphenated Americans" have also left part of themselves on the other side of the Ocean, in this case in East Anglia, the stronghold of English Puritanism; except for the Amerindians, all Americans are hyphenated; one cannot identify with something which is nothing in particular. Those who strive to preserve their ethnic, and/or regional identity are resistance fighters against East Anglian Puritan imperialism. Accurately

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enough, many now say that Southerners are ethnics, as they very militantly (violently in the US Civil War) do not conform to the New England, East Anglian Puritan Yankee WASP paradigm. As we noted above, people as diverse as James J. Pettigrew and Florence King have noted that, whatever his ancestry, a white Southerner, in so far as he is Southern by culture and mode d'etre, he is NOT a WASP, and, in so far as he may be Anglo-Saxon by ancestry and WASP by culture he is a Yankee (or scalawag, i.e., a would be Yankee) not a Southerner. So, some of us are double or triple unmeltable ethnics.

Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederacy, was a product of Catholic education in the Old South. The only European head of state to recognize the Confederacy was Pope Pius IX. After the War Between the States, when Jefferson Davis was imprisoned, Pope Pius IX, the beloved Pio Nono, sent him a crown of thorns, which the Pope had made with his own hands. Many believe that Jefferson Davis formally converted to Catholicism before he died.

Pope Pius IX has recently been beatified, the first step towards being proclaimed a saint.

*As we mentioned before, the famous Confederate Battle Flag was designed by General Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard, called **"Napoleon in Gray"**, a French Creole of Royalist or "Chouan" ideology. With its St. Andrew's Cross and color combination, the*

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Confederate Battle Flag enshrines both Jacobite and Carlist symbolisms. There can be no doubt General Beauregard, a very learned and cultured man and personal friend of Colonel James J. Pettigrew was well aware of this.

General P.G.T. Beauregard, was idolized by Confederate soldiers, particularly those of the gallant Army of Tennessee, who would follow him "to Hell and back". Counting Creoles, Cajuns, French Royalists (such as the Prince de Polignac, who became leader of a force of wild Texans) who came to fight for the South, and diverse individuals who fit none of the above categories, the number of French speakers in the Confederate Army was so large

that the hybrid swear word *sacredamn* was used in said army. Some say that General Beauregard invented said hybrid word, but this would have been totally out of character for this handsome, courtly, chivalrous, devoutly Catholic Southern Gentleman.

Even the Yankee historian Bruce Catton said that General Beauregard was "a very good soldier".

So pervasive was the Puritan influence, so great was the triumph of "The Puritan Demon" as a result of the Northern victory in the US Civil War. Thus to this very day one hears television commercials which say "Almost sinfully delicious", and a holiday commemorating an event in the history of the Puritan founders of

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Massachusetts is now a national holiday (though NOT very popular in the South NOR among Catholics, Eastern Orthodox Christians and Muslims anywhere in the country). I refer to "Thanksgiving". I most firmly believe in giving thanks to God, but I avoid any reference to those odious and detestable "Pilgrim (Puritan) Fathers"; they were **NOT** pilgrims, and most certainly **NOT** my fathers or ancestors.

In the grim, scowling faces portrayed in Grant Wood's famous painting "American Gothic", one sees the image of the "Puritan Demon", of which John Walker Lindh is so avid a disciple.

Recently Michael Lind wrote a study on the Vietnam War. In the course of said book, Mr. Lind goes into some detail concerning

persistent regional differences within the USA. Below is an example:

"To Southerners, even intellectual and progressive Southerners, the notion that a government or an entire society should be organized according to a theory or an idea, rather than on the basis of tradition and custom, is the ultimate New England folly."(207)

The above-mentioned "ultimate New England folly" has been thoroughly skewered, roasted and buried by Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, Edmund Burke, Samuel Johnson, Louis de Bonald, Joseph de Maistre, L'Abbe Maury, Le Comte Ferrand, L'Abbe Barruel (in Memoirs Illustrating the History of Jacobinism), Dostoyevsky, the Russian Slavophiles, Sir Walter Scott, Samuel Taylor Coleridge,

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Benjamin Disraeli, Jaime Balmes, Juan Donoso Cortes, Marcelino Menendez Pelayo, Fr. Felix Sarda i Salvany, Rene Guenon, G.K. Chesterton, Hilaire Belloc, Frederic Mistral, the Southern Agrarians (including Richard Weaver, author of Ideas Have Consequences), and the poet Allen Tate) T.S. Eliot, Nicolas Gomez d'Avila, William Butler Yeats, George Santayana (born Jorge Agustin Nicolas de Santayana), Jose Maria Peman, Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn (in Leftism Revisited: From de Sade and Marx to Hitler and Pol Pot), Allamah Tabataba'i, Ayatollah Mirza Mahdi Pooya Yazdi, Frithjof Schuon, Idries Shah, Plinio Correa de Oliveira, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Juan Lanadulusi (in Asi Pensamos), Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Tom Scott, Brent Bozell, Michael Davies, Charles Coulombe, Paul Johnson (in Intellectuals) Lawrence J.

Dickson (in The Book of Honor), and even some native New Englanders, descendants of the Puritans, as we shall see.

We have already seen how Herman Melville - whose mother was a New Englander - saw that the "Puritan Demon" or "vile Puritan viper" was indeed serving as the secret ally of atheism.

To be fair, not all New Englanders were possessed by the "Puritan Demon"; President Franklin Pierce certainly was not, nor were Henry Adams and the great author Nathaniel Hawthorne, himself a descendant of the New England Puritans, defined the Puritans as "most dismal wretches", and thoroughly skewered Puritans and

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Puritanism in his novels and short stories. In the short story "The Maypole of Merry Mount", part of the collection called Twice Told Tales Nathaniel Hawthorne refers to the Puritans as "most dismal wretches". After cutting down the maypole from which the short story takes its name, the Puritan John Endicott repents of it, saying:

"I thought not to repent me of cutting down a maypole, yet now in my heart I wish to plant it again. It would serve admirably as a whipping post."

The whipping post is indeed the maypole of the Puritans. After reading Nathaniel Hawthorne's novel The Scarlet Letter, many, including myself and E. Michael Jones came to the conclusion that the scaffold is "the Puritan's confessional". Nathaniel Hawthorne also said:

"No man was ever more justly hanged than John Brown."

In his short novel Young Goodman Brown, Nathaniel Hawthorne bluntly states that the New England Puritans (and presumably the English Puritans as well) were Satanists, Devil Worshipers. Were I to say this, I, Irish-Spanish Catholic and Southerner (member of the Sons of Confederate Veterans) who virtually bears hatred of the English and New England Puritans in his genes and chromosomes or DNA, would immediately be accused of "bigotry", "bias", even "mendacity", but, remember, Nathaniel Hawthorne was himself a descendant of the New England Puritans.

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According to the "Northern Mythology" or "Yankee Mythology", the US Civil War or War Between the States was an anti-slavery Crusade or jihad. Though this would lead us too far afield, it can be conclusively demonstrated that the "Yankee Mythology" is a lie, that the War Between the States was NOT about slavery, as Eric Foner noted very recently. Can anyone seriously believe that the leading abolitionists, i.e., the psychopathic terrorist and mass murderer John Brown, the vile blackguard and pornographer William Lloyd Garrison and the scions of wealthy New England Yankee families who had made their money in the slave trade and brutally exploited their workers, had any compassion for the slaves?

Many nations were involved in the trans-Atlantic slave trade from Africa to the Americas: Great Britain, France, Portugal,

Spain, Netherlands, even Prussia, Denmark, Morocco and the Ottoman Empire. However, it was Great Britain which was by far the leader in said trade, as Hugh Thomas has noted. Of course, during the Colonial Period, New England Yankees were British subjects, so it is not possible to determine what percentage of said trade was in the hands of New Englanders. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that, in proportion to their numbers, New England Yankees were the most avid practitioners of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. It should also be noted that the first British colony in North America to

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officially legalize slavery was Massachusetts. It is a fact that the region in which Abolitionism was most prevalent - New England - was also the region which had most participated - and by a large margin - in the trans-Atlantic slave trade. In fact, one of the leading abolitionists, a Mr. de Wolfe, had made a vast fortune in the trans-Atlantic slave trade and at one time may have been the world's leading slave trader. No doubt Mr. de Wolfe did not object to slavery so long as he was making money at it, an attitude typical of New Englanders in general. Is it not evident to anyone not deaf, blind and mentally retarded that for the abolitionists slavery was only a pretext rather transparently disguising evil and inconfessable hidden agendas?

That the North pretended to moral superiority over the South is equivalent to the owner of a nation-wide chain of whorehouses who dabbles in international human sex trafficking and child

pornography giving sermons denouncing fornication and adultery.

As Jesus said in the Gospel,

"First take the beam from your own eye before you try to remove the mote from the eye of your neighbor."

That so vile a group of people as the abolitionists, who included terrorists, slanderers, atheists and pornographers among their leadership, could have been sincerely concerned about the slaves in the South is so incredible as to make one either cringe or laugh. All too obviously, slavery was but a pretext used by

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very bad people as a pretext to conceal their utterly evil, inconfessible hidden agendas.

Said the poet Allen Tate:

"In a sense, all European history since the (Protestant) Reformation (which Allen Tate, a Catholic, would have agreed in calling the "Deformation") was concentrated in the war between the North and the South, the most conservative of the European orders had, with great power, come back to life, while in the North, opposing the Southern feudalism, had grown to be a powerful industrial state which epitomized in spirit all the middle-class (capitalist or communist), urban impulses directed against the agrarian aristocracies of Europe after the Reformation." (208)

H.W. Crocker III continues:

"These were the stakes: two visions of civilization, each of which despised the other. The South considered the North an unprincipled, money-grubbing, self-righteously (a gross understatement!) intolerant leviathan, and thought of itself as a liberty-loving agricultural Sparta(?) of gracious gentlemen, classical culture, and feudal order". (209)

And good food and beautiful women, one might add.

Mr. Crocker continues:

"What the Confederate Constitution sought to do was to preserve what Southerners believed was the original intent of the (U.S.) Constitution, which the North had tried to overturn. To the framers of the Confederate Constitution, sovereignty resided in the people of the states. That is how it had been in the colonial period(s), and how it was under the Articles of Confederation and under the Constitution of the United States. The North, however, had adopted a view not of sovereign states affiliated within a union, but of a sovereign majority of the American people, represented in the federal government.

To Southerners, this interpretation of the Constitution was flat-out wrong. The Constitution,
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Jefferson Davis pointed out, did not create a new American people; sovereignty continued to reside with the people within their respective states. 'The monstrous conception of the creation of a new people, invested with the whole or a great part of the sovereignty which had previously belonged to the people of each state,' Davis argued 'has not a syllable to sustain it in the (U.S.) Constitution.'"(210)

If anyone can prove that Jeff Davis was mistaken in what he said above, I challenge him to demonstrate it.

The Yankee ideology was a blueprint for every totalitarian system; Lenin, Stalin, Mussolini and Hitler in this sense were all "Yankees".

It has already been noted that some considered the South to be the equivalent of the Chouans and Vendeeans. The North the equivalent of the Radical Jacobins. In fact, the South had a its closest equivalent the Carlists of Spain. The motto of the Carlists is: "**Dios, Patria, Fueros, Rey**" (God, Patria, Local and

regional rights and autonomies, King). "States Rights" is a very precise translation of "Fueros".

During my time in India, I was told: "We Indians may be poor, but we have hearts." It has been said: "The English have no hearts, and so are constantly searching for one". Then there is the Irish saying: "Colder than a Protestant's heart". Unlike the North, the South had no Puritan heritage, and unlike the North, the South was not WASP, as has been noted at least since the time of James J. Pettigrew (who used the term "Anglo-Saxon",

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as the expression "WASP" had not yet been coined) to Florence King in our own day. Among the many utterly evil hidden agendas of the Abolitionists was cultural genocide, the destruction of a non-materialist, non-Puritan, non-WASP, or has also been said, "the rape of a culture".

As Stephen Vincent Benet - Northerner though not a New Englander - said in John Brown's Body, his long narrative poem about the War Between the States or US Civil War:

*He brooded for a moment, it wasn't slavery
That stale red herring of Yankee knavery (211)*

The Spanish journalist and playwright Alfonso Paso put it very well in his column in the Madrid daily "El Alcazar":

*"La causa de la Guerra de Secesion (US Civil War)
no fue la esclavitud; fue un conflicto entre dos modos
distintos de entender a la vida."*

"The War of Secession (US Civil War) was not about slavery; it was a conflict between two distinct modes of understanding life or human existence."

It is no surprise that a traditional Spaniard such as Alfonso Paso should understand the Old South and the War Between the States better than a brainwashed Yankee.

In the Spanish journal "Historia y Vida" (History and Life), someone made an observation similar to that of Alfonso Paso, though using an analogy from the history of France, comparing the North to the Revolutionaries or Jacobins and the South to the Vendeeans and **Chouans**. Interestingly, the name **Chouan** comes

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from a **patois** word for whip-poor-will or night bird, because the Chouans of Brittany used the call of this bird as a signal.(212) Confederate forces very often used this same bird call as a signal.

The Confederate General D.H. Hill proclaimed the South to be:

"The Vendee of the United States."(213)

La Vendee is, of course, that part of western France where Poitou, Anjou and Brittany come together and which which suffered total devastation and destruction for opposing the atheist savagery of the French Revolution. Once again, let us remember the words of Charles Coulombe in The White Cockade:

The Jacobites for Royal James
And Bonnie Charlie as well
And Carlists fought with Spanish names
While Chouans tasted Hell.

The brave emerged from old Vendee

*And died at Quiberon
Or fought with great old Duke Conde
Or fell at bold Toulon.*

*And Hofer up in High Tyrol
Fought his (Habsburg) Emperor's foe
Feared not to pay the awful toll
Before they laid him low.*

*In far off Russia's blinding snows
The Whites fought for their Czar
And though their country's sunk in woes
Their glory none can mar. ...*

*...I beg the King Who reigns above
That to me may be shown
How to fight with savage love
For altar, and for throne.(214)*

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The Confederate General Richard Taylor greatly admired and respected the French-speaking Cajuns and Creoles of antebellum (pre-War Between the States) rural Southern Louisiana, seeing in them the virtues of the French peasant of the days before the French Revolution. Said General Taylor:

"Tender and true were his traditions of La Belle France, but of the France before Voltaire and the encyclopaedists, the Convention and the Jacobins - ere she (France) had lost faith in all things divine and human, save the bourgeoisie and avocats (lawyers -lawyer jokes and not new)."(215)

General Beauregard was well aware of the above. As even a Union or "Yankee" song says,

"General Beauregard, he fights us very hard."

It is no surprise that Creoles and Cajuns of Southern Louisiana were among the most militant and die hard of Confederates and most pugnacious of Confederate soldiers.

The Catholic writer G.K. Chesterton, whom we have cited several times in this work, said:

"America and the whole world is crying out for the spirit of the Old South".

E. Michael Jones, Ph.D., described the Old South as:

"The last non-materialist civilization in the Western World."

Proof of what Dr. Jones says above is the fact that the Old South rejected industrialization because it did not want the social problems and the environmental degradation which

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industrialization brings in its wake. To paraphrase William Blake, the Old South did not want "dark satanic mills" destroying its "green and pleasant land". It is most strange that the environmentalists, with few exceptions, have not praised the Old South.

In this chapter and in the previous chapter we have referred to Amerindians. Some things need to be clarified.

The Amerindian peoples of North America were and are extremely varied in physical type, while their linguistic diversity is so extreme as to be bewildering and mind-boggling. Someone once said that the Amerindian peoples of North America have cultures as distinct as those of Japan and Italy. In other words, it is virtually impossible to make any sort of general statement concerning the Amerindian peoples of North America. In this work we speak of North American Amerindians as individuals:

Maria Martinez, Tomas Montoya, Kateri Tekakwitha, Hot Ashes, and Black Elk. We also speak of varias tribes of North American Amerinindians: Comanches, Kiowas, Apaches, the Five Nations of the Iroquois, Chinook, Cheyenne, the Oglala branch of the Lakota Sioux, Tlingit, as well as cultural groups, i.e., the "Pueblos", those sedentary, agricultural Amerindians of New Mexico and Arizona who live in picturesque adobe and rough stone towns or "pueblos". However, nowhere do we make any statements concerning the Amerindian peoples of North America in general.

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Some may question my use of the Canadian term "Amerindian". The term "Indian" is obviously not applicable to the Amerindians of North America, who have no connection whatever with India, and its use in this sense is bound to cause confusion. Particularly since the US and Canada have received so many immigrants from India, the term "American Indian" sounds like a gross oxymoron, and, once again is bound to cause confusion, as it sometimes does. The politicaaly correct term "Native American" is a misnomer, as it literally means anyone born in the Western Hemisphere; as usual, that which is politically correct is factually wrong. With the Canadian neologism "Amerindian" there is no possible confusion, as, being a neologism, it has only one possible meaning. Some may say that said neologism is "pedantic"; very well, would it be less pedantic to say "American Aborigines" or "The Aborigines of the Americas", which are the only other precise

and non-ambiguous terms. So, I use the term "Amerindian" because it is the least bad of a poor selection.

People often ask what is the etymology of the word "Yankee".

Amerindians who spoke Iroquoian languages (the Hurons, the "Five Nations", [i.e., Mohawks, Oneidas, Senecas, Cayugas, Onondagas] smaller tribes) pronounced the word "English" or the French **Anglais** as **Yengeese** or **Yengeez**. Now, in both French and English "Yengeese" or "Yengeez" sounds like a plural the

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singular of which would be **Yengee**. "Yengee" quickly morphed into the French Yanqui and the English "Yankee". For some time, Canada belonged to France, and New York to The Netherlands, therefore, during this time the only English-speaking people with whom the Five Nations of the Iroquois were in contact were New Englanders. Hence, strictly speaking, a "Yankee" is a New Englander descended from the early Puritans, and in this sense the word is often used to this day. Washington Irving's book Legend of Sleepy Hollow is one long joke about the New England Yankee Ichabod Crane (who today would be called a "nerd" or "geek"), despised by the Knickerbockers or Dutch inhabitants of Sleepy Hollow. Even Abraham Lincoln often told Yankee jokes.

While we are speaking of the Iroquois, we might make a digression which has a close relationship to much of the subject-matter of this book, especially Chapter 7.

During my early teen-age years, I lived for a time in Quebec. No, I do not eat pea soup every day, nor drink maple syrup, nor wear gum boots, nor wear a red-and-black checked woolen jacket, nor play ice hockey. However, in cold weather, at times I have been known to wear a red-and-black checked woolen cap or a French-Canadian voyageur style toque or stocking cap. Also, I have been known to sing A la Claire Fontaine, Vive la Canadienne and Frangue, Frangue Sur La Riviere. My favorite ice hockey team is

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the Montreal Canadiens. The motto Nous Souvrons (We Remember) appears on all the license plates of La Province de Quebec. I attempted to have this motto put on my State of Ohio license plate, but too many letters.

*During my time in Quebec I acquired a great admiration for the French Jesuits or "Black Robes" of the 17th and early 18th centuries, who so diligently studied the languages and customs of the Amerindians among whom they were to serve, knowing full well that their end would likely be a hideously cruel martyrdom, as happened in the well known cases of Jean de Brebeuf (known to his fellow Jesuits by the nickname **Vrai Boeuf**, meaning "True Ox", Isaac Jogues, Rene Goupil and Jean de Lalande, and others.*

Between 1642 and 1649, eight men were martyred, all of whom, save St. Jean de Lalande being Jesuits. I will spare the reader the horrific details of some of said martyrdoms:

St. Rene Goupil (1642) - Jesuit brother killed by a hatchet blow to the head by a Mohawk in Ossernenon.

St. Isaac Jogues (1646) - Jesuit priest killed by a hatchet blow to the head, then beheaded by Mohawk in Ossernenon.

St. Jean de Lalande (1646) - Jesuit companion killed by a hatchet blow to the head, then beheaded by a Mohawk in Ossernenon.

St. Antoine Daniel (1648) - Jesuit priest shot by a Mohawk during a raid on a Huron village on Ontario (Canada). His body was burned in the church.

*St. Jean de Brebeuf (1649) - Jesuit priest captured by the Iroquois from Huron mission in Ontario and tortured to death, his heart cut out, and his blood drunk by the Iroquois.
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St. Gabriel Lalemant (1649) - Jesuit priest captured by the Iroquois from Huron mission in Ontario and tortured to death.

St. Noel Chabanel (1649) - Jesuit priest ambushed by a Huron while on his way to preach at a Huron village near Quebec.

St. Charles Garnier (1649) - Jesuit priest attacked by Iroquois at Mission St. Jean near Quebec who was shot and killed by a hatchet blow.(216)

Besides the famous Haudenosaunee, the "People of the Long House", the Confederation of the Five Nations of the Iroquois:

- ❖ Mohawks - the Ga-ne-a-ga-o-no or Kanienkehaka - the Flint Possessing People;*
- ❖ Oneidas - the O-na-yote-ka - the People of the Stone;*
- ❖ Onondagas - the O-nun-da-ga-o-no - the People on the Hills;*
- ❖ Cayugas - the Gue-u-gweh-o-no - The People at the Mucky Lands (Marshes);*
- ❖ Senecas - the Nun-da-wa-o-ne - the Great Hill People;*

of what is today the western part of the State of New York, the northern Iroquoian peoples include the Hurons, Eries, Petuns, Susquehannas and smaller tribes.

Before continuing. Let us recall the words of a French Catholic missionary among the northern Cheyennes of western North America:

"Amerindian [Northern Cheyenne in this case; I would be most reluctant to make a general statement in this sense concerning all the Amerindian peoples of North America] values present strong ties to the same teachings modeled for us in the life of Jesus Christ - revealing the presence of the Spirit in all things."

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The Russian Orthodox missionaries in Alaska made the same observation concerning the Inuits, Aleuts and Amerindians whom they attempted to evangelize. This may help the reader to understand Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha, the **Lys des Agniers**, or "The Lily of the Mohawks", **La sainte mystique de la terre sauvage**, i.e., "The holy mystic of the wilderness" and **La sainte mystique du le foret vierge**, i.e., "The holy mystic of the virgin forest", or "The holy mystic of the forest primeval", as well as the redoubtable Oneida chief Hot Ashes.

Notable among the converts made by the Black Robes among the **Confederation des Cinq Nations des Iroquois**, i.e., "The Confederation of the Five Nations of the Iroquois" was the famous and redoubtable Oneida chief **Ogenheratarhiens**, whose name in French means **Cendre Chaude**, which in English would be "Hot Ashes"

or "Hot Cinders". Because of his great prestige among all the Cinq Nations, the "Five Nations", Cendre Chaude or Hot Ashes was of great help to the Black Robes in their perilous work of converting the Iroquois to Catholicism.

Says Margaret R. Bunson:

"The answer to their prayers arrived soon after in the person of an Oneida chief named Ogenheratarihiens, known to the French as Cendre Chaude, which is translated as "Hot Ashes" or "Hot Cinders". Those colorful images were chosen by the French because they represented the temper of the man. He was what is known as a "short fused" individual who could fly off the handle into a rage at the slightest provocation.

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Powerful, strong and relentless, Hot Cinders was a man to be reckoned with, and the early French learned to walk carefully when in his company. The Iroquois also honored Hot Cinders as a man who was brave, resolute and honorable.

Several years before his arrival at Gandawague, Hot Cinders was hunting when a friend brought word of his brother's death. He blamed the French, naturally, and he started out for the city of Montreal, then called Ville Marie, where he intended to hunt down the murderers and take his vengeance upon them. On the way, however, Hot Cinders was informed that his brother had not been slain by the French but by another party altogether. He listened to the details of the murder, thought about the situation and then continued on to Montreal in order to maintain the safety of his people. Hot Cinders had sworn revenge upon the murderers, and if he returned to the Oneida nation, the other chiefs and warriors would be obliged to aid him in his vengeance. War would erupt within the Five Nations, and many good people would die in order to satisfy his honor. Being a chief of the Oneidas, trained in the ways of the (Five) Nations and in the ramifications of one man's desires, Hot Cinders knew that he could not bring his people into his private affairs.

He remained in Montreal for the same reason, and in time he was joined by his wife, a woman named Maie Garhi. These two had a most remarkable marriage. They had been espoused according to the Iroquois tradition at

he age of eight. They had started living together then, as brother and sister, and they had never separated. In time the union was made whole and complete, and the pair remained constant and close over the tears, as the result of their growing up together and their sharing of all that life offered them.

Hot Cinders, however, was not the same man that he had been when he started out on the path of vengeance. During his stay in Montreal he had been in the company of many that he respected, and in the process he had discovered the fact that they were now (Catholic) Christians. Learning as much as he could about a religion that could turn his friends into gentle, kindly and compassionate beings, Hot Cinders decided to accept catechetical instructions. The missionaries in Montreal also practiced the custom of making converts of adult age take weekly classes and prove themselves worthy of baptism. Hot Cinders, naturally, brought all

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the force of his personality into his conversion, honing his honor, his courage and his mental prowess in the change taking place. When baptized he was given the name Louis, after St. Louis, King of France, the gentle and ascetic ruler, and he became an exemplary member of the (Catholic) Christian community.

He attended two Masses a day, received Holy Communion, was especially devoted to the Blessed Sacrament and conducted all of his affairs with calm. Word of his conversion, naturally, spread across Iroquoia, and his former warrior companions made the long trek to Montreal to discover for themselves what had taken place. They were stunned to find Hot Cinders spreading the doctrines of (Catholic) Christianity, but they listened attentively, drawn as usual by his fiery eloquence.

It is difficult for modern Catholics to understand the remarkable impact that the faith had upon the Nations of the Iroquois and their leaders. Certainly the ideals and spiritual concepts of these Native Americans prepared them for the profoundly beautiful aspects of (Catholic) Christianity, and their sense of obligation and honor fitted them admirably for the tasks of carrying out the commands of Christ throughout their lives. They came to the (Catholic) Church with a unified purpose, with strength tested in the wilderness, and with a basic wisdom about the earth and mankind that fortified their beliefs. Certainly not every Iroquois was a magnificent specimen of the faith, as that does not happen in any land, but the early converts were

great enough to cause a sensation among their own people.

After discussing the situation, the Oneida elders went to Hot Cinders and asked him to return as their chief again. He could practice his faith, instruct others and fulfill whatever he believed to be his destiny as a (Catholic) Christian. The former chief, however, recognized the dangers of returning to the wilderness and set about making a series of proposals that he knew his own would not be able to accept in good faith. First he demanded that all of the Oneidas become (Catholic) Christians. That was very difficult for them, because not all of them had been convinced of the need to put aside their traditional spirituality. Even more of them might have considered making a conversion, but the (Catholic) Church represented not only Christ and the Saints but the white men,

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particularly the French (and the Spanish, but **NOT** the English **NOR** the Dutch). They balked at this but did not actually refuse to accept the first condition. Hot Cinders, therefore, made his second demand, which he knew would put an end to all negotiations about his return. He insisted that the Oneidas abandon their tribal lands and live in the Sault Mission. This was impossible, and he knew that as well as they did. The Oneidas would never give up their ancestral sites, not even for Hot Cinders and his new faith. Such a move would allow others to intrude and slowly engulf the lands of the Gens de la Pierre, the People of the Stone, the O-na-yote-ka (in Iroquois). The elders sadly bade Hot Cinders goodbye and went away, wondering what sort of power had overtaken their leader. Hot Cinders, resolved, maintained his (Catholic) Christian ways and led a very distinguished life, becoming chief of the Sault Mission in time. He was slain in 1684 in a war with the Senecas.

In Kateri's time, however, Hot Cinders not only administered Indian affairs at the Sault Mission but went on journeys throughout the Iroquois territories, accompanied by trusted friends. He and Kryn, Le Gran Agnie, i.e., "The Great Mohawk" [Le Gran Agnie or "The Great Mohawk" had as his Iroquoian names Togouiroui or Ganeagwa: among the Dutch he was known as Kryn] visited the various villages of Iroquoia to talk to their people about the faith. Eloquent orators, the two men spent days on the trails, stopping to gather the members of the Cinq Nations or Five Nations so that they could explain their conversion and the beauty of the

(Catholic) Church in their lives. The two famed leaders, naturally, reached far more Indians than the missionaries could, and they were able to explain the Catholic faith in terms that were far more reasonable and enticing."(217)

A French Catholic missionary made the following observation:

"Amerindian values present strong ties to the same teachings modeled for us in the life of Jesus Christ, thus revealing the presence of the (Holy) Spirit in all things."

Said missionary was referring specifically to the Northern Cheyennes, but exactly the same observation was made by Russian

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Orthodox missionaries in Alaska in reference to the Inuits, Aleuts and Amerindians - especially the Tlingit - whom they sought to evangelize.

The above will help us to understand Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha, Hot Ashes, Black Elk, and, perhaps, Tomas Montoya and his famous daughter, Maria Martinez.

Siouan is an important language family of Amerindians, whose ancestors originated in the Mississippi valley, where the Temple Mound culture had its principal center. Tribal traditions among the Sioux, refer to what they call the "walking time" when they lived among the lakes and forests of Minnesota (the name "Minnesota" in Sioux means "Shimmering Water") and before they had acquired horses, point to a movement to the west to the vast area along the Missouri, from where they acquired the use of horses, became a typical bison-hunting, nomadic people and dominated the central part of the Great Plains of North America. There are three

main divisions of the Sioux: the *Dakota* or *Santee* Sioux, who lived in southern Minnesota. Though they knew of horses, except for an occasional bison hunt, were essentially woodland Amerindians. The *Dakota* or *Santee* Sioux in turn are divided into the *Mdewakanton*, *Wahpekute*, *Sisseton* and *Wahpeton*.

The *Nakota* live in North Dakota and neighboring areas of Canada, and are divided into two divisions: *Yankton* and *Yanktonai*.

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The *Lakota* or *Teton* Sioux, were exclusively nomadic bison hunters and dominated the central part of the Great Plains of North America. The name *Teton* is purely Sioux; however, there is a joke concerning the etymology of this name, related to the fact that *Lakota* women in tend to be well endowed. Anyone who knows the meaning of the word *teton* in French will understand this joke immediately. The *Lakota* or *Teton* Sioux were - and are - by far the largest of the three principal divisions, and are, in their turn, divided into seven branches, or the "Seven Council Fires": **Oglala**, 'Scatter One's Own', **Minneconjou** or **Mnikohowozhu**, 'Planters by the Water', **Itazipco** or **Sans Arcs** (French: 'No Bows'), **Siha Sapa** or **Pieds Noir**, (French: 'Black Feet') (not to be confused with the Algonquian *Blackfeet*, who were not only unrelated to the Sioux, but were their enemies), **Oohenonpa** or **Deux Bouilloires** (French: 'Two Kettles'), **Sichaju** or **Brule** (French: 'Burned' or 'Scorched'), and **Hunkpaha**, 'Head of the Camp Circle'

Though considered to be inferior to the Comanches and Kiowas as horsemen and fighters, by any other standard (who could compare with the Comanches and Kiowas as horsemen and fighters?) the Teton Sioux would be considered as splendid horsemen and formidable warriors. Only when measured against the superlative standards set by the Comanches and Kiowas could the Teton Sioux be considered as anything except splendid horsemen and formidable warriors.

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In fact, in one rather important respect, the Lakota or Teton Sioux retained a certain connection with Minnesota and with the "walking time". First, certain things should be clarified.

The sacred pipe of the Lakota was generally called simply *lela wakan*, meaning "very sacred". The bowl of the sacred pipe was made of a red stone found only at one quarry in southwestern Minnesota. So, in so important an aspect as the bowls of the sacred pipes, the Lakota retain a memory of and a connection with their old home in Minnesota where they had lived during the "walking time".(218) The Sioux word **kinnikinnik**, or **chanshasha** is often translated as "tobacco"; however, this is totally in error.

Kinnikinnik in reality is the dried inner bark of the red alder or red dogwood (***Cornus stolonifera***), and is the key ingredient of the mixture which is smoked in the sacred pipe. *Kinnikinnik* is almost never by itself alone because of its extreme harshness and bitterness. The **Arikaras** or **Rees** are a basically

agricultural and sedentary people who speak a language of the *Caddoan* family and are therefore close kin to the **Pawnees**. The *Arikaras* grew a tobacco which when cured was twisted into a rope-like shape. Since the *kinnikinnik* by itself was so harsh and bitter, when smoked in the sacred pipe it was mixed with an equal quantity of Arikara twist tobacco and with a small amount of a fragrant herb or root, often the Sweet Ann root, said ingredients

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are always mixed according to a set ritual.(219) Even with the admixture of Arikara twist tobacco and fragrant herbs and roots, the mixture smoked in the sacred pipe must have been somewhat harsh and bitter, not the sort of thing that one would smoke for pleasure.

So, the key ingredient of the mixture smoked in the sacred pipe is not tobacco at all, but rather the dried inner bark of the red alder or red dogwood; tobacco and fragrant herbs and roots are added only to produce a smokable mixture. So, when they smoke the sacred pipe, the Lakota are not "enjoying a smoke"; in any case the profane use of the sacred pipe was prohibited.

For some time I was an occasional pipe smoker, though not habitual. A good grade of commercial pipe tobacco typically contains *burley* tobacco from Kentucky, *bright* tobacco from Virginia, *perique* tobacco from Louisiana, and *latakia* from Syria, to which some like to add a bit of cigar tobacco from Cuba or Brazil. I myself have never smoked Arikara twist tobacco, but have

known people who did; according to them, to someone accustomed to a good grade of commercial pipe tobacco, Arikara twist tobacco is very harsh; however, when mixed with fragrant herbs and roots, the mixture, though still somewhat harsh to one accustomed to commercial pipe tobacco, has a pleasant, not excessive bitterness, and a pleasing aromatic and spicy character.

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Obviously, the Lakota were not passionate smokers, and in fact used tobacco very little; it was something which they did not produce, but had to obtain from the Arikaras, with whom their relations were not always friendly. Today, of course, some Lakota may indeed be passionate, habitual tobacco smokers, but this is something relatively recent.

The quarry from which is obtained the red stone used for the bowl of the sacred pipe is in southwestern Minnesota. Today said quarry is part of the Pipestone Quarry National Monument and of a small reservation of the Santee Sioux, who are, in effect, the guardians and caretakers of the quarry from which comes the red stone used for the bowls of the sacred pipes. Thus, the quarry from which is obtained the red stone used to make the bowls of the sacred pipes is in the hands of the Sioux.

Some years ago appeared a book which has been reissued numerous times *titled* Black Elk Speaks. Black Elk was a chief and holy man **wicasa wakan** of the Oglala branch of the Lakota Sioux who

had fought the white man for most of his life. In 1904 Black Elk entered the Catholic Church. Black Elk affirmed that he was being true to his heritage, because the essence of Lakota Sioux practices could be found in the rites of the Catholic Church. Black Elk continued, saying that the Catholic Church is "the full revelation of **Wakhan Thanaka** (Lakota Sioux: **Wakhan** = "Holy" or "Sacred"; **Thanaka** = "Great"), declaring that the spiritual

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experiences of the Lakota Sioux people had prepared them to receive Christ. Four hundred Lakota Sioux followed Black Elk into the Catholic Church.

Below is given what may serve as an introduction to Black Elk, by John G. Neihardt, titled: A Great Indian Poet. There may be some question about Neihardt's use of the term "Aryan". I never cease to be surprised by how many people, including some who presume to be "intellectuals", use said term in the sense it was used by Hitler, who was both an ignorant lout and a liar on a grand scale. Therefore, anyone who uses the word "Aryan" in the Hitlerian sense is either an ignoramus or else is a liar who uses said word in what he knows is a grossly inaccurate sense for some evil ulterior motive. It may be taken for granted that Neihardt did not use the word "Aryan" in the sense it was used by Hitler, because the following essay was written in 1931, when Hitler was unknown outside Germany. Now, the word "Aryan" has two senses: 1.) the exact: & 2.) the more general. Now, all Aryans are Indo-

Europeans, but not all Indo-Europeans are Aryans. The Germanic peoples, though Indo-Europeans, are not Aryans. To use the word "Aryan" as referring to all Indo-European peoples, while not very exact, is obviously not completely false; to use said term to refer to the Germanic peoples only is simply wrong. Now, the exact meaning of the word "Aryan" refers to: A.) the Indo-Aryans; B.) The Iranians, & C.) the Celts. Of all the Indo-European peoples,

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it is only these three, i.e., Indo-Aryans, Iranians and Celts, who ever referred to themselves as "Aryans". As Neihardt was not an authority on Indo-European philology, he most likely used the term "Aryan" to refer to all Indo-European peoples, though he does not specifically say this. Says John G. Neihardt:

A GREAT INDIAN POET

"This writer has just returned to the modern world after spending a month in a contemporary antiquity that, in certain cultural respects, may be described as pre-Homeric. In company with his two daughters he has been living with his friends, the Oglala Sioux, in lonely country empty of white men where there was little to remind one of our civilization save the usual injustice and the resultant poverty of a conquered people who deserve a better fate.

The writer had only casual contacts with the younger generation, who, having little of their own racial culture and less of ours, seem lost somewhere in a shadowy borderland that lies between the white man and the red and that has been crossed far less often by people of our race than is generally supposed. The writer's host and intimate associates were the old *pahuskas*, that is to say, the longhaired old-timers who have retained their "pagan" culture with a passionate devotion; men who were in at the death when (Captain) Fetterman and his 80 troopers died that blizzard day on Piney Creek now more than 60 years ago (this in 1931); men who, as boys of 12 and 14 and 16, slaughtered

(General) Reno's panic-stricken cavalrymen "like fat cows" in the valley of the Little Big Horn, and helped to rub out (General) Custer in the darkness of the hoof-dust and smoke upon the hill; men who went through the tragic affair at Wounded Knee when their felling women and children were murdered as they fled and where a great dream died in the bloody snow.

Well, we killed a bull and had a feast, cooking in the ancient way, and there were enough of us so that when the feast was finished little remained but the hide and horns and hoofs (to be quite accurate, later on we ate the hoofs). And the old men and women danced in full dress and wrinkled old-timers made

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"killtalks", remembering their youth before they had become prisoners of war, recounting deeds of prowess in quite the true Homeric manner while the rawhide drums boomed at high points in the story and the old women sent forth their tremolo of admiration.

And it happened, so powerful was the spell of it all, that we three danced, too, mere white folks that we were, and we did it in no spirit of derision, but with a happy humility, as was fitting. And that night we danced the rabbit dance under the stars to the booming of the big drum while the young drummers sang and the old and the young, the dark and the white, the men and the boys and the women and the girls, seemed of one age and of one color and of no sex at all. The pure lyric joy of it is very good to remember.

But it wasn't the dancing or the Gargantuan feasting that mattered most in the end. It wasn't even the eating of raw liver hot from the bull - an act of communion with the old warriors and hunters far more satisfactory as a symbolism, be it confessed, than as a gustatory experience! The best of it all came out in the long days of constant talk with the old men, and especially with our host, *Heraka Sapa* (Black Elk), who is the second cousin of the great chief Crazy Horse. Black Elk is a great "medicine man", that is to say, a priest and a seer of visions. At the age of 13 he did a man's share of the bloody work on the Little Big Horn, and he fought at Wounded Knee and at White Clay Creek in the Badlands during the Messiah (Ghost Dance) trouble of 1890. But war, to him, was only an unavoidable necessity. He has lived for spiritual values and his visions, as set forth in careful detail for this writer, rank easily in beauty and profundity of significance with the supreme things in the rich literature of the Aryan peoples. His great vision, which came to him first

at the age of 9, during a 12-day period of apparent unconsciousness, is in itself a very great work of art, both as to form and to content. Unfortunately, for us white people, literature, in our sense, never developed among Black Elk's people. His culture never passed the evolutionary stage of the dance ritual and accordingly the great vision can be adequately expressed only in the dance ceremony, with its accompanying song. One portion of the vision alone - the horse dance, which is poetry of a sublime order - would require some five or six hours to produce. No white man has ever seen it performed, and no white man

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until now has ever heard it described in its astonishing beauty; but that one white man, who has spent his life in awe of the great ones of our literature, felt that he had been sitting at the feet of a poet fit to dine with the finest spirits that have sung in his discordant world and are now among the tallest of the dead. Black Elk is truly a great poet; and if ever our world shall be privileged to see and understand his masterpiece, the horse dance - as this writer hopes it may - there will be few to question the indubitable truth of this statement." (220)

Says Raymond J. DeMallie, himself a Lakota:

JOHN G. NEIHARDT AND NICHOLAS BLACK ELK

("Nicholas" was the baptismal name given to Black Elk on his conversion to Catholicism.)

"Black Elk Speaks is arguably the single most widely read book in the vast literature relating to North American (Amer)Indians. John G. Neihardt's poetic rendering of the life story of an Oglala Lakota holy man captivates the imagination of readers, drawing them into a meaning-charged world of symbols and otherness. We come away from our experience of Black Elk through Neihardt not with alabytical understanding of the old Lakota religious life, but, as Neihardt wrote after his first meeting with Black Elk, with insights into the holy man's "inner world, imperfectly revealed as by flashes". That experience, in Neihardt's words, is for us, as it was for him, "both strange and wonderful".

The mystery of the intellectual and emotional bond that these two men recognized between one another, and

that led to their creative collaboration, adds a very human dimension to the narrative. As Neihardt explained to Black Elk in a letter about the proposed book about his life, "I would use as much of your language as possible". Indeed, Neihardt was so successful in blending his own voice with Black Elk's that they became a single voice, a literary device so convincing the Neihardt faded into the background, allowing readers the sensation that Black Elk was speaking to them directly, without an intermedieary.

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Having grown up hunting buffalo (bison), witnessing Custer's demise at the (Battle of the) Little Big Horn, experiencing visions and living as a medicine man, traveling with Buffalo Bill (Cody), and participating in the Ghost Dance and the aftermath of Wounded Knee, Black Elk's life stretched back across the historical epoch that Neihardt celebrated in his epic poem A Cycle of the West. Admittedly, when he first met Black Elk, Neihardt's only intention was to gain a sense of what the Ghost Dance beliefs were like and how the ritual felt in order to infuse his Song of the Messiah with an emotional authenticity. But in that first meeting in August, 1930, Black Elk offered much more, a sharing of his vision, of the story of his life, and of his people. And Neihardt jumped at the opportunity.

From the beginning, Neihardt understood that the "very peculiar merging of consciousness" that he experienced with Black Elk had a mystical basis. Black Elk told him on that first visit, Neihardt wrote, "that a spirit, which stood behind me, had forced me to come to him that I might learn a little from him." Neihardt believed that his interest in "the things of the other world", which Black Elk instantly intuited, provided the Lakota holy man with the opportunity to pass on the knowledge of things that were sacred in the old ways of his people. For more than a quarter of a century Black Elk had put aside those old ways and embraced Catholicism and the ways of the white people. He had served as a catechist and a missionary and was a staunch member of the Catholic Indian community. He had given up his traditional ceremonies and healing practices and had not shared with his children any of his old sacred knowledge. Although Black Elk's commitment to Catholicism would not waver, Neihardt understood that the failure to live up to the mandate of his vision was a heavy burden for the Lakota holy man. But suddenly, with Neihardt's arrival, and his obvious desire to learn

about the "other world", Black Elk could transfer his burden to another man - a writer, who could preserve the sacred knowledge in a book. So it was arranged for Neihardt to return in the spring and set down in writing that which Black Elk wished to tell him.

When Neihardt returned in May, 1931, with financial support from William Morrow, a New York publisher, his project was very clearly defined. As he

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wrote to Black Elk during the winter, "I would want you to tell the story of your life beginning at the beginning and going straight through to [the battle or massacre of] Wounded Knee ... this book would be not only the story of your life, but the story of the life of your people". For his part, Black Elk was ready. He had enlisted the help of three friends - men older than he - who could tell with firsthand authority about events of which Black Elk could not speak from his own experience. He had obviously carefully thought through what he would tell Neihardt since he related his life story very nearly in chronological order, without the need to go back and fill in gaps.

But before the work could properly begin, it was necessary for Black Elk to formalize his relationship with Neihardt by adopting him as a relative. Black Elk accepted Neihardt as a writer, a "word sender", and clearly respected him for it, but the relationship they were establishing as Black Elk gave to Neihardt the sacred knowledge he had never shared with anyone before required establishing a bond of kinship. So, at the beginning of their work together, in the public context of a feast, Black Elk adopted Neihardt as a son and gave him the name Flaming Rainbow. The name reflected a striking image in his great vision, a rainbow door radiating multicolored flames through which Black Elk had to pass to gain the knowledge and gifts of the Six Grandfathers. Neihardt himself would be the conduit through which that knowledge would subsequently pass to the world at large, Also representing images from his vision, Black Elk named Enid Neihardt *She Walks with her Sacred Stick*, while Hilda Neihardt was called *Daybreak Star Woman*. These were not casual names and the adoption ceremony was not an insignificant spectacle for the edification of non-Indian visitors. Rather, these new identities were central to the collaboration that would ever link Black Elk to Neihardt, and their families to one another.

Throughout the interviews, as Black Elk spoke, Neihardt's primary task was to clarify his meaning by

questioning Ben Black Elk as he translated his father's words. Frequent repetition was required to clear up ambiguities; only then did Enid Neihardt transcribe the sentences in her notebook. Her notes were recorded in Gregg shorthand, except for proper names and Lakota words, which were written out in full to prevent confusion. The precision and neatness of her notes

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reveal that once a sentence was clarified and transcribed there was very little revision. The records reveal only a very few occasions when Neihardt asked substantive questions; the interviews were structured by Black Elk himself.

Neihardt was intimately familiar with the nineteenth-century historical records of conflicts between the whites and the Lakotas, and he had long acquaintance and amicable relationships with individuals among the Omaha, Crow [or Absaroka], and Lakota peoples. He was less familiar with the ethnographic record of Plains Indian cultures, nor did he evince interest in cultural description for its own end. He was a storyteller and, as he wrote to Black Elk, "people like stories". Black Elk Speaks is filled with cultural details but they are carefully selected to advance the story and to provide necessary context. The interview notes abound with additional details the Neihardt omitted in the interest of writing a book that would speak to a broad audience. His interest was universalistic, the identification of commonalities between Lakota culture and that of white America, both as a means of promoting understanding and of using Lakota spiritual and social values to critique modern America.

Central to the success of their collaboration was a shared sense of the significance of the dream or vision. Black Elk told Neihardt in detail about his vision experiences, most importantly, the great vision he had at the age of nine, when he lay unconscious for twelve days. It was that dream that set his life course and placed the burden on him to serve his people as an intercessor with the spirit world. In return, Neihardt told Black Elk about the dream he experienced at the age of eleven, when he lay in a fever. Repeated three times during the night, Neihardt felt himself hurtling through a vast emptiness at a dreadful speed, his arms stretched forward, a great voice driving him on. Neihardt interpreted the dream as a mandate for his life's work, to choose a path with higher purpose, which finally settled into his vocation as a poet. Almost two decades

later Neihardt returned to the dream and transformed it into a poem, "The Ghostly Brother", that conceptualized the cosmic force in the dream as a spiritual alter ego, a fate or guide: "I am you and you are I". The poem expresses the tension between the two egos, the spiritual leading forward, urging the other
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to follow "through the outer walls of sense", toward a higher reality, while the earthly fears the challenge and begs to stop and enjoy life's worldly pleasures.

Black Elk found Neihardt's dream perfectly comprehensible. It was, in his words (as interpreted by Ben), "a power vision". Black Elk indentified Neihardt's unseen guide: "I think this was an Indian brother from the happy hunting grounds who is your guide." For Black Elk, it was natural that one's life work should be revealed in a dream; he said to Neihardt, "The work you were assigned was man thinker". Moreover, Neihardt's invisible guide and his vocation as a writer linked him directly to Black Elk. Before he met Neihardt, Black Elk confided, he would think about his vision but was powerless to do so. "It seems that your ghostly brother has sent you here to do this for me."

Neihardt's mission was clear: to preserve Black Elk's vision and to share it with the world. When he returned home from his visit with Black Elk and the other old Lakota men he felt as though he was returning to the twentieth century. He he had been lost, he wrote, "in the consciousness of those essentially primitive men, and it so happened that the whole mood of the experience was determined by one of them in whom the highest spiritual conceptions of his race have flowered in beauty and wisdom." The beauty and wisdom of Lakota culture, as articulated by Black Elk, served as a stark counterpoint to "the dominant contemporary consciousness."

As he composed Black Elk Speaks, using Enid's transcript of her shorthand notes as the basic source, Neihardt was concerned that the book be factual, but more importantlt - as he wrote in his introduction to a paperback reprint forty years after the first edition was published - "to recreate in English the mood and manner of the old man's narrative. The task was to create a literary Black Elk real enough to be accepted by twentieth-century readers. The first-person voice obviated the problems of description and explanation that would have faced a third-person narrative. Readers would have to judge for themselves what Black Elk's experiences, actions, and beliefs truly signified.

Neihardt, as recorder, would not serve as an intermediary between Black Elk and the readers of the book.

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The material, however, was challenging for general readers, for whom visions and spiritual intervention in the affairs of this world seemed both archaic and suspect. This became clear to Neihardt when the editors in New York proposed relegating the account of the great vision to an appendix, a suggestion that Neihardt adamantly rejected. The conflict exemplified how unprepared non-Indian readers could be to take Native American spirituality seriously. Neihardt won that battle, but he lost when it came to the title. He wanted to call the book The Tree that Never Bloomed, focusing on this central symbol of Black Elk's vision and of his hope for the future of his people. In the end, Neihardt settled for Black Elk Speaks, a tactful compromise suggested by his wife, Mona.

Neihardt's literary Black Elk, as his character developed to using prayer, sacred songs, and ceremonies to cure the sick and to heal his people. His visions placed a burdensome responsibility on him to use the powers given him for the benefit of the Lakotas, whose way of life and reason for living were both casualties of the Euroamerican conquest of the West. The metaphors of restoring the hoop of the nation and making the tree bloom summed up what Black Elk felt himself called to do, the responsibility that he had failed. And so the literary Black Elk delivers an elegy on Harney Peak, the feeble cry of a pitiful old man, defeated, but who still hopes that his people may have a future.

The power of Neihardt's book to move readers to an appreciation of Black Elk's sense of the other world, the reality of his visions, and the tragedy of his people is undeniable. Whether read in English or the half-dozen other languages into which the book has been translated, readers respond viscerally to Black Elk Speaks. Because the book speaks so eloquently about our common humanity and fulfills our desire, in Neihardt's words "to learn a little more in a world where so very little can be known", it has become a religious classic, the paradigm of American Indian religions, and Black Elk an icon of the wise and holy medicine man.

For the first three decades after its publication, Black Elk Speaks attracted an audience primarily of scholars interested in other culture and specialists in American literature. When it was reprinted in paperback

in 1961 it soon drew a countercultural audience of youths who found in the book an alternative to the
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alienation of twentieth-century industrial culture. Many of them, in turn, passed on their enthusiasm to their children and grandchildren, with each new generation finding in Black Elk an antidote to their discontents and a promise of meaningful connection to the worlds in a cosmic sense.

The popularity of Neihardt's book inevitably drew the attention of scholars, who, over the past four decades, have fashioned a veritable industry in analyzing and commenting on Black Elk. Two other works also present material dictated by Black Elk, and they, too, have been part of the scholarly debate.

The first is Neihardt's When the Tree flowered: An Authentic Tale of the Old Sioux World (1951). In 1944, while employed by the Office of Indian Affairs, Neihardt once again visited Black Elk, who told him a series of stories that constituted a history of the Lakotas. Distressed that Black Elk Speaks, in its initial edition, had failed to find a popular audience, Neihardt decided to try again. When the Tree Flowered combines incidents from the life of another aged Oglala, Eagle Elk, with a reworking of Black Elk's story of his travels with Buffalo Bill and of the Ghost Dance. The time frame of the two books is the same, but When the Tree Flowered takes a broader view of Lakota society and is somewhat less focused on the spiritual aspects of Lakota culture. Unlike the earlier book, it employs a non-Indian narrator to frame Eagle Elk's first-person narrative, telling the story as a series of visits to the old man.

The second work is Joseph Epes Brown's The Sacred Pipe: Black Elk's Account of the Seven Rites of the Oglala Sioux (1953). In 1947 and 1948, Brown, a student of comparative religion, was moved by reading Black Elk Speaks to seek out the Oglala holy man. Brown visited Black Elk, who welcomed him as he had Neihardt, adopting him and enlisting him to write a book recording the traditional ceremonies of Lakota religion. While Black Elk had described to Neihardt ceremonies based on his personal visions, he had not touched on the communal rituals central to Lakota religious practice. Black Elk was in truth the aged sage Neihardt had portrayed; now, toward the close of his life (he died at age 86 in 1950), the material that he dictated to Brown reflected a mature integration of Lakota tradition with

Catholicism. For an obvious example, throughout Neihardt's interviews, Black Elk
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consistently used six as the sacred number; when he worked with Brown, the sacred number was seven, and his account of the seven Lakota rituals is structured in a way that parallels the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church.

These three works - Black Elk Speaks, When the Tree Flowered, and The Sacred Pipe - are the primary texts around which debate swirls endlessly.

Because I have myself contributed to the Black Elk literature, it may be fair to state my involvement. I learned of Black Elk through The Sacred Pipe, which I purchased in a bookstore in Rochester, New York, in 1960. It led me to Black Elk Speaks, which I found in the public library, but loved so much that I located and purchased a copy from the catalogue of an antiquarian bookseller - my first such purchase. The next years I found in Lowdermilk's bookstore in Washington, DC, a copy of the British edition of When the Tree Flowered, published under the title Eagle Voice. Reading and rereading these volumes throughout my high school years played a major role in my choice of a career in anthropology.

As a college student I was fortunate to have been able to spend three summers in the mid-1960s working in the old Bureau of American Ethnology Archives at the Smithsonian Institution. Surrounded by original manuscripts documenting generations of scholars' work studying American Indians, I was deeply impressed by the wealth of knowledge they contained. Sitting at a desk behind the rose window of the Smithsonian Castle - a desk I could use after hours and on weekends - and reveling in the heady sense of direct contact with history, I wrote to Neihardt asking whether it would be possible to read the original transcript of his interviews with Black Elk. He graciously agreed to allow a photocopy to be made from the original in the Western Historical Manuscripts Collection at the University of Missouri. The notes amazed me with the treasury of ethnographic detail they contained.

I returned to the transcript again and again, referring to them in college term papers, in my Ph.D. dissertation, and in some of my early publications. They form such an important source for the anthropological study of Lakota culture that I was convinced that they should be published. Finally, in 1980, when I gained

tenure at Indiana University, I felt in a position to undertake the job. I proposed the
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project to Hilda Neihardt, who allowed it to proceed and ultimately gave permission to publish not only the 1931 interviews, but also those from 1944, for which she had served as her father's stenographer. The book, called The Sixth Grandfather: Black Elk's Teachings Given to John G. Neihardt (1984) includes a biographical introduction about Black Elk and a complete and corrected version of the 1931 notes based on a retranscription of Enid's original shorthand. While the publisher wanted a title that would attract attention, perhaps Black Elk Speaks Again, I preferred something that reflected the message that Black Elk wished to send, so I based the title on his statement, "the sixth grandfather was myself, who represented the spirit of mankind. For the subtitle I wanted to avoid "interviews" and thought about Black Elk's statement to Neihardt at their first meeting in 1930: "He has been sent to learn what I know, and I will teach him".

The Black Elk literature has become impressively large in size and scope, ranging over and between disciplines as diverse as anthropology, Native American studies, literature, rhetoric, philosophy, history, and religious studies. This is not the place to attempt a systematic review. Readers can gain a good sense of the variety of issues and approaches involved from The Black Elk Reader, edited by Clyde Holler (2000). Here I wish to focus on to debates that shaped this literature and that are relevant for readers of Black Elk Speaks. First is the authorship of the book, which inevitably leads to the question of authenticity. Second is Black Elk's identity as a Catholic and the question of Catholic influences on his account of traditional Lakota religion.

The question of authorship and authenticity began with one of the first reviews of Black Elk Speaks in 1932, which accused Neihardt of inventing the narrators of the book: "perhaps them ain't Indians at all ... how could they talk that way?" Most reviewers, however, went to the other extreme and accepted the book as a transcript of Black Elk's words, understanding Neihardt's role to have been that of a recorder. They, like readers of the book in general, took the words on the title page literally: "The Life Story of a Holy Man of the Oglala Sioux told to John G. Neihardt". To counter this misunderstanding, beginning with the 1972

edition, Neihardt rewrote the title page: "told through John G. Neihardt".

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Scholarly debate over authenticity began in the early 1970s, with the first critics being students of literature. Robert Sayre was apparently the first to compare parts of the book with Enid's transcript, on the basis of which he concluded the Neihardt had been faithful to Black Elk's words and intentions. Sally McCluskey interviewed Neihardt and asked him directly for his assessment. The reply was definitive: Black Elk Speaks is a work of art with two collaborators, the chief one being Black Elk. My function was both creative and editorial." Note that he does not say "two authors", for the writing of the book was entirely Neihardt's. The only parts of the text that he left largely unchanged from the interview transcript are the song lyrics. As to the voice in which the work is written "it is absurd to suppose that the use of the first person singular is not a literary device". Neihardt is absolutely clear in stating his approach to writing the book: "The beginning and ending are mine; they are what he would have said if he had been able". Neihardt perceived the Black Elk was unable to express fully his thoughts and emotions through a translator. Even though the translator was Black Elk's son Benjamin, he was completely unfamiliar with his father's traditional religion, and this, combined with the limitations of his English, made translating Black Elk's words a challenging task. It therefore became the poet's duty to synthesize what Black Elk would have said, had he been an English speaker with a literary bent. Neihardt is very specific about his writing method: "At times I changed a word in a sentence, sometimes created a paragraph. And this translation - or rather the transformation - of what was given me was expressed so that it could be understood by the white world."

In 1983, Michael Castro published an insightful and well-reasoned essay on Neihardt and Black Elk that dealt in part with the process of writing Black Elk Speaks, focused particularly on the great vision. Using Enid Neihardt's transcript, he compared Neihardt's additions, and was the first contributor to the Black Elk literature to discuss his deletions. Castro characterizes those editorial strategies as follows: "Unlike most other poets who took liberties in translating Indian materials, Neihardt's changes tend to read like extensions of the informant's consciousness, reflecting less the white writer's

independent and impressionistic judgement than a hard-earned mutual understanding and trust." His discussion of deletions focuses on the omissions of the vision scenes devoted to war and the power to destroy.

Brian Holloway, a professor of English in Interpreting the Legacy: John Neihardt and Black Elk Speaks (2003), discusses the responses of literary critics to Black Elk Speaks, especially in terms of authorship and of the genre of American Indian autobiography. Of special value is Holloway's own analysis of the ways in which Black Elk Speaks fits into the broader picture of Neihardt's literary work, and in particular his mysticism. Neihardt once commented that "the essence of religion is mystical experience", and it is the common bond of mystical experience that forged his relationship with Black Elk and led the poet to consider telling Black Elk's story as "a sacred obligation".

The heart of the book has the greatest relevance for anyone wishing to understand the making of Black Elk Speaks. Here Holloway presents a selection of photocopied pages of Enid Neihardt's interview transcripts together with the corresponding pages of Neihardt's handwritten manuscript, with corrections, strikeouts, and additions, that allow a reader to see step-by-step the transformation of the raw material into the published book. Holloway discusses the literary voice that Neihardt created for this work, arguing that it skillfully reproduces oral narrative and demonstrating its influence on later writers.

A more recent interpretation by Dana Anderson from a perspective of rhetorical theory contributes to an understanding of Black Elk Speaks by examining the alternative identities. He examines issues of authenticity, the dynamics of Catholic conversion, and presents an insightful summary of the relevant literature.

Turning to the debate over Catholicism, there is no questioning the fact that the Oglalas, the people of Pine Ridge Reservation, knew Nicholas Black Elk from 1904 until his death in 1950 first and foremost as a leader in the Catholic Church. In his younger years he served as a missionary to other tribes and for much of his life he served his community of Manderson as a catechist. Black Elk taught generations of children to pray the rosary and gave them their first lessons in Catholic dogma. It is therefore not surprising that

when copies of Black Elk Speaks circulated at Pine Ridge in 1932 the Jesuit missionaries were infuriated. They blamed Neihardt for failing to carry Balck Elk's story forward to his conversion to Catholicism and repusiation of the old system of belief. In a document written in Lakota and translated into English in 1934, Black Elk affirmed his commitment to the Faith.

Because of his identification with the Church, some critics cast doubt on the authenticity of the material Black Elk told Neihardt, and the Catholic priests at that time claimed that the vision accounts were amalgams of stories Balck Elk had learned from others. May years later, Michael F. Steltenkamp, a young Jesuit priest who was a graduate student at Michigan State University, recorded reminiscences of Black Elk from individuals who had known him. They became the basis for his dissertation, later published as Black Elk: Holy Man of the Oglala (1993). They included stories told by Black Elk's daughter, Lucy Looks Twice, a staunch Catholic who spoke of her father's activities in the Church and of his use of the Two Roads Map, a pictorial catechism in the form of a scroll that was used to teach Catholic doctrine without requiring any written text. Steltenkamp argued that the two roads of the catechism - one leading to heaven, the other to hell - might have been amalgamated by Black Elk into the memory of his childhood vision. (This argument leaves unresolved how the circular form of the vision could be merged with the linear form of the catechism.) Rather than conceptualizing traditional religious practice and Catholicism as two stages of his life, Steltenkamp's interpretation opens the possibility that Black Elk blended the two and that Neihardt, since he was unprepared to recognize Catholic influences in Black Elk's narrative, simply failed to understand them. In short, for some Jesuits, Black Elk exemplified fulfillment theology, in which native traditions are interpreted as laying the moral foundation for the eventual introduction of Catholicism.

[Note in the previous chapter we prominently mentioned the Montoya family of Pueblo San Ildefonso, who were devout Catholics, and had been for many generations, but still mixed some native

elements in their religious practice, something true of a great many - almost certainly the majority - of that Amerindian cultural group known as "Pueblo" or "Anasazi", as was indicated later in the chapter.]

More recently, writing in a postcolonial framework, Damian Costello argued in Black Elk: Colonialism and Lakota Catholicism (2003) that, under the tutelage of Jesuit priests, Black Elk's generation developed a creolization of Native and Christian traditions. While this is undoubtedly true, the implications that Costello draws seem implausible. Drawing particularly on parallels to the Book of Revelation, Costello characterizes Black Elk's vision as "Christiological", a "salvation history" in which "Black Elk redescribed the Lakota tradition to avoid contradiction with the Christian story and also to show how Christ permeated the entire Lakota tradition as its central theme."

Many writers conceptualize Black Elk as having accepted Catholicism without forsaking the old religion; see, for example, Marie Therese Archambault, Meditations with Black Elk. Others, like Ed McGaa, in Mother Earth Spirituality, are concerned to defend Black Elk against the charge that he had forsaken his traditional religion. In Black Elk's Story: Distinguishing Its Lakota Purpose, Julian Rice argues - to me, unconvincingly - that Black Elk's main concern was to perpetuate Lakota tradition, and that his apparent adherence to Catholicism was entirely opportunistic. [This is disgusting, revolting!] Clyde Holler, a philosopher of religion, argues persuasively in Black Elk's Religion: The Sun Dance and Lakota Catholicism that Black Elk drew creatively on both religions to forge his own spiritual path. Frank Fool's Crow, a nephew of Black Elk's and also a holy man, is reported to have told the writer Thomas Mails, "Black Elk told me he had decided that the (Lakota) Sioux religious way of life was pretty much the same as that of the Catholic Church, and there was no reason to change what the Sioux were doing."

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Ultimately, the two issues of authenticity and Catholicism impinge on the appreciation of Black Elk

Speaks. In their harshest forms, critics dismiss the book completely. Anthropologist William K. Powers declares that "in Black Elk Speaks and other books written by white men for a white audience, the ideas, plots, persons, and situations of these books have been constructed to conform to the expectations of a white audience." Julian Rice suggests that Black Elk Speaks "may perhaps be relegated to the ranks of nineteenth century curios, reflecting white misconceptions of Indians." The contrast between these evaluations and that of Vine Deloria, Jr., the Lakota scholar, activist, and religious thinker, is stark. Writing in a foreword to the 1979 reprint, he characterized Black Elk Speaks as "a religious classic, perhaps the only religious classic of this century." Deloria observed that "Present debate centers on the question of Neihardt's literary intrusions into Black Elk's system of beliefs ... It is, admittedly, difficult to discover if we are talking to Black Elk of John Neihardt." But for Deloria, this question is of little relevance. "The very nature of great religious teachings is that they encompass everyone who understands them and personalities become indistinguishable from the transcendent truth that is expressed So let it be with Black Elk Speaks."

[As was noted earlier, both Black Elk and Neihardt were mystics; it is obvious that Vine Deloria is also a mystic. This says a very great deal indeed; being both a Lakota and a mystic, Vine Deloria understands Black Elk far better than any "scientific" type who suffers from what the Spaniards call *positivismo atontado* (idiotized positivism) ever could. Do not forget that the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches have a very rich mystical tradition, and one of the great unitive mystics of the Catholic Church, Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha, **Lys des Agniers** or

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"Lily of the Mohawks" was herself an Amerindian, a Mohawk, to be exact.]

Not everyone shares Deloria's sense of equanimity. Perhaps it is my nature as an anthropologist to try, to whatever extent possible, to disentangle the voices. For that reason, I was eager to take up the invitation to prepare this annotated edition. Interested readers who follow the footnotes will find facts and figures, explanations of matters Neihardt left implicit, Lakota words and phrases, identification of those sections written by Neihardt and those that vary from the interview notes, and bibliographical suggestions that lead into the vast literature of which Black Elk Speaks forms a part. I have undertaken this with a kind of remorse, realizing that the aesthetic pleasure of reading the book for the first time is, to quote once again Vine Deloria, Jr., "that it speaks to us with simple and compelling language". [To Vine Deloria, Jr.: **Hya-a-a-a!**, i.e., "Thank you!"] My goal, simply, has been to produce the kind of edition of the text that I would like to have had when I first read it many years ago.

So, with apologies to Deloria, and to Neihardt himself, I have taken on the job of explicating authorship.

The annotations I have added throughout the text provide comparisons between the book as published and the transcript of the interview notes. Recognizing the impracticality of sentence-by-sentence or even paragraph-by-paragraph comparison (truly devoted readers can perform that task for themselves by comparing the book with the transcript in The Sixth Grandfather), I have limited myself to points that I found significant or just interesting. Such comparison makes apparent material in the book that is either lacking in the transcript or has been substantially reworked. Limited as we are to the written sources, it is possible that some of the material lacking in the transcript did originate in the interviews. Such is apparently the case with the story of High Horse's courting, which is not found in the transcript. While some anecdotes and details may have been preserved in Neihardt's memory, it is very clear that he depended closely on the transcript to write the book. He promised Black Elk to use as much of his language in

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the book as possible, and he was faithful to that promise.

The bulk of the material in Black Elk Speaks that seems to be written entirely by Neihardt, without reference to the Black Elk interviews, is of two kinds:

historical events and cultural context. Both types of additions were necessary in order to make the book accessible to readers who have neither previous knowledge of the history of (Amer)Indian-white relations on the northern plains nor any understanding of Lakota culture.

When Black Elk and the other old men told their stories, Neihardt did not interrupt the flow of their narratives with questions. The transcript records very few occasions when Neihardt asked any questions at all. Black Elk was prepared to tell his life story and knew in advance the topics about which he would speak. He spoke about himself and his people, but said relatively little about their relationship with the white people beyond military engagements, from the Fetterman Fight (Battle of the Hundred Slain) at Fort Phil Kearny in 1866 to the Wounded Knee Battle in 1890. It was therefore up to Neihardt to fill in the historical context in which these military encounters occurred. Based on his reading of the literature and correspondence with old frontiersmen that had formed the basis for his Song of the Indian Wars, Neihardt was able easily to add material on the building of the Union Pacific Railroad in the 1860s; the 1868 treaty that created the Great Sioux Reservation; the military expeditions into the Black Hills **Paha Sapa** in 1874 and 1875 and the discovery of gold; the subsequent influx of miners into the (Black) Hills **Paha Sapa**; the government order for the Lakotas to return to their agencies before January 31, 1876, or to be considered hostile; Reynolds' attack on a Sioux and (Northern) Cheyenne [note: the Cheyenne languages are of the Algonquian family, and so are unrelated to the Sioux] camp on March 17, 1876; Miles' attack on American Horse's village at Slim Buttes, September 9, 1876; the Black Hills Agreement in September, 1876; the Battle of Wolf Mountains, January 8, 1877, a fight with Miles' troops; the surrender of Crazy Horse at Fort Robinson in May, 1877 and his death there on September 5 of that year; the destruction of the buffalo (bison) herds in the early 1880s; the corruption at the Lakota agencies that led to hunger and despair; the 1889 Agreement by

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which the Lakotas surrendered a large part of their reservation and were reduced to five smaller ones; the origin of the Ghost Dance among the Paiutes [the Paiutes, who speak languages of the Uto-Aztecan family, are unrelated to the Sioux, who, of course, speak languages of the Siouan family]; the death of Sitting

Bull, December 31, 1890; and the description of the dead at Wounded Knee, December 31, 1890. This historical background bolstered Balck Elk's narrative and transformed it from Balck Elk's story to the story of the Lakotas as a people, with Black Elk as their representative and spokesman.

Neihardt's additions that provide cultural context were more modest. The most substantive of them is the account of the Sun Dance. Both Black Elk and Standing Bear told Neihardt about the pranks boys played on adults during the Sun Dance, but they did not describe the ceremony itself. Neihardt also added a discussion of the relationship between vision experience, public performance of the vision, and use of powers granted in the vision to cure the sick, and added some explanatory comments about the *heyoka* and elk ceremonies.

Less easy to specify is the manner in which Neihardt shaped the narrative. While being faithful to the transcript of what Black Elk said, the story is told, as the revised title page reads, "through John G. Neihardt". By his choice of words and by the selection of material he decided to omit, Neihardt necessarily interpreted Black Elk's meanings, both literal and emotional. To the extent practical, I have added annotations to draw attention to those choices, which reveal a writer grappling with his art.

Neihardt justifies his role along two grounds. One is empathy. Their common vision experience leads Neihardt to read into Black Elk's experience meanings and emotions similar to his own. He transforms Balck Elk's "other world" into his own concept of the "outer world", doing so apparently naturally, perhaps unconsciously. The other factor is the language barrier. Speaking through his son Benjamin as translator, the meaning of what Black Elk said was sometimes obscure. It was necessary for Neihardt to hone expression and explicate meaning. By choosing to write in the first person, he took on himself the burden of speaking for and as Black Elk - literally taking over the burden of his vision - creating a literary Black Elk that, as Neihardt later expressed it

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to McCluskey, was "a work of art with two collaborators."

Black Elk as a literary character created by Neihardt may be characterized as humble, dedicated to a higher purpose in life, a sage whose wisdom is universal, transcending time and cultures; a primitive thinker, outside the systems of Western knowledge and

(at least partly) Christian theology; a man who quietly suffered outrage at the mistreatment of (Amer)Indians and whose life epitomized the pathos of a (then) dying people [note: whatever their current problems, for some time the Lakota have most certainly not been a "dying" people, though in the time of Black Elk it no doubt appeared so]. In combination with the exoticism of Lakota culture and the sense of inevitable doom in the face of modern civilization, the narrative appeals in a fundamentally human sense, even to readers with no specific interest in learning about American Indians.

Neihardt underscores Black Elk's humility from the very start of the book: "what is one man that he should make much of his winters? As for his famed powers as a medicine man, he takes no personal credit: "it was not I who cured. It was the power from the outer world."

That mankind has a higher purpose in life is fundamental to the persona of Black Elk: "the thoughts of men ... should rise high as eagles do". Yet all one can do is strive for understanding, which is always beyond human grasp. Neihardt has Black Elk say, speaking of the symbolism of the (tobacco) pipe: "because it means all this, and more than any man can understand, the pipe is holy". No matter how much a person learns about the Holy,, as in vision experiences, we are only human and fall short of our potential: "It is hard to follow one great vision in this world of darkness and os many changing shadows. Among those shadows men get lost." None of these sentiments are expressed in the transcript; they are authored by Neihardt, expressing in words what he felt Black Elk's meanings to be.

The universality of Black Elk's teachings gives them their special literary significance. The literary Black Elk wishes to share his vision of the universe: "It is the story of all life that is holy and is good to tell, and of us two-leggeds sharing it with the four-leggeds and the wings of the air and all green things, for these are children of one mother and their father is one Spirit". What was true in Black Elk's

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youth, his great vision experience, must still be true, no matter how drastically life has changed: "if the vision was true and mighty, as I know, it is true and mighty yet; for such things are of the spirit, and it is in the darkness of their eyes that men get lost". The vision relates not just to the Lakotas, but has universal meaning: "And I saw that the sacred hoop of my people was one of many hoops that made one circle, wide as daylight and as starlight, and in the center grew one

mighty flowering tree to shelter all the children of one mother and one father. And I saw that it was holy".

While he was with Black Elk and the other Lakota elders, as Neihardt wrote shortly after his visit, he "was able to lose himself in the consciousness of those essentially primitive men". Fundamental truths become obvious: "Is not the sky a father and the earth a mother, and are not all living things with feet or wings or roots their children?" These truths are arrived at without outside influence, even though Black Elk (the literary figure) may have heard bits of the white men's knowledge: "the Power of the World always works in circles, ... This knowledge came to us from the outer world with our religion. ... The sky is round, and I have heard that the earth is round like a ball, and so are all the stars. Neihardt uses "Power of the World", "the powers that are One Power", and "Spirit of the World", and "Spirit", as alternate translations for Black Elk's "Great Spirit", the literal translation of the Lakota designation *Wakhan Thanka* (or "*Wakan Tonka*"), a subtle change that lends a universal sense.

Even though the literary Black Elk is devoted to harmony with all creatures and all peoples, he nonetheless expresses his bitterness toward the whites for taking the Lakotas' lands and destroying their way of life. In the Dog Vision, when the spirit riders kill the dog, Black Elk comments: "I saw that the dogs' heads had changed to the heads of *Wasichus* (white men). This personification of the enemy as white men is not found in the transcript, but neihardt uses it to transform the vision into a powerful symbol of the Lakotas' disdain for the whites. After the death of Crazy Horse, Black Elk says, "now they were going to pen us up in little islands and make us like *Wasichus*. Then came the (almost total) extermination of the buffalo (bison): "That fall [1883], they say, the last

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of the (great) bison herds was slaughtered by the **Wasichus**. I can remember when the bison were so many that they could not be counted, but more and more *Wasichus* came to kill them until there were only heaps of bones scattered where they used to be. The **Wasichus** did not kill them to eat; they killed them for the metal that makes men crazy (gold)". Confined to the reservations: "Hunger was among us often now, for much of what the Great Father in Washington sent us must have been stolen by *Wasichus* who were crazy to get money. There were many lies, but we could not eat them." Greed was intrinsic to the white man's character. Speaking of

his experiences with Buffalo Bill (Cody) Show in the East and in Europe, the literary Black Elk observes, "I could see that the Wasichus did not care for each other the way our people did before the nation's hoop was broken". Commenting on the 1889 Agreement, Black Elk says: "So the flood of Wasichus, dirty with bad deeds, gnawed away half of the island that was left to us." This critique of white civilization is a major theme in the book, but it is Neihardt's critique, written on Black Elk's behalf.

The theme of despair and the (apparent) death of the Lakota people permeates the narrative. Black Elk's pathos epitomizes that of his people: "And now when I look about me upon my people in despair, I feel like crying and I wish and wish my vision could have been given to a man more worthy. I wonder why it came to me, a pitiful old man who can do nothing. ... It was the nation that was dying, and the vision was for the nation; but I have done nothing with it.". Through repetition, Neihardt drives this theme home. The literary Black Elk says: "The people were in despair. They seemed heavy to me, heavy and dark; so heavy that it seemed they could not be lifted; so dark that they could not be made to see any more". Five times in the book Black Elk characterizes himself as a "pitiful old man", and Neihardt heightens the sense by giving the impression of Black Elk's great age: "now that I can see it all as from a lonely hilltop"; "When I look back now from this high hill of my old age". This is an effective literary device, but Black Elk was only sixty-seven years old and not once in the transcripts does he refer to himself as a pitiful old man. Yet an aged narrator is better able to represent in his person the symbols of the dying nation (so it appeared at the

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time), the tree that withered and died, the hoop of the people that was broken and scattered.

Another perspective on Neihardt's portrayal of Black Elk is provided by focusing on the material he omitted in the process of creating Black Elk Speaks. Comparison of the interview transcript, published in The Sixth Grandfather, with the book reveals some of Neihardt's decisions as to which material to cut out. Cuts were necessary, given the length of the transcript and the necessity for Neihardt to add material on essential events and topics that Black Elk had failed to discuss. Many of the cuts eliminated detail that, while historically and ethnographically important, cluttered

the narrative and made it harder to read. But having characterized Black Elk in the preface of the book as "a saint in the deeper meaning of that term, as signifying a rare form of genius", some of the cuts seem motivated by the desire to make Black Elk both empathetic and believable.

In relating Black Elk's great vision, for example, Neihardt omitted the parts directly relating to warfare and emphasized, instead, those relating to healing. He made no mention of the episode in which Black Elk and his companions attack a being in the midst of flames that transforms into a dog after Black Elk kills it. Black Elk commented to Neihardt, "This meant that when you go to war you should kill your enemy like a dog". Neihardt also omitted the entire episode in the vision in which he saw warfare personified as a horned man, painted black, with lightning flashing all over his body as he moved. The man transformed into another sacred herb that Black Elk was given, the soldier weed of destruction, which had the power to kill indiscriminately. This episode occurs in the fourth ascent of the vision, when Black Elk returns from the center of the world to the Six Grandfathers. He meets four riders on different colored horses (bay, gray, sorrel, and white), each wearing a headdress of living eagles and other animals; the sorrel rider carries a lance [something more typical of the Comanches and Kiowas than of the Lakota] that is a living serpent. Even though this is one of the most powerful visual images in the vision, Neihardt omits it. The riders represent a time in the fourth ascent when there would be warfare throughout the world (something fulfilled in the two world wars). In the vision, Black Elk was told that he would be thirty-seven years old and that by

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using the soldier weed he would defend his people, even though it would kill many men, women, and children. Black Elk told Neihardt that he refused to cause such destruction and said that when he reached that age, he gave up his vision and joined the Catholic Church.

Neihardt includes in the book the story of Black Elk's first cure as a medicine man, a remarkable account that reveals the psychological process by which he moved from the abstraction of the vision to the ritual acts of curing, convincing himself, as well as others, that he had the power to heal. However, Neihardt omits a central part of Black Elk's system of shamanic curing. When, in his great vision, he returns to the Six Grandfathers, the Grandfather of the North gives him a cup of water to

drink in which there is a tiny man, painted blue, holding a bow and arrow. When Black Elk drank the water,, as his grandfather instructed him, he drank down the man as well, transformed into a fish that represented the healing power of the water. During his first cure, Black Ellk felt the blue man moving in his chest, then felt him in his mouth as he drew through the patient's body the healing power of the North wind removing the sickness. Black Elk commented that whenever he was curing a patient, "I could actually make this little blue man come out and swim in the cup I used". An in-dwelling spirit being is an element of shamanism found widely throughout North America, as is the concept of illness caused by an intrusive object, and curing it by sucking it out. Clearly, the blue man was central to Black Elk's healing rituals. Doubtless Neihardt sensed that including this aspect of Black Elk's story in the book would test the reader's credulousness and render the literary Black Elk unbelievable.

In the same vei, not wanting Black Elk to seem gullible or simply superstitious, Neihardt in some instances softens Black Elk's accounts of seemingly miraculous events. For example, in describing the pictographs seen high on Deer Rocks that the Indians believe foretold Custer's defeat

[Too bad that a Confederate cavalryman with a sabre slash or pistol shot or a Confederate sharpshooter with a well aimed rilfe bullet did not save the Lakotas the job of killing that murdering,

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blue-bellied Yankee criminal Custer! As one Confederate soldier described Custer: "blue slime belly". In a review of the film "Little Big Man", someone said 'Gneral Custer is portrayed as pure pig on the prairie'; this is a gross insult to pigs],

Neihardt writes: "There was a picture on it then, of many soldiers hanging head downward; and the people said it was there before the rubbing out of Long Hair (Custer): I do not know; but it was there then, and it did not seem that anybody could get up that high to make a picture". In comparison, the transcript reveals no shade of doubt about the picture's mysterious origin:

"Next we stopped at a sacred place where a big rock bluff was. The Indians claim that before the Custer fight the whole thing was pictured on it. No man could possibly get up to where the picture is." Similarly, when Black Elk returns to the preparation *tipi* after the Horse Dance, Neihardt has him say: "we saw the prints of tiny pony hoofs as though the spirit horses had been dancing while we danced". The transcript, however, is definitive as to the source of the hoof prints: "On the fresh dirt we could see small horse tracks all over the *tipi* floor. The spirit horses had been dancing around the circle of the *tipi*".

Another example involves an omission. In fall 1875, as Neihardt has Black Elk tell it: "I went up into the [Black] Hills [*Paha Sapa*] alone and sat a long while under a tree. I thought maybe my vision would come back and tell me how I could save that country for my people, but I could not see anything clear". In fact, according to the transcript, Black Elk did experience a vision on this occasion: "I went up into the Black Hills alone and had another vision under a tree [recalls Buddha under the *Bodhi* tree] and found out that the duty I was to do was to come to me and that I would probably save the Black Hills. It looked as though it were impossible, but I was anxious to perform my duty on earth". Perhaps because this vision inevitably led back to the herb of destruction in the great vision, Neihardt chose to omit it.

One final instance is worth noting. Early in 1877, just before his people go to Fort Robinson to surrender, Neihardt's literary Black Elk comments: "I

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thought and thought about my vision, and it made me very sad; for I wondered if maybe It was only a queer dream after all". The corresponding passage in the transcript seems to relate to the fall of 1877, after the killing of Crazy Horse, when his people left the agency and headed north: "I recalled my vision now and then and wondered when my duty was to come." Nowhere in the transcript does Black Elk express any doubt about the significance of his great vision. And whereas Black Elk Speaks leaves the nature of Black Elk's "duty" unspecified, it seems clear from the transcript that Black Elk understood his duty to be saving the Black Hills.

In writing Black Elk's story Neihardt created some powerful images and crafted many quotable sentences. Some are well-crafted versions of old stereotypes: "It [the land] was ours already when the Wasichus made the

treaty with Red Cloud, that said it would be ours as long as grass should grow and water flow"; "only crazy or very foolish men would sell their Mother Earth."; "could we believe anything the Wasichus ever said to us? They spoke with forked tongues" [like a snake]. Others are lyrical and deeply evocative. For example, regarding Crazy Horse: "It does not matter where his body lies, for it is grass; but where his spirit is, it will be good to be". Regarding the *heyoka*: "You have noticed that the truth comes into this world with two faces. One is sad with suffering, and the other laughs; but it is the same face, laughing or weeping". The importance of the nation's unity: "The life of the people was in the hoop, and what are many little lives if the life of those lives be gone?" The inexorable greed of the whites for Lakota land: "So the flood of Wasichus, dirty with bad deeds, gnawed away half of the island that was left to us." The victims of Wounded Kne: "The snow drifted deep in the crooked gulch, and it was one long grave of butchered women and children and babies, who had never done any harm and were only trying to run away".

After studying the transcript of the interviews, it is not clear that any of these images are based on words Black Elk spoke; they are Neihardt's. But Neihardt did not invent them alone, for his narrative flowed from the experience of listening to Black Elk and absorbing, in his own way, what Black Elk had to teach him. So, after my attempt to disentangle their voices, I am led back to Vine Deloria's conclusion

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concerning Black Elk Speaks: "that it speaks to us with simple and compelling language about an aspect of human experience and encourages us to emphasize the best that dwells within us is sufficient. Black Elk and John Neihardt would probably nod affirmatively to that statement and continue their conversation. It is good. It is enough".

The historical Black Elk lived on for two more decades after first meeting John Neihardt. During that time Neihardt visited him for the entire summer of 1934, while he finished writing The Song of the Messiah, for a week in 1944 (during which he recorded a second set of interviews, focused on Lakota history and culture), and for brief periods in 1945 and 1946. During those years that saw the Great Depression, the Dust Bowl, and World War II, Pine Ridge became progressively less isolated from the rest of the country and the Oglalas became progressively more involved in the world outside the reservation, working as migrant farm laborers, moving to

nearby cities for employment, volunteering for the army, or doing war-related work. For at least a decade beginning in 1934, Black Elk returned to the work he had done in his youth with Buffalo Bill and organized an Indian show in the Black Hills, designed to teach tourists about historical Lakota culture. The pageant took place throughout the summers at the Duhamel's Crystal Caverns attraction near Rapid City and provided the opportunity to live in tipis in the coolness of the Hills and make money as well. Unlike Wild West shows, which glorified Indian warfare, Black Elk's pageant - a series of vignettes - focused primarily on traditional sacred rituals, including the Sun Dance.

Then, in 1947, Joseph Epes Brown sought out Black Elk and took on the task of writing Black Elk's last book, which Brown characterized as a "history" of the sacred pipe. While Black Elk does speak of the origin of the pipe as the gift of White Buffalo Cow Woman, The Sacred Pipe is devoted to detailed accounts of what Black Elk considered to be the seven fundamental rituals of traditional Lakota religion. Brown experienced the same sense of transcendent mystery in meeting Black Elk as had Neihardt. Apparently, Black Elk was anxious for someone to help him preserve an account of Lakota sacred rituals in writing. Perhaps this was the "great work" that Black Elk told Neihardt

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in a letter he wished to accomplish "before we are both laid in the ground".

Because his relationship with Black Elk was so meaningful to him, Brown was reluctant to talk about it freely. I clearly recall my sense of puzzlement, overcome by embarrassment, when my questions to him about his work with Black Elk were met with silence. Recently, however, Brown's daughter, Marina Brown Weatherly, his widow, Elenita Brown, and Michael O. Fitzgerald, who was once Brown's teaching assistant and is a student of Plains Indian religions, published extracts from a series of letters that Brown wrote while working with Black Elk. They are invaluable for the light they shed on their collaboration. According to Brown, Black Elk was not only engaged in making a record of sacred ceremonies, but was doing so in order to insure that they would continue into the future. He wished to enlist the other old Lakota men in establishing "the Order of the Pipe", a revitalized Lakota religion. In this, he was encouraged by a Catholic priest, Father Gall,

[What a coincidence! "Gall" is the name of a war chief of the Hunkpapa branch of the Lakota, who played a prominent role in the Battle of the Little Big Horn, in which the loathesome General Custer was killed, and is mentioned a number of times in Black Elk Speaks. Chief Gall's name is remembered in the words of the popular song made famous by Johnny Cash, "The General (Custer) He Don't Ride Well Anymore". Had Fr. Gall been a French-Canadian or a **Meti**, it is possible that there may have been some sort of connection between Fr. Gall and The Hunkpapa Lakota war chief, perhaps even a distant blood relation. However, as Fr. Gall was Belgian, there would seem to be no possible connection between him and the Lakota war chief of the same name. So, we have one of

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those real-life coincidences which are beyond the reach of novelists.],

an ordained Trappist monk in Belgium who was clearly ahead of his time in his attitude toward American) Indian religion. Brown wrote, "Black Elk says that he is sorry that his present action towards reviving Lakota spiritual traditions shall anger the priests [the Jesuits at Holy Rosary Mission], but that their anger is proof of their ignorance and that in any case *Wakan Tonka* is happy, for He knows that it is His Will that Black Elk does this work."

Brown's material supports the hypothesis that after Neihardt's initial visits, Black Elk came to consider comparatively the fundamental truths of Lakota tradition in relation to those of Catholicism. That this should be so is not surprising. The gradual opening of the reservations to influences from the wider society necessarily cast (American) and white cultures in a different light. What had seemed an unquestionable

hierarchical relationship, with Euroamerican civilization eclipsing native cultures, began to appear comparatively. Each had its strengths, in a practical sense, for those who would survive. In middle age, Black Elk had accommodated to the white man's way. He found it congenial during his trip with the Wild West shows, and after the failure of the Ghost Dance visions to protect the people at Wounded Knee, there seemed no alternative. He embraced Catholicism enthusiastically, serving as missionary to other reservations and as catechist in his own community. His role in the Church provided him with social standing and modest economic reward. But when Neihardt reawakened in him the vivid reality of his visions and the realization that this white man had been led to him to learn about the Lakota path to the other world, the experience did not prompt him to reject the Catholic religion, but to reaffirm his traditional religion. Just as Black Elk regretted his action after the Wounded Knee Battle when he relied solely on his Ghost Dance vision and put aside the visions of his youth, he may have regretted putting aside Lakota belief and relying solely on Catholicism in middle age. None of the three were incompatible; all paths lead to the same transcendent truth.

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This conclusion, simple as it is, will not end the debate over Black Elk's religious life or the interpretation of Black Elk Speaks. Proponents of every interpretation of what Black Elk said or meant are passionate in defense of their perspective. I do not consider them all of equal merit, but I consider the passion of the debate to be a clear reflection of the power that Black Elk, primarily through Neihardt's portrayal of him in Black Elk Speaks, has to inspire readers to think about and even experience a kind of transcendence sorely lacking in our workaday lives. We need from time to time to be shaken out of our certainties and be given glimpses of alternate realities. As the literary Black Elk says, in Neihardt's words, speaking of when he was a boy, just after experiencing his great vision: "when the part of me that talks would try to make words for the meaning, would be like fog and get away from me. ... It was as I grow older that the meanings came clearer and clearer out of the pictures and the words, and even now I know that more was shown to me than I can tell". Ev'n now, after multiple efforts over many years to analyze Neihardt's work critically, I return to Black Elk Speaks with appreciation and a sense of awe as fresh as that I

experienced on my first reading. I trust that other readers, too, will find that the experience of following the processes of Neihardt's creativity through the annotations in this edition a dimension of understanding and enjoyment to reading this classic book."(221)

Recall the words of the French Catholic missionary concerning the northern Cheyenne, and the fact that the Russian Orthodox missionaries in Alaska made exactly the same observation concerning the indigenous peoples of Alaska, both *Inuits* or Eskimos and Amerindians, especially the **Tlingit**, as we have noted above.(222)

Also recall the Montoya family mentioned in the previous chapter, who, though for many generations had been devout

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Catholics, yet they retained something of the pre-Spanish religion of the Teras.

We have spoken, and below will speak again of Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha, an Amerindian of the Mohawk tribe of the Five Nations of the Iroquois, converted to Catholicism by French Jesuits, hailed a a great unitive mystic, worthy of her namesake, Ste. Catherine of Siena.

Below are some citations from The Sacred Pipe by Joseph Epes Brown which are of special interest, an interest which goes far beyond the merely "anthropological".

"Wakan Tanka as Grandfather is the Great Spirit of manifestation, unqualified, unlimited, identical to the Christian Godhead [in more precise terms, of the Godhead of the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Christian mystics as well as the Muslim Sufis], or to the Hindu **Brahma-Nirguna**. **Wakan Tanka** as Father is the Great Spirit

considered in relation to His manifestation, either as Creator, Preserver or destroyer [in Sanskrit, **Brahman** = the Creator, **Vishnu** = the Nurturer or Preserver, **Shiva** = the Destroyer; I must confess, this is, of necessity, somewhat oversimplified], identical to the Christian God, or to the Hindu **Brahma-Saguna**.(223)

"As in the distinction made within **Wakan Tanka** between Grandfather and Father, so the earth is considered under two aspects, that of Mother and Grandmother. The former is the earth considered as the producer of all growing forms, in act; whereas Grandmother refers to the ground or substance of all growing things - potentiality. This distinction is the same as that made by medieval Christian Scholastics [sometimes known as "The Medieval Latin Schoolmen"] between **natura naturans** and **natura naturata**."(224)

"Since **Wanbli Galeshka** (the spotted Eagle) flies the highest of all created creatures and sees
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everything, he is regarded as **Wakan Tanka** under certain aspects. He is a solar bird, His feathers being regarded as rays of the sun [hence the symbol of the "Feathered Sun" so beloved of Frithjof Schuon], and when one is carried or worn by the Indian it represents, or rather is, the "Real Presence". In wearing the eagle-feathered "war bonnet", the wearer actually becomes the eagle, which is to say that he identifies himself, his real Self, with **Wakan Tanka**.

The spotted eagle corresponds exactly, in the Hindu tradition, to the **Buddhi**, which is the Intellect, or the formless and transcendent principle of all manifestation; further the **Buddhi** is often expressed as being a ray directly emanating from the **Atman**, the spiritual sun.

From this it should be clear what is really being expressed in the often misunderstood Ghost Dance song: **Wanbli galeshka wana ni he who e**, "The Spotted Eagle is coming to carry me away."(225)

"O Grandfather **Wakan Tanka**, You are above everything! It is You who has placed a sacred rock upon the earth, which is now at the centre of our hoop. You have given to us also the fire; and there at the place where the sun goes down, You have given power to the **Wakinyan Tanka** who controls the waters. ... You have placed a winged One at the place where the sun comes up, who gives us wisdom; and You have also placed a winged

One at the place towards which we always face; He is the source of life, and He leads us on the sacred path. All these powers are your power, and they are really one.

...
"...The great Thunderbird of the west, **Wakinyan Tanka**, is one of the most important and profound aspects of Siouan religion. The Indian describes him as living "in a lodge on the top of a mountain at the edge of the world where the sun goes down. He is many, but they are only as One; He is shapeless, but He has wings with four joints each; He has no feet, yet He has huge talons; he has no head, yet has a huge beak with rows of teeth in it like the teeth of a wolf; His voice is the thunder clap and rolling thunder is caused by the beating of His wings on the clouds; He has an eye, and its glance is lightning. In a great cedar tree beside His lodge He has His nest made of dry bones, and in it is an enormous egg from which His young continually issue. He devours His young and they each become one of

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His many selves. He flies through all the domain of the sky, hidden in a robe of clouds. ... His functions are to cleanse the world from filth and to fight the Monsters who defile the Waters. His symbol is a zigzag red line forked at each end." (J.R. Walker, The Sun Dance and other Ceremonies of the Oglala Division of the Teton Dakota [Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History, XVI, Part II, New York, 1917].)

"This Thunderbird is really **Wakan Tanka** as the giver of Revelation (symbolized by the lightning); He is the same as the great one-eyed bird, **Garuda**, of the Hindu tradition, [or the Iranian **Simurgh**], or the Chinese Dragon (the **Logos**), who rides on the clouds of the storm, and whose voice is the thunder. As giver of Revelation he is identical in function to the Archangel Gabriel of Judaism and Christianity, known as **Jibril** in Islam." (226)

Note that the thunderbird is known among many Amerindian peoples of North America, including some, such as the Apache, who are unrelated to the Lakota and apparently had no connection with them whatever. If the image of the thunderbird among other

Amerindians is the same or similar to that among the Lakota, I do not know, and do not wish to express an opinion on the subject.

"All that is left of the water is now poured upon the rocks, which are still very hot, and as the steam rises and penetrates everything, we sing or chant a sacred song. Soon the leader of the *Inipi* says: "The helper will soon open the door for the last time, and when it is open we shall see the Light. For it is the wish of **Wakan Tanka** that the Light enters into the darkness, that we may see not only with our two eyes, but with the one eye which is of the heart (**Chante Ishta**), and with which we see and know all that is true and good. We give thanks to the helper; may his generations be blessed! It is good! It is finished! **Hetchetu alo!**"

As the door of the lodge is opened, all the men cry: "*Hi ho! Hi ho!* Thanks!, and the men are all happy,

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for they have come forth from the darkness and are now living in the Light. ...

...Entering into the light after being in the darkness of the purification lodge represents liberation from the universe, the cosmos, or microcosmically the liberation from the ego; both ego and world are "dark" since they have only a relative or illusory reality, for ultimately there is no reality other than **Wakan Tanka**, who is here represented by the light of day, or by the space around the lodge."(227)

"You have all heard of our great chief and priest [remember, at the time of his long interviews with Joseph Epes Brown, Black Elk was a Catholic, and had been so for some years] Crazy Horse (**Tasunke Witko**), but perhaps you did not know that he received most of his great power through the "lamenting" which he did many times a year, and even in winter when it is very cold and very difficult. He received visions of the Rock, the Shadow, the Badger, a prancing horse (from which he received his name), the Day, and also of *Wanbli Galeshka*, the Spotted Eagle, and from each of these he received much power and holiness. ...

...The Indian actually identifies himself with, or becomes, the quality or principle of the being or thing which comes to him in a vision, whether it be a beast, a bird, one of the elements, or really any aspect of creation. In order that this "power" may never leave

him, he always carries with him some material form representing the animal or object from which he has received his "power". These objects have often been incorrectly called **fetishes**, whereas they actually correspond more precisely to what the Christian calls guardian angels, since for the Indian, the animals and birds, and all things are the "reflections" - in a material form - of the Divine Principles. The Indian is only attached to the form for the sake of the principle which is contained within the form."(228)

"As the men sing, and as the hot steam rises, the "lamerter" cries, for he is humbling himself, remembering his nothingness in the presence of **Wakan Tanka**. ...

...This humiliation in which the Indian makes himself "lower than even the smallest ant" as Black Elk once expressed it, is the same attitude as that which is Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Christianity is
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called "spiritual poverty"; this poverty is the **faqr** of the Islamic tradition or the **balya** of Hinduism and is the condition of those who realize that in relation to the Divine Principle their own individuality is as nothing."(229)

"It means that he should always remember You, O **Wakan Tanka**, as he walks the sacred path of life; and he must be attentive to all the signs that You have given to us. If he does this always, he will become wise and a leader of his people. O **Wakan Tanka**, help us all to be always attentive! ...

...This message - "Be attentive!"- well expresses a spirit which is central to the Indian peoples; it implies that in every act, in every thing, and in every instant, the Great Spirit is present, and that one should be continually and intensely "attentive" to this Divine Presence.

This presence of **Wakan Tanka**, and one's consciousness of it, is that which the Christian (mystic) saints have termed "living in the moment", the "eternal now" or what in the Islamic Tradition is called the **Wagt**. In Lakota this presence is called **Taku Skanskan**, or simply **Skan** in the sacred language of the holy men."(230)

Joseph Epes Brown, a student of comparative religion, at times appears not to have been a great student of mysticism. In

mystical terminology, the "eternal now" means that the mystic has transcended time and space, all spatio-temporal categories, so that there is no past nor future. It is sometimes forgotten that "eternal" does not mean an extremely long period of time, but rather "beyond time" or "outside time".

"In this new rite which I have just received, one of the standing peoples has been chosen to be at our centre; he is the **wagachun** (the rustling tree, or cottonwood); he will be our centre and also the psople, for the tree represents the way of the people. Does it not stretch from the earth to heaven there? This new way of sending our voices to **Wakan Tanka** will be very
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powerful; its use will spread, and, at this time of year, every year, many people will pray to the Great Soirit." ...

...In the Atharva Veda Samhita of the Hindu scriptures, we find a description of the significance³ of their (the ancient Aryans, or the Vedic Hindus) World Tree, which is quite identical to the symbolism of the tree for the Lakota: "The world Tree in which the trunk, which is also the sun pillar, sacrificial post, and axis *mundi*, rising from the altar at the navel of the earth, penetrates the world door and branches out above the roof of the world; as the 'non-existent (unmanifested) branch that yonder kindreds know as the Supernal'." (Translated by A. K. Coomaraswamy, Svayamatrna: Janua Coeli", Zalmoxis.)

For a full explanation of the symbolism of the tree, see Rene Guenon, Le Symbolisme de la Croix, Les Editions Vega, (Paris, 1931); especially Chapter IX, "L'Arbre du Milieu".(231)

"I think it would be good to explain to you here why we consider the cottonwood tree to be so very sacred. I might mention first, that long ago it was the cottonwood who taught us how to make our tipis, for the leaf of that tree is an exact pattern of the tipi, and this we learned when some of our old men were watching little children making play houses from these leaves. This too is a good example of how much grown men may learn from very little children, for the hearts of little children are pure, and, therefore, the Great Spirit may show to them many things which older people

miss. Another reason why we choose the cottonwood tree to be at the center of our lodge is that the Great Spirit has shown to us that, if you cut an upper limb of this tree crosswise, there you will see in the grain a perfect five pointed star, which, to us, represents the presence of the Great Spirit, Also perhaps you have noticed that even in the very lightest breeze you can hear the voice of the cottonwood tree; this we understand is its prayer to the Great Spirit, for not only men, but all things and all beings pray to Him continually in differing ways.

The chiefs then did a little victory dance there around the tree, singing their chief's songs, and as they sang and danced they selected the man who was to have the honor of counting coup on the tree; he must always be a man of good character, who has shown

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himself brave and self-sacrificing on the warpath. Three other men were also chosen by the chiefs, and then each of these four men stood at one of the four sides of the tree - the leader at the west. This leader then told of his great deeds in war, and when he had finished the men cheered and the women gave the tremulo. The brave man then motioned with his axe three times towards the tree, and the fourth time he struck it. Then the other three men in turn told of their exploits in war, and when they finished they also struck the tree in the same manner, and at each blow all the people shouted "hi! hey!" When the tree was nearly ready to fall, the chiefs went around and selected a person with a quiet and holy nature, and this person gave the last blow to the tree; as it fell there was much cheering, and all the women gave the tremulo. Great care was taken that the tree did not touch the ground when it fell, and no one was permitted to step over it.

The tree was then carried by six men towards the camp, but before they reached camp they stopped four times, and after the last stop they all howled like coyotes - as do the warriors when returning from the war path; then they all charged into camp and placed the sacred tree up upon poles - for it must not touch the ground - and pointed its base towards the hole which had already been prepared, and its tip faced towards the west. The lodge around the tree had not yet been set up, but all the poles had been prepared, and all the equipment for constructing the *Inipi* had been gathered.

The chief priest, Kablaya, and all those who were to take part in the dance, then went into a large tipi where they were to prepare themselves and receive

instructions. The lodge was shut up very tightly, and leaves were even placed all around the base.

Kablaya, who was seated at the west, then scraped a bare place on the ground in front of him, and here a coal was placed; as Kablaya burned sweet grass upon the coal, he said: "We burn this sacred herb for *Wakan Tanka*, so that all the two-legged and winged peoples of the universe will be relatives and close to each other. Through this there shall be much happiness. ...

...An interesting parallel to this attitude towards trees is found in an Islamic (Sufi) source: "[Holy] men dance and wheel on the [spiritual] battlefield: From within them musicians strike the

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tambourine: at their ecstasy the seas burst into foam. You see it not, but for *their* ears the leaves too on the boughs are clapping hands. ... one must have the spiritual ear, not the ear of the body." (Jalaluddin Rumi, *The Mathnawi*, R.A. Nicholson translation, 8 volumes, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England, 1926, III 9.)(232)

Being familiar with the cottonwood tree, I can understand how the Lakota came to consider it to be sacred. The leaves of the cottonwood tree do indeed rustle even in the slightest breeze, and it is certainly easy to imagine the rustling leaves of the cottonwood tree as clapping hands.

Frithjof Schuon was fascinated by the religiosity of the Lakotas, making much use of the "Feathered Sun", one of their symbols. Certainly this is a very high recommendation indeed.

Certainly Catholicism was not completely strange to the Lakotas of Black Elk's time. One need only recall their long association with the French, which began during the "walking times" in Minnesota, and with that handsome, rugged, devoutly Catholic people of western Canada known as **Metis**, i.e., "Mix

Bloods", descendants of French **voyageur** fathers and Amerindian - largely Plains Cree - mothers.

At this point I cannot resist quoting from a very beautiful folk song, of which there are several versions, some in the original Canadian French, some in English, some mixed:

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La vieux Missouri, c'est une gran riviere
Away, you rollin' river
Indians camp along her border
Aller, il faut de aller
Pour la grande Missouri.

Le voyageur aimai a une fille indien
Away, you rollin' river
With trade goods his pirogue was laden
Aller, il faut de aller
Pour la grande Missouri.

Oh Shenandoah, I'm bound to leave you
Away you rollin' river
Oh Shenandoah, I'll not deceive you
Aller, il faut de aller
Pour la grande Missouri.

Oh Shenandoah, I love your daughter
Away you rollin' river
I'll take her 'cross the rollin' water
Aller, il faut de aller
Pour la grande Missouri.

They said that I was bound to fail her
Away you rollin' river
Pouquois je suis un errant voyageur
Aller, il faut de aller
Pour la grande Missouri.

Many say, "the tune is very beautiful, but it sounds so lonely".

The life of the **voyageur** continued until surprisingly recent times, long after the great age of the fur trade had passed into history. The last of the **voyageurs** all swore that there was no life so fine as that of a **voyageur**. Many may find this last to be incredible, thinking of the loneliness, and the lack of shelter from inclement weather. Then there are the biting insects, i.e., the **moustiques**, those large, gray northern mosquitoes that are

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capable "drilling" through almost any kind of cloth, the **mouche li piqueur** or **mouche vorace**, those biting flies that everyone believes carry a knife and whose bite draws blood, the **moucheron** or **midges**, in English often called "no-see-ums" because they are so tiny as to be almost invisible. How anything so tiny as a **moucheron** could bite so hard amazes me. As someone said, "if a **moucheron** were as large as a robin, it would be more dangerous than a shark". The small black bear is not dangerous, but the much larger grizzly bear is very dangerous indeed. As someone told me, "a silvertip grizzly is the meanest, most bad-tempered, most unreasonable creature that exists".

However, there was the feeling of being completely free, taking orders from no one. Then there was the splendor of the forest primeval, the pristine waters, the soaring hawks and eagles, the flights of wild geese, the cry of the loons at sunset, the mournful howling of the wolves at night. I will not bore the reader with fishing stories. Most people do not comprehend how

anyone could so love the life of a *voyageur*. I think maybe that I understand.

As Black Elk Speaks makes plain, Black Elk was very much a mystic. Now, the Catholic Church has a very rich mystical tradition. Since Black Elk's instructors in the Faith were Jesuits, the most learned of Catholic orders, and the Belgian Trappist Father Gall was very much a learned man, one may assume

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that Black Elk was aware of the mystical tradition of the Catholic Church, and that he was drawn to it, felt an affinity with it, as was obviously also the case with Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha, known as the *Lys des Agniers* or "Lily of the Mohawks", though she was a Mohawk rather than a Lakota, and therefore no ethnic kin and belonging to a culture radically different from that of Black Elk. Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha was converted to Catholicism by French Jesuits, and it was also Jesuits who were responsible for the conversion of Black Elk; therefore, it is very likely that Black Elk heard of Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha (though she had not yet been officially canonized as a sainte). Though Black Elk never became renowned as a unitive mystic, there is no doubt that he was, nevertheless, very much a mystic.

Though Lakota was obviously the language in which he felt most at home, Black Elk was not only a baptized Catholic, but was a catechist and a missionary. This would make it obvious that at some stage in his life he became literate in English, and very

likely also in French. As I know from personal experience, it is very possible to be literate in a language without being able to speak it fluently nor understand it well when spoken.

As we mentioned above, Black Elk was a "medicine man" (**pejuta wicasa**) as well as a holy man (**pejuta wakan**), known as a healer. As has been noted:

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"As Iza Buxhoeveden observed, it was not uncommon for Russian peasants to control bleeding in their injured livestock by 'exercising pressure on the smaller blood-vessels and thus stopping bleeding', but it was a secret gift that they 'jealously guarded'. Princess Barbara Delgorouky also recalled:

Among the peasants in Russia there were most remarkable healers. Some healed burns, some stopped blood and some cured toothaches - I know of exceptional cases of toothaches which were stopped not only for these particular minutes of pain, but for ever. And from a distance ... I knew and later was a great friend of a Russian lady, Madame de Daehn, who cured burns by touching the burned places and murmuring something."

In pre-Revolutionary Russia, many learned people believed that the gift of healing possessed by some Russian peasants was a manifestation of the connectivity between the natural and the spiritual worlds. This is something which dates back to the time of the Vedas.(233)

Says Michael Oleksa:

"Perhaps even more important to the early phase of the conversion of the Alaskan Native peoples was the survival among Russians of a cosmic dimension to the (Orthodox) Christian faith which was theologically

affirmed by the sixth and seventh ecumenical councils.(234)

Says Pierre Pascal:

"It is by no means easy to say to what extent this belief in the sanctity of the earth is present in the consciousness of the Russian people today. But some evidence on various related points has been collected since the beginning of the (20th) century. Have we here a case of paganism and 'double faith'? I believe rather that what we are dealing with here are certain authentically (Orthodox) Christian features of popular
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religion. The (Russian) peasant, together with Genesis and St. Paul, believes that the whole creation, which the earth represents, is affected by man's sin and called to renewal with him. His religion has hardly any conception of individual fall and individual salvation; it is more collective, cosmic, never forgetful - as the West has tended to be - of the great vision of the Apocalypse. It is on that level that it exists. It is powerfully aware of a mystical communion between man and nature, both alike works of a good God. Nature is always pure. Man, when he sins, separates himself from it and sees no more than what can be seen from the outside. But the pure man perceives its beauty, its oneness with God and his own oneness with it. The Pilgrim, once he has entered the state of perpetual prayer (*Hesychasm*), sees everything round him in a fresh and wonderful light - trees, plants, birds, earth, sunlight, everything proclaim's God's love for man, everything prays and sings the Glory of God. The Missionary, too, in his childlike purity, receives his earliest call to prayer from nature. Makar Ivanovich in *The Adolescent*, stands for popular religion at its highest levels, sees the mystery of God in all its fullness, an indescribable beauty, shining in every blade of grass, in the singing of the birds and in the stars. After the accusation of paganism should we now press the charge of pantheism? The Russian believer would be surprised if we did; for, if nature puts him in contact with God, it is not through any confusion with God, but because nature is His creation."(235)

Today in India the practitioners of **Ayurvedic** medicine, known as **vaisyas**, are mainly renowned for their unrivalled knowledge of

herbal medicine. There is a legend that, centuries ago, a man was told that in order to earn the title of vaisya, he had to find a plant which had no medicinal value. Days later, the man returned, weeping, saying that he was unable to find a plant which has no medicinal value. The Ayurvedic masters then said that he had learned his lessons well, and was awarded him the title of **vaisya**.

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However, the "metaphysics" of Ayurvedic medicine, as the name indicates, follows the tradition of the **Vedas**; i.e., the interconnectivity between the natural and spiritual worlds.

Said Russian peasant healers were devout Orthodox Christians - remember, this was still Holy Russia - and also were Slavs, in other words Indo-Europeans (all Slavs are Indo-Europeans, but not all Indo-Europeans are Slavs), so we may have here something which harks back to the Indo-European past.

Though some Protestant dimwits will immediately scream "pagan" on reading the above, thus indicating that they are crypto-Manichaeans, there is absolutely nothing in it which is Un-Christian; it is simply a manifestation of the fact that God is Immanent as well as Transcendent, and to deny this is indeed heresy.

So, we must learn the facts, think long and hard on them, meditate on them, preferably with that hymn or chant to **Wakan Tanka** which one hears at the end of the film "A Man Called Horse", and finally admit: "God works in mysterious ways".

As we have said above, the Amerindian peoples of North America are very diverse in all respects. What we say in this chapter and the previous chapter essentially concerns the Tewas of the Pueblo cultural group, the Tlingit, the Five Nations of the Iroquois and their cousins the Hurons, and, finally the Lakota

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Sioux. Certainly I do not presume to extend this to all the Amerindian peoples of North America, for reasons given above.

We now return to Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha, **Lys des Agniers** or "Lily of the Mohawks". Much of what was said above concerning Black Elk will help one to better understand Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha.

*While I was in Quebec I noted the devotion among both Amerindians and French-Canadians to a holy person with the strange name Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha (though at that time she had not yet been officially canonized as a saint), of whom we have spoken above, known as the **Lys des Agniers** or "Lily of the Mohawks" (Mohawk = French: **Agnier**; from Agnier came **Annie**, a slang term used by the French regular soldiers to refer to the Mohawks), **La sainte mystique du terre sauvage** i.e., "The mystic of the Wilderness" or **La sainte mystique du le foret vierge**", i.e., "The Holy Mystic of the Virgin Forest" or "The holy mystic of the forest primeval". She was portrayed as a beautiful Amerindian girl in typical Mohawk (Iroquoian: **Ga-ne-a-ga-o-no** or **Kanienkehaka**;*

French: **Agnier**) dress. Later I discovered that her full name in her native Iroquois, used among her fellow "Mission Iroquois", *id est*, those of the **Haudenosaunee** or the **Cinq Nations**, the Five Nations who had been converted by the French Jesuits is:

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Kaia'tano:ron Kateri Tekakwitha, *id est*,

Kaia'tano:ron = "Dear, Precious, Blessed"

Kateri = Baptismal name, **Kateri** being the Iroquois pronunciation of "Catherine"

Tekakwitha = "She who walks groping for her way".

She was called **Tekakwitha** because at the age of four she suffered an attack of smallpox which left her once beautiful face pockmarked and damaged her eyes so that she was partially blind.

Anything like a biography of Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha would lead us very far afield indeed, to long discussions concerning the ethnography of the Iroquois and the history of the French Empire in North America. We will give only a brief resume.

Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha was born in 1656 in the Mohawk (Iroquoian: **Ga-ne-a-ga-o-no** or **Kanienkehaka**; French: **Agnier**) village of **Ossernenon**, in the valley of the Mohawk river, the "Mohawk Vale" of song and story. Today the village of Auriesville, New York, sits on the site of Ossernenon. She was baptized on April 5, 1676 at the Mission St. Pierre by the Mohawk village whose name is variously spelled **Kahnawake**, **Caughnawaga** or **Gandouague**, also in the Mohawk Vale, by Jesuit Fr. Jacques de Lamberville. The variant spellings of the name said Mohawk village

are due to the difficulties of transcribing Iroquois names in the Roman alphabet. Today the village of Fonda, New York, occupies the site of Mission St. Pierre and the Mohawk (Iroquoian: **Ga-ne-a-ga-o-no** or **Kanienkehaka**; French: **Agnier**) village whose name is

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variously spelled **Kahnawake**, **Caughnawaga**, or **Gandouague**. Near Fonda, New York is a spring which the French Jesuits named *Fontaine Tekakwitha* and which today is still known as "Kateri's Spring". Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha was appropriately and prophetically, given the baptismal name "Catherine", pronounced Kateri in Iroquois, and the great unitive mystic Ste. Catherine of Siena as her patron sainte.

Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha was a unitive mystic, or, in Islamic terms, a Sufi. Hence, she is known as **La sainte mystique du le foret vierge** i.e., "The Holy Mystic of the virgin forest", or The Holy Mystic of the Forest Primeval; **La sainte mystique de la terre sauvage**, which, in either case, would be in English "The mystic of the wilderness". Recall the words of Henry W. Longfellow's long narrative poem of Canada in the French colonial period:

*This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and
the hemlocks,
Bearded with moss, and in garments green, indistinct in the
twilight,
Stand like Druids of old, with voices sad and prophetic,
Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on their
bosoms.
Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-voiced neighboring
ocean
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the
forest.*

*This is the forest primeval; but where are the hearts that
beneath it
Leaped like the roe, when he hears in the woodland the voice
of the huntsman? ...*

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*...Still stands the forest primeval; but under the shade of
its branches
Dwells another race, with other customs and language.*

*Kateri Tekakwitha followed in the footsteps of her namesake
and patron sainte, the great unitive mystic Ste. Catherine of
Siena. The following was said of Ste. Catherine of Siena, and
could equally apply to Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha:*

*"To divorce the mystical from the history of a
sainte like Catherine (of Siena) would be to empty her
of her personality. ... Being so closely associated with
her (Ste. Catherine of Siena), I was able to see at
first hand how, as soon as she was freed from the
occupations in which she was engaged for the work of
souls, at once, one might say almost say by a natural
process, her mind was raised to the things of
Heaven." (236)*

*"There are critics who say that Ste. Catherine of
Siena's central motif was Truth, others contend that it
was Love. Both are in fact right. For Catherine God is
la prima dolce Verita (gentle first Truth), and God is
pazzo d'amore (mad with love) and essa carita (charity
itself)." (237)*

*"Her (Ste. Catherine of Siena's) contemplation, on
the other hand, was so present in her active life that
she prayed and even burst into ecstasy within the text
of many of her letters." (238)*

*We have the testimony of Fr. Pierre Cholenec, one of the
Jesuits at the Mission St. Francois Xavier des Pres du Sault, near
Montreal, where Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha spent her last years. Fr.*

Cholenec was a native of Brittany, a Celtic land where mysticism is in the very air. He was a learned man, as are all Jesuits, and

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was a specialist in Christian Mysticism. Said Fr. Cholenec of Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha:

"She was in a euphoric state and her whole conversation was in Heaven. She spent many hours before the altar, her spirit being totally absorbed in prayer and in perfect union with God. These moments of fervor undoubtedly gave great joy to all in Heaven, and Kateri was overjoyed: her greatest desires had been fulfilled."(239)

As we have mentioned in Chapter 7, St. Gregory of Nyssa, Ibn Abbad of Ronda, Rumi, St. John of the Cross, the Starets Silouan and many others have spoken of "The Dark Night of the Soul", though said expression is used in more than one sense by all of these, as we have said above.

The way of the unitive mystic, whether Christian or Sufi, is the way of love and union with God. We have spoken of all this above, notably in Chapter 7. There can be no doubt that Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha was a unitive mystic.

The Iroquoian peoples, both northern and southern, are generally considered to be among the handsomest of all the Amerindian peoples of North America. As we said above, according to her fellow Mission Iroquois, before she suffered from smallpox Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha had a beautiful face. There exists a hauntingly beautiful 19th century American folk song which speaks

of "blue-eyed Bonnie Eloise, the belle of the Mohawk Vale". Had she not suffered from smallpox, Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha would no

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doubt have been "the belle of the Mohawk Vale" or her day or the mid to late 17th century, though she did not have blue eyes and her name was not Bonnie Eloise. According to many eyewitnesses; Amerindians, Jesuits and French colonists, shortly before Kateri Tekakwitha died the ravages of the smallpox vanished, and everyone was dazzled by her radiant beauty. Though she was never able to be "the belle of the Mohawk Vale", for a very short time Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha was perhaps "the belle of the St. Lawrence Valley", though here there was no doubt competition. Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha died at the Mission St. Francois Xavier des Pres du Sault not far from Montreal on April 17, 1680.

The village of Auriesville, New York, in the Mohawk Vale, sits on the site of Ossernenon, the Mohawk (Iroquoian: **Ga-ne-a-ga-o-no** or **Kanienkehaka**; French: **Agnier**) village in the heart of Mohawk country, which was the birthplace of Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha, in 1656, as we have said above. Ossernenon was also the site of the martyrdom of Rene Goupil in September, 1642 and of Isaac Jacques and Jean de La Lande in October, 1646. Some years ago some French Canadian priests built a shrine in Auriesville to the memory of both the Jesuit Martyrs and Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha. Not long ago said shrine was taken over by - appropriately - the Jesuit Order. It has been greatly enlarged, and has become a major

goal of pilgrims from both USA and Canada. Very recently a "Ste. Kateri Chapel" was inaugurated at the shrine, and the third

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Wednesday of every month a special "Ste. Kateri Mass" is celebrated in said chapel.

Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha has become something of an "unofficial patron sainte" not only of the Mohawks (Iroquoian: **Ga-ne-a-ga-o-no** or **Kanienkehaka**; French: **Agniers**) and the rest of the **Cinq Nations**, the Five Nations, but of all the Amerindians of North America.

Below is the epitaph on the granite tombstone in the cemetery of the Mission St. Francois Xavier des Pres du Sault. Said epitaph, except for the date, is in Iroquois, Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha's native tongue:

Kateri Tekakwitha

17 de Avril, 1680

ONKWE-ONWE-KE KATSITSIIO TEIOTSITSIANEKARON

Kateri Tekakwitha

April 17, 1680

The most beautiful flower that blossomed among the Amerinidians.

Of course, there is no translation, neither French nor English, on Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha's tombstone.

The Mission St. Francois Xavier des Pres du Sault still exists, and is the home of the world-renowned **Choeur des Agniers** or Mohawk Choir.

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At the present time there is a movement to have Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha declared the patron sainte of North America. Could anyone be more appropriate?

Those interested may contact:

Shrine of Our Lady of Martyrs
136 Shrine Road
Fultonville, NY 12072
U. S. A.
Tel: (1-518) 853-3033
Email: Office@MartyrShrine.org

Sister Kateri Mitchell is a nun of the Order of the Sisters of Ste. Anne, and is the Executive Director of the National Office of the Tekakwitha Conference and Consultant for the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue. Like her namesake, Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha, Sister Kateri Mitchell is a Mohawk (Iroquoian: **Ga-ne-a-ga-o-no** or **Kanienkehaka**; French: **Agnier**).

Ste. Anne is the mother of the Virgin mary, and patron sainte of Brittany and of French Canada.

As we said in reference to the story of Black Elk, in reference to Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha, in the end one must say: "God moves in mysterious ways."

Below is an account of a pilgrimage to the shrine of the Jesuit Martyrs and Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha in Auriesville, New York, by someone of Russian Orthodox background, i.e., Catherine

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de Hueck Doherty, born Ekaterina (Katya) Feodorovna Kolyschkine in Russia on August 15, 1896.

"They all laughed hard. Not uncharitably, mind you, but lustily and joyously; and I really did not mind. Though, if the truth be told, I was confused because the cause of the laughter was myself. And yet, so far as I knew, I had done nothing funny, nor did I look unusual to myself.

For it was a pilgrimage, wasn't it? We all were to assemble at a given address, on that particular date, to go to the shrine of the Martyred Jesuits and Ste, Kateri Tekakwitha in Auriesville, New York. At least, that is what I had understood the day several weeks before when the little group I belonged to had discussed the last-minute plans.

Well, here I was, with my hobnailed boots, a knapsack, and a precious gourd of water. What was so funny about that? Yet they were laughing, a friendly, joyous, yet loud laughter. Finally one good soul exclaimed -

"Katie, you don't mean you thought we were walking to Auriesville! That's hundreds of miles away. We are going by bus, you nut ..."

Well, well. It was, I confess, my turn to look astonished and finally to laugh. By bus! A pilgrimage by bus! I had never heard of such a thing. And in my lifetime I had made many pilgrimages.

A pilgrimage was a sort of prayer: an act of penance, thanksgiving, or praise. How all this could be accomplished in a short bus ride was more than I could figure out. But then I was in America and not Russia. When in Rome do as the Romans do. I climbed meekly into the bus.

As we rolled through a beautiful countryside, I was back in the soft pastel-shaded summer of northern Russia.

Soon the Little Lent would come around, the four weeks preceding the feast of SS. Peter and Paul, a time for fasting and penance. And as sure as not, mother would begin first to think and to talk about, and then to prepare for, another pilgrimage to some holy place. She loved pilgrimages, especially to one of the many shrines of Our Blessed Lady with which Russia abounded.

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First, of course, one prays and reads up on the shrine one goes to. Let me see. From a bolt of clean, unbleached linen, made at home out of our own flax, one cuts the pilgrim's dress. A simple affair for women. Just a sort of kimono pattern. A hole for the head, and sleeves cut on the kimono style. Then one sews it with clean linen thread and a prayer. Now a linen cord, hand woven, and a linen sack, sewn neatly together and just big enough to hold a loaf of freshly baked rye bread, and a goodly pinch of rough salt wrapped in a clean linen rag. Clean and air the water gourd ... and all is ready.

The morning of the pilgrimage is usually clear and sunny. It always was for us anyhow. Mass and Communion at the little country church. A light breakfast. No one eats much on penitential pilgrimages. Now the dressing, in the neat, clean garments prepared beforehand. The linen robe. The linen cord. A simple, modest, and easy-to-put-on attire.

Easy to walk in, too. We go barefooted. The bread and the water -. Now we are ready.

The family walks with us to the village green. Here the rest of the pilgrims are assembling, all dressed alike. All are barefooted. They may be, and sometimes are, princesses and dukes or peasants and paupers. But no one can tell which is which. The men wear linen trousers, a clean linen shirt.

The leader carries holy water. Now all kneel and ask God's blessing on the pilgrimage, and invoke the Archangel Raphael, St. Joseph, and the Blessed Mother to be at their side through the journey. For they know aa about traveling, don't they? Raphael was Tobias' guide, and the others made the journey afoot to Egypt.

Now the leader sprinkles all with holy water, and we are off. Relatives, friends, and onlookers speed us on our way, shouting their last demands for our prayers and intentions.

We have formed ourselves in a long straight line. The village is left behind. We start chanting the litanies - we will keep that up at regular intervals all

through the journey. In between the litanies there is a great silence, in which each talks to God in his own way.

The road is soft under our bare feet. The flowers smell sweet. The clouds are white and gay in the blue sky. The forests we pass are cool and gentle, and a wind is on our sunburned faces. At times it seemed to

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me that all the world re-echoes the song of our litanies:

Hail Mary, Mother of God, Virgin and mother.
Morning Star. Perfect Vessel.
Hail Mary, Mother of God. Holy Temple in which God Himself was conceived.
Hail Mary, Mother of God. Chaste and pure dove.
Hail Mary, Mother of God. Ever effulgent light; from thee proceedeth the Sun of Justice.
Hail Mary, Mother of God. Thou didst enclose in thy sacred womb the One who cannot be encompassed.
Hail Mary, Mother of God. With the shepherds we sing the praise of God, and with the angels the song of thanksgiving. Glory to God in the highest and peace to men of good will.
Hail Mary, Mother of God. Through thee came to us the Conquerer and the triumphant Vanquisher of hell.
Hail Mary, Mother of God. Through thee blossoms the splendor of the Resurrection.
Hail Mary, Mother of God. Thou hast saved every faithful Christian.
Hail Mary, Mother of God. Who can praise thee worthily, O glorious virgin?
We salute thee, Mother of God...

Yes, I am sure the earth sang with us ... or maybe it listened.

Noon would come. The leader would call a halt, always by a clear river or stream. We would refill our gourds, wash our tired, hot feet and hands. Pray and sit down to a lunch of rye bread, salt, and water. And did it taste good! Nothing ever tasted quite so good since. An hour's rest. A nap, and again a prayer. Holy water sprinkled on our rested brows ... and off for the next lap.

Slowly we moved. Chanting. Slowly the day moved. Listening. And dusk was around the corner. Now we were near a village again. Thus it was planned. We were

meeting people coming back from the fields and a day's work. All greeted us gladly and asked for our prayers.

Now we were in the village. We broke ranks, and with a last injunction to be ready early and on the road, we made our ways to the little log houses, **isbas**, we call them in Russia. Now each person, or family

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representative, was knocking at a door. Repeating the age-old formula:

"In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit - we are pilgrims to holy places ... begging for food and a night's lodging ... in the name of God."

Invariably, the door would open, and hospitably we would be asked in.

"In the name of the Holy Trinity, come in pilgrims. Honor our poor house, and share with us what God in His great mercy has seen fit to send us today."

In we went, bowing low three times before the holy icons and the Crucifix that used to adorn each Russian house ... a bow for each Person of the Most Holy Trinity. Then the last and fourth bow to the hosts.

Now we were ready to wash up and eat. Whatever there was on the table was shared equally with us. All one poor family had to give us was bread, salt, and tea. The loaf was justly and accurately divided among the seven members of the family and my mother and me. We dipped the bread in the salt and drank the tea, realizing that we were immensely privileged, for we were seeing charity at its best - real Christ's charity - the poor feeding pilgrim travelers, because He was once One.

At night we slept in sweet-smelling haylofts. At sunup we rose. Then a wash at the pump. A hastily drunk glass of cool milk. A piece of bread. A grateful farewell to our kindly hosts, with a promise to bring some sacramental from the holy place, and we would not forget. We were off again.

Days passed by like the beads of a rosary (tasbih). Slowly, reverently. In walking ... close to God and the earth He made. In praying, begging, walking, resting, and praying again. Praying for our sins ... for the world ... for those we love. Just praying, praising, thanking God.

And then one day we would come to the shrine. Oh the joy of it? We had been walking a long time. We sort

of knew that thus it would be when we would at last die in the Lord, after the long, tiresome journey of life. Just like now - standing on some knoll - seeing as yet from afar the spires of the holy shrine. Blessed be God ... and His holy Mother!

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Days, perhaps a week at the shrine. Loving in the big monastery hostels built for the like of us. Having monks wait on us, silent and kindly. Visiting the shrine and the churches around it. Taking back a supply of holy oil, holy water, pictures, medals for those we promised to bring them to.

Masses, Matins and Lauds, the Little Hours, Vespers, Compline, in the big, holy, beautiful churches. Praying and singing with the monks and nuns of near-by convents and monasteries. Several Masses a day - the glory of it! The joy of it! Like heaven or, at least, its hallway.

And then the way back, just as we came. The same hosts - now old friends. The sharing of gifts. The talking about God and the things of God.

And finally home. Sunburned. Healthy. Leaner. Filled to the brim in soul.

Yes ... my yesterdays have great gifts for me ...

The bus lurched. Someone laughed. Someone passed me a sandwich and a thermos bottle filled with hot coffee. In the back of the bus someone started to sing "Mairzy Dotes".

My hobnailed boots were heavy on my feet ... my knapsack heavy on my lap. And I could not tell why - or could I? My heart was heavy with a strange sorrow.

Maybe it was just homesickness."(240)

No doubt Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha with have been more at home and been more gratified by the pilgrimage described above by another Catherine, the then Ekaterina (Katya) Feodorovna Kolyschkine than by the modern pilgrimage by bus, if this be not an oxymoron, even though the modern pilgrimage was to her own shrine and those of the Jesuit martyrs.

We have spoken of the French and Spanish Catholic missionaries among the Amerindians in parts of North America.

It would hardly be right not to mention the Russian Orthodox missionaries in what is today the state of Alaska.

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So far as is known (obviously, some things are known for certain only to God), did the efforts of the Russian Orthodox missionaries in Alaska produce a figure comparable to the great unitive mystic Ste. Kateri Tekakwitha, the Lys des agniers, or "Lily of the Mohawks", La sainte mystique du bois vierge, i.e., "The holy mystic of the virgin forest", La sainte mystique de la terre sauvage, i.e., "The holy mystic of the wilderness."

At least one of these Russian Orthodox missionaries suffered martyrdom, but even of those who did not, this does not diminish their heroism; they also had to work diligently learning the languages and customs of the peoples whom they served, in the bitter climate of Alaska, they knew hardships unknown even to the French Jesuits in eastern Canada. Knowing the history of the French and Spanish missionaries in other parts of North America, the Russian Orthodox missionaries knew that it was very possible that they would suffer a hideous martyrdom, as at least one did.

Below is an account of the martyrdom of Hieromonk Iuvenalii in the year 1796, so far as I have been able to determine, the only Russian Orthodox missionary to suffer martyrdom in Alaska, though, in the circumstances, there may have been others whose martyrdoms went unrecorded:

"...but the unanimous testimony of the Native peoples of the region (in this case Easkimos or Inuit), together with reports filed by later explorers and
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missionaries all indicate that he died at the village of Quinhagak, at the mouth of the Kuskokwim River, on the shores of the Bering Sea - the destination he himself had determined before leaving (the island of) Kodiak. The newly baptized people of Quinhagak described Father Iuvenalii's death in some detail to the Protestant missionary, John Kilbuck, who resided there for a decade at the end of the nineteenth century. Father Iuvenalii, as their version goes, stood up to preach in his "angyacuar" [literally, "little boat"] but was forbidden to speak by the local shaman, who ordered him killed in a "hail of arrows". Shamans on both sides of the Bering Straits customarily wore chains of metal or (walrus) ivory as a sign of their status and magical powers. Immediately before his death, a later report added, he seemed to be waving his arm, as if he were "chasing away flies". This indicates that the hieromonk was blessing his murderers with the sign of the cross, a gesture they had never seen before. His **Tanaina** (American) Indian guide, probably from Kenai or Tyonek, tried to escape by swimming away, and impressed his Eskimo assailants by his remarkable swimming ability. They were forced to chase him in their kayaks, but he too eventually perished. The shaman then removed Father Iuvenalii's brass pectoral cross from his body and tried to work some sort of rite, but was unsuccessful. Removing the cross, he noted that there was some other power represented here that prevented him from doing his own usual magic. Some years later, a Russian explorer was "adopted" near Quinhagak in a ceremony that closely resembled the Orthodox rite of chrismaton/confirmation, and a Yup'ik Eskimo, wearing a priest's pectoral cross, visited the Russian trading post at Nushagak. Later Orthodox missionaries, Hieromonk Ilarion (1864), Father Zakharii Bel'kov (1879) and Father Vasilii Orlov (1885), when each visited the village, all recorded that Quinhagak was the site of Father Iuvenalii's martyrdom. He was canonized by the Orthodox diocese of Alaska in 1977.(241)

Note that like the French and Spanish Catholic martyrs in other parts of North America, Hieromonk Iuvenalii died blessing his murderers.

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Each missionary who came to Alaska from Russia or Ukraine was required to take an Oath before leaving Russia for his new assignment. He signed it and it was witnessed by the priest who gave the Oath. The following was the Oath used when Bishop St. Innocent Veniaminov was the bishop of Kamchatka, with jurisdiction in Alaska and the Aleutian Islands.

"I, the undersigned, in front of this Holy Bible, promise and swear by Almighty God that I am obligated by my position and am earnestly willing, in the work of Christianization assigned to me, to think, to teach and to act as is maintained and taught by our Orthodox Church and as it is prescribed and ordered by the instructions of my Archpastor, The Right Reverend Innocent, Bishop of Kamchatka, in accordance with the decrees of His Imperial Majesty.

I swear by the Living God that, ever keeping in my mind His awful words, 'damned is he who preaches God's word carelessly', I will earnestly perform the work of God which has been assigned to me to my utmost mental and physical strength, without hypocrisy and avarice, avoiding all threats, deceit, extortion and other unlawful acts, and without any force or violence; but sincerely, disinterestedly, kindly, considerately with true meekness and Christian love, keeping in mind the glory of God and the salvation of people's souls as the final aim of all my thoughts, words and acts, seeking not my own, but that which is of Our Lord Jesus.

I furthermore swear by Almighty God that I am obligated and am willing at all times to be the loyal, good, and obedient subject of His Imperial Majesty, the All-Merciful Emperor, and of the lawful heir of the Russian Throne in carrying out the work entrusted to me; and I will preserve and defend the interests of His Imperial Majesty to the utmost of my understanding and ability, being ready to sacrifice my life if necessary.

I furthermore swear by Almighty God that I do not entertain any mental reservation, equivocation or misinterpretation of the promises pronounced by my tongue. Should it be otherwise, God, He to whom all hearts are open, be my righteous avenger.

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*I seal my oath by kissing the words and the cross
of my Savior. Amen."(242)*

*The priests who took the above oath knew perfectly well that
they were condemning themselves to great efforts, great hardships,
and, very possibly to a cruel and hideous martyrdom.*

*As a tribute to all of these heroic Russian Orthodox
missionaries, we present an anonymous Akathist (Church Slavonic:
Akafist) to St. Innocent (Church Slavonic: Innokenty), Apostle to
America:*

*O Holy father, Good Shepherd of the Flock entrusted to
you by the Lord!*

*You dedicated all your strength and heart, All your mind and
soul to Christ!*

*In the remotest regions you labored tirelessly without
thought of earthly reward, for the sake of His Holy Church
and th salvation of all.*

*We the recipients of your great spiritual legacy offer to you
this hymn of praise.*

*As you stand before the Throne of the Lord of Glory,
intercede fot our land and its people!*

*That united in One Holy Orthodox Church we may gratefully
sing to you:*

*Rejoice O Holy Father Metropolitan Innocent! Equal to the
Apostles and Enlightener of Alaska.*

Holy Father Innocent! Your glory has shone from the far Eastern lands to the Western World. From humble origins in a Siberian village you rose to world renown as a modern Apostle. The Lord chose you to bring the Orthodox faith to the ancient peoples of Alaska and Asia, who together with us honor you with these songs of praise:

Rejoice! Imitator of the Apostles and their Successor!

Rejoice! Evangelizer of the Arctic Peoples!

Rejoice! Scholar and Teacher of the Aleuts!

Rejoice! Illuminator of the Eskimos and Indians!

Rejoice! Humble genius whose footsteps were guided by the Lord!

Rejoice! Visionary Architect of the Orthodox Church in America!

Rejoice! O Holy Father Innocent! Equal to the Apostles and Enlightener of Alaska!

You distinguished yourself as a young student, displaying your many interests and talents by excelling in your studies at home and in school. Your greatest joy was the service of God and His Holy Church. Your uncle instructed you in the ways of piety and Faith so that from an early age you sang to the Lord: ALLELUIA!

In your youth, the Lord prepared you for a lifetime of service by enabling you to study various disciplines. Remembering your dedication, we thankfully celebrate your memory:

Rejoice! Your talents were employed in the service of Christ!

Rejoice! Your achievements inspire all who are familiar with them!

Rejoice! Skilled craftsman, imitator of the Carpenter of Nazareth (St. Joseph)!

Rejoice! Clock-maker who proclaimed the Timeless One!

Rejoice! Your teachers marveled at your intelligence!

Rejoice! Your spiritual children praise your humility!

Rejoice! O Holy Father Innocent! Equal to the Apostles and Enlightener of Alaska!

Completing your preparation at the seminary at Irkutsk, you accepted the Divine Call to the missionary frontier of Alaska. Together with your wife, the beloved Katherine (Russian: Ekaterina), you set out on your apostolic journey to Russian America, as you sang to the Lord: ALLELUIA!

As a newly-ordained priest you showed great determination in reaching your destination, 1,000 miles away, in the Bering Sea. You willingly forsook all for the sake of the Gospel of Christ, travelling for many months over frozen tundra and treacherous seas. Inspired by your dedication, we sing to you thus:

Rejoice! Apostle to America!

Rejoice! Heroic Founder of Orthodoxy in the Western World!

Rejoice! Imitator of the Apostle Paul!

Rejoice! Courageous voyager on the northern seas!

Rejoice! Your dedication equaled that of the Apostles!

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Rejoice! Your perseverance was a Gift of the Holy Spirit!

*Rejoice! O Holy father Innocent! Equal to the Apostles and
Enlightener of Alaska!*

*Arriving at Unalaska, you rendered thanks to the Lord for
your safe passage. Kneeling on the beach together with all
those in your company, you praised God with the hymn:
ALLELUIA!*

*Together with your tutor, the Aleut Chieftain Ivan, you
studied the Native language and devised a writing system for
it. You labored for many years, preparing the Word of God for
publication in the Aleut tongue. You astounded the indigenous
peoples with your ability to preach to them in their own
language, thus enlightening them with the Light of Christian
Truth. We glorify God for bringing you to our shores and
honor your evangelical accomplishments:*

Rejoice! Ennoblement of Ancient Peoples!

Rejoice! Father of learning in Alaska!

Rejoice! Teacher of Virtue and Divine Truth!

Rejoice! Catechist of those seeking Righteousness!

Rejoice! Your vision inspires all future missionaries!

Rejoice! Your brilliance illuminates the arctic night!

*Rejoice! O Holy Father Innocent! Equal to the Apostles and
Enlightener of Alaska!*

*You traveled throughout the Aleutian region, braving storms
and hostile seas in your efforts to evangelize your scattered
flock. Warmed by your love for the Lord, you journeyed in
your bidarka on the icy waves, softly singing to the Creator
of all: ALLELUIA!*

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*During the ten years you remained in the Aleutian Islands,
you devoted much time and energy to the study of the land,
people and wildlife of the area. You kept careful records of*

your experiences and observations so that this heritage could be preserved for future generations. You opened schools for the Native children so that they could advance in the Knowledge of God and His Creation. Praising the Lord for His bounties, we offer a hymn to you:

Rejoice! Patient instructor of the simple and the wise!

Rejoice! Scholar and Teacher of the Aleutian languages

Rejoice! Preserver of Alaska's ancient heritage!

Rejoice! Dispeller of the darkness of ignorance!

Rejoice! Perceptive observer of the wonders of Creation!

Rejoice! Messenger of the Good News of Salvation!

Rejoice! O Holy father Innocent! Equal to the Apostles and Enlightener of Alaska!

Having created a written language for the Native (Aleut) people, you developed textbooks for them so that they could become literate, Reading the Word of God in their own tongue, and giving thanks to God, the Aleuts sang with joy: ALLELUIA!

O Holy Father, you travelled beyond the limits of your own extensive district into the land of the Eskimo people. You brought to the natives of Bristol Bay the sanctifying Grace of Holy Baptism. You made the Nushagak River a new Jordan for them, Bringing Christianity to the northern shores of the Bering Sea, where you are remembered today with these words of praise:

Rejoice! Enlightener of the Eskimo (Inuit) Nation!

Rejoice! Sanctification of the Nushagak!

Rejoice! Husbandman sent to the plentiful harvest!

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Rejoice! Laborer in the Vineyard of Christ!

Rejoice! Warrior clothed in the armor of Truth!

Rejoice! Soldier armed with the Gospel of Peace and the sword of Prayer.

Rejoice! O Holy Father Innocent! Equal to the Apostles and Enlightener of Alaska!

Using your talents, you erected the first Orthodox Cathedral in the New World, designing the Temple and supervising its construction yourself. The Faithful celebrated the consecration of the new church, singing the hymn of Thanksgiving: ALLELUIA!

Transferring the center of your missionary activity to the City of New Archangel (Sitka), you began anew the evangelization of the Tlingit People. You became proficient in their language and preached the Gospel in their villages, winning converts to Christ by your knowledge of medicine as well as theology. You admired the nobility of these proud warriors, who together with us offer these praises to you:

Rejoice! Teacher of the Tlingit Indians!

Rejoice! Physician of souls and bodies!

Rejoice! Fearless apostle, protected by God!

Rejoice! Illuminator of the Northern Peoples!

Rejoice! Mountain rising above the clouds of error!

Rejoice! Harbor, sheltering from treacherous seas!

Rejoice! O Holy Father Innocent! Equal to the Apostles and Enlightener of Alaska!

(Note: The Tlingit are Amerindians of the Athabaskan-Tlingit-Eyak branch of the Na-Dene linguistic family found from Alaska to extreme northern Mexico, which family includes the Navajo and Apache, among many others. They are therefore no kin to Inuits [Eskimos] and Aleuts).

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You were summoned to appear before the Holy Synod to present your many translations for ecclesiastical approval. You returned to your homeland by circumnavigating the globe, arriving at St. Petersburg you praised God in song: ALLELUIA!

Learning of your wife's repose during your absence, you prayerfully visited the Holy monasteries at Kiev and Zagorsk in order to discern the Lord's Will. The Emperor himself, impressed with your apostolic fervor and achievements, approved your elevation to the rank of bishop. Returning to Alaska, you were welcomed with these words:

Rejoice! You who took up the Cross and followed Christ!

Rejoice! You who first brought the Joy of the Resurrection to Alaska!

Rejoice! You who were inspired by the heroic example of St. Innocent of Irkutsk!

Rejoice! You who promoted the apostolic labors of St. Nicholas of Japan!

Rejoice! You were among the first to ask the Elder Herman to intercede for you!

Rejoice! By his prayers, you arrived safely in (the island of) Kodiak.

Rejoice! O Holy Father Innocent! Equal to the Apostles and Enlightener of Alaska!

As bishop of the Russian colony, you renewed your efforts to bring the Gospel to all Alaska. You opened a seminary in Sitka for the training of indigenous clergy and designed a new cathedral for the capital city. You also constructed the clock for the church bell-tower. When the Holy Temple was completed you sang out in gratitude to the Lord: ALLELUIA!

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As over-seer of the huge diocese which included Eastern Siberia as well as Alaska, you dispatched priests to areas where no missionaries had ever gone. Your own son-in-law was assigned to the Nushagak, while your former student, Father Yakov, set out for the Yukon delta. Because of your great vision for the future of Orthodoxy in this land, we honor you with these hymns:

Rejoice! Good Shepherd of the Arctic!

Rejoice! First Hierarchy of America!

Rejoice! Our guide to the Kingdom of God!

Rejoice! Benefactor to the needy and oppressed!

Rejoice! Your foresight determined the growth of the Church in Alaska!

Rejoice! Your boundless energy established the True Faith in the North!

Rejoice! O Holy Father Innocent! Equal to the Apostles and Enlightener of Alaska!

With characteristic enthusiasm you visited the peoples of the Amur Valley in Siberia and began yet again to study their languages and traditions. Together with the Aleuts and Tlingits you learned to praise the Almighty Creator with the song of Thanksgiving: ALLELUIA!

Transferring your headquarters to the Far East, you bid farewell to the New World and returned to the Old. Following the example you had set for them, the Native Clergy of Alaska continued your WORK IN America. Through them we have become your spiritual children and venerate your memory in these words:

Rejoice! Student of Alaskan languages and Teacher of the True Word!

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Rejoice! Preacher "in tongues" like the Apostle on Pentecost!

Rejoice! You published the Gospel in the Aleut language!

Rejoice! You founded schools for the enlightenment of the Native Peoples!

Rejoice! You directed the evangelization of Alaska and Siberia!

Rejoice! You planted the seeds of the Orthodox Faith on American soil!

Rejoice! O Holy Father Innocent! Equal to the Apostles and Enlightener of Alaska!

(Note: The language of the Aleuts is of the Eskaleut linguistic family, and is therefore closely akin to the Eskimo or Inuit languages, but it is of no kin whatever to the Tlingit language, which, as we have said, is an Amerindian language of the Athabascan or Na-Dene family.)

You spent your entire life laboring in remote regions for the propagation of the Holy Faith. In your you were called to yet another great task. You were elected Metropolitan of Moscow to succeed the venerable Philaret. As you journeyed across the frozen steppes of Asia en route to your enthronement, you sang in amazement to God: ALLELUIA!

You revitalized the missionary spirit of your homeland by organizing societies for the support of evangelical enterprises. You assisted your former flocks with your holy prayers and material aid. We who have benefitted from these labors sing to you in gratitude:

Rejoice! You who were faithful in little things!

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Rejoice! You have been set over much!

Rejoice! Rushing Wind dispelling the fog of ignorance and fear!

Rejoice! Mighty River watering the spiritual wilderness!

Rejoice! Precious Vessel filled with the Holy Spirit!

Rejoice! Adornment of the Church in the Old World and the New!

Rejoice! O Holy Father Innocent! Equal to the Apostles and Enlightener of Alaska!

With the same humility you exhibited throughout your earthly life, you asked that no eulogies be delivered at your burial. Instead, you requested an edifying sermon be preached for the benefit of all. Learning of your falling asleep, your spiritual children commended your soul to the Lord, singing: ALLELUIA!

The heirs of your spiritual legacy throughout the New World rejoice today at your glorification, O holy Father. Asking for your prayers for the (Orthodox) Church in America, we gather to celebrate your remarkable achievements with these words:

Rejoice! Inspirator of Orthodox pastors and teachers!

Rejoice! Indicator of the Way to the Kingdom of Heaven!

Rejoice! Faithful steward in the Household of Faith!

Rejoice! Far-sighted Champion of Orthodoxy!

Rejoice! Loving Father of your spiritual children!

Rejoice! Intercessor for all who come to the Orthodox Faith!

Rejoice! O Holy Father Innocent! Equal to the Apostles and Enlightener of Alaska!

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O Holy Father, Bishop Innocent! As we remember all the glorious deeds you so humbly accomplished, we are inspired by your vision, courage and perseverance. Pray therefore that we may be accounted worthy to continue your work in the New World, and to sing gratefully to the Lord: ALLELUIA! [3 times].

O Holy Hierarch and Father Innocent!

The Lord chose you and ordained you to go and bring forth much fruit in His New Vineyard, on the frontiers of Russia and America. You dedicated your life to building up the Body of Christ in the New World and the Old, and brought the Treasures of the Holy Apostolic Faith to Alaska and Siberia. We your spiritual children kneel before your holy icon and ask you to intercede for the Holy Orthodox Church in your adopted and native lands. As you were humble and kind, help us by your prayers to be patient and generous. As you persevered under difficult circumstances in a remote and lonely region, strengthen us in our dedication to Christ and His Gospel. As you loved God and your flock and devoted your life in service to them, pray to Our Lord that our hearts may be filled with love for Him and our neighbor. You planted the seeds of the Orthodox Faith in Alaskan soil: implore the Lord that we may be accounted worthy to continue the work you so gloriously began, to bring the Light of Christ to every corner of America. You indicated the Way into the Kingdom of Heaven by your words and example: intercede for the salvation of all of us who venerate your holy memory

That by your holy prayers we may become worthy of the precious spiritual heritage which God has entrusted to us through you, and sing eternally the praises of the Holy Consubstantial and Life-Creating Trinity, the Father and Creator who is without Beginning, the Son, Our Lord and Savior who became Man in order to sanctify and save us, and the Comforter, the Holy Spirit who enlightens and enlivens all, now and ever and unto ages of ages."(243)

There would seem to be no use for commentary; the above **Akafist** (or **Akathist**) prayer says it all. Though lesser known than the French and Spanish Catholic missionaries in other parts of

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North America, the Russian Orthodox missionaries in Alaska were **NOT** less heroic.

In fact, New England Yankee WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant) jokes exist to this day. Here is a very contemporary example:

Endicott and Chauncey (typical New England Yankee masculine first names) met in Harvard Yard (or "Hahvuhd Yahd").

Endicott said:

"Did your ancestors come over on the Mayflower?"

To which Chauncey replied:

"Why good heavens no, we always had our own boat."

Question: How does one may a New England Yankee WASP laugh on Monday?

Answer: Tell him a joke on Friday.

The strong influence of Spanish priests in the Texas countryside before the US Civil War should also be noted.

Stephen Vincent Benet was a Yankee in the sense of being a Northerner (though not a New Englander), yet he had a certain, if limited and grossly incomplete (not to mention contaminated with "Yankee mythology") understanding of the Old South and the real issues at stake in the War Between the States. The fact that Stephen Vincent Benet was a Yankee, neither a Southerner nor a

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traditional Spaniard like Alfonso Paso, nor a Catholic Traditionalist of any other sort makes it all the more significant that in parts of his epic-style work John Brown's Body one finds echoes of the words of Alfonso Paso:

Bury the bygone South
Bury the minstrel (or bard, or trobador) with the honey-mouth
Bury the broadsword virtues of the clan (a Celtic and

Jacobite reference)
Bury the unmachined, the planters' pride,
The courtesy and bitter arrogance,
The pistol-hearted horsemen who could ride
Like jolly centaurs under the hot stars ...
...And with these things, bury the purple dream
Of the America we have not been,
The tropic empire, seeking the warm sea,
The last foray of aristocracy
Based not on dollars nor initiative
Nor any blood for what that blood was worth
But on a certain code, a manner of birth,
A certain manner of knowing how to live,
The pastoral rebellion of the earth
Against machines, against the Age of Steam,
The (Alexander) Hamiltonian (or Celtic, or Continental)
extremes against the (Benjamin) Franklin (or Anglo-Saxon)
mean,
The genius of the land
Against the metal hand. (244)

Recently the book Nobility and Analogous Traditional Elites
in the Allocutions of (Pope) Pius XII by Plinio Correa de Oliveira
was hailed by Richard T. Hines, Chairman of the Confederate
Memorial Committee of Washington, D.C. as:

"A book that is a masterful compendium of the
principles that true Southerners believe in."

Plinio Correa de Oliveira is founder of the well-known
international Catholic traditionalist movement "Tradition, Family
(5493)

and Property".

Obviously, only the grossly ignorant and/or those willfully
blind followers of the Stalinist idiocy called "political
correctness" can believe that the War Between the States was about
slavery, or that the Confederate Flag is a symbol of slavery.

As G.K. Chesterton, Stephen Vincent Benet and Eric Foner noted, the War Between the States had as one of its unintended results the abolition of slavery but, slavery was **NOT** the cause of said war.

The point of the above is that what I am about to say may be taken by people in countries with a Calvinist background, including Northern USA and that part of the South more or less "Yankeefied" as a result of losing the War Between the States - to get the idea that Shi'a Islam and Spanish Catholicism are "killjoy religions" that consider enjoying life to be sinful.

This is **NOT** true; below we deal with only one facet of two very multi-faceted religions, or, to put it another way, one brush stroke does not make a painting, nor one pebble make a mosaic. One must never forget the big picture.

Elias Canetti said that:

"The suffering of (Imam) Hussein and its commemoration became the very core of the Shi'i faith.

... Which is a religion of lament more concentrated and more extreme than any to be found elsewhere. ... No faith has ever laid greater emphasis on lament. It is the highest religious duty." (245)

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Canetti exaggerates, or, rather, not being a Shi'a himself, he has concentrated on only one aspect of Shi'ism, thus losing perspective, ignoring "the big picture" and mistaking one pebble for the whole mosaic. I cannot emphasize too strongly that Shi'a Islam and Spanish Catholicism are **NOT** "killjoy religions", **NOT**

poisoned by Manichaeism and Nominalism; in view of the Calvinist, Puritan background of the culture of Northern USA (victorious in the War Between the States), this emphasis is particularly necessary in order to avoid serious misconceptions.

Nevertheless, it is true that Shi'ism does put much emphasis on lament and mourning. As anyone who has been in Spain during Holy Week knows, Spanish Catholicism also puts great emphasis on lament, more, no doubt than the Christianity of any other country, including Russian Orthodoxy. To a lesser extent, the above is also true of Irish Catholicism, as the Irish-Gaelic songs about "The Sorrows of the Virgin (Mary)", cited in the preceding chapter, and the fact that in so many Irish Catholic homes one finds images of the "Mater Dolorosa", the Virgin Mary with her heart pierced with seven swords (of course, one also finds this in Spain). Holy Week in Ireland bears little resemblance to the Muharram or Ashura commemorations of the Shi'as.

Certainly, what we have to say here is not sufficient to draw any sort of conclusions. However, it is interesting and

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suggestive, and I ask the reader to remember certain facts.:

- ❖ 1.) That Spain is very largely Celtic in its heritage and ethnic base, and, as we have seen, there exist strong affinities between the Celts on the one hand and the Iranians and Indo-Aryans on the other.
- ❖ 2.) Except for that having to do with Passion Plays, what we about to say below is

true only of Spain and, to a certain extent, some countries under strong Spanish cultural influence. It is NOT true of other Catholic countries, not even Ireland and Brittany.

- ❖ 3.) Islam and Catholicism coexisted in Spain for very nearly nine centuries, and, truth be told, cordiality between the two sister faiths was the rule, NOT the exception; after all, Muslims or Catholics, they nearly all were Spaniards, of Iberian, Celtic and Visigothic blood.
- ❖ 4.) As we have shown, the number of Shi'as in Muslim Spain as well as the influence of Shi'ism was much greater than is generally supposed.
- ❖ 5.) As we have seen, contacts with Persia were numerous and Persian cultural influences were much stronger in Muslim Spain than is generally believed.
- ❖ 6.) The credibility of "mere coincidences" is in inverse proportion to their number.

The truth is that the parallels and resemblances between Holy Week in Spain on the one hand and the commemoration of Muharram or Ashura among the Shi'as of Iran and the Indian Subcontinent are both numerous and close. As one might expect, Spanish Holy Week

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bears a greater resemblance to Ashura in Iran than to Ashura in the Indian Subcontinent.

Mourning, weeping and breast-beating are very frequent during Holy Week processions in Spain, self-flagellation was frequent until quite recently, and may still occur in some out-of-the-way

places. Self-flagellation during Holy Week processions occurs to this day among the descendants of Spanish colonists in New Mexico, who no doubt included many Moriscos.

As in Iran and occasionally in the Indian Subcontinent, during Good Friday and Holy Saturday processions in Spain, a coffin, representing the death of Jesus on the Cross and sometimes containing a carved wooden statue of Jesus' dead body, is carried through the streets, to the sound of muffled military drums, wailing, breast-beating and saetas, of which we shall speak more later.

Floats and tableaux of the Crucifixion and events leading up to it, some quite gory and gruesome, are carried during Holy Week, once again to the sound of muffled military drums, wailing, breast-beating and saetas. In Galicia and Asturias, the plaintive skirl of Celtic bagpipes is added to all the above.

The *cofradías* of Spain are very exact equivalents of the **guruhan** of Iran and the Indian Subcontinent. **Guruhan** should be translated as **cofradías**, NOT "guilds".

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Though I personally have not witnessed any "Passion Plays" in Spain, I have heard rumors that some villages and parishes put them on during Holy Week. As we have seen, certain aspects of Holy Week in Spanish New Mexico seem to be a continuation of a "Passion Play" tradition brought from Spain. Holy Week

celebrations in Lorca in the province of Murcia and Puente Genil in the province of Cordoba come very near to being Passion Plays.

There is a Spanish equivalent to the elegies or marsiyas (Urdu) sung, chanted or recited during Muharram or Ashura in Iran and the Indian Subcontinent. Particular in Andalusia, heart-rending **saetas** are an integral part of Holy Week. The word **saeta** literally means "crossbow bolt", which indicates an origin no later than the 16th century, more likely earlier. **Saetas** are elegies and songs of mourning concerning the Crucifixion and the events surrounding it. The tunes to which saetas are sung are not only heart-rending, but also exotic and haunting, of obvious Hispano-Muslim origin. Nearly all **saetas** are folkloric or traditional in the sense that their words and music are very old and the names of the authors long forgotten.

Recall what we said earlier in this chapter concerning the musica of a selection from the music of a **ta'ziyeh** transcribed in musical notation. Said music was obviously modal, using a heptatonic or seven-tone mode, though, of course I was unable to

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precisely determine said mode. Long, complex **melismas** were also used in said musical selection from an Iranian **ta'ziyeh**.

The Andalusian **saetas** are also modal, as is most Spanish folkloric music, use various heptatonic or seven-tone modes and long, complex, heart-rending **melismas**; any influence of liturgical chant is therefore either Mozarabic or Byzantine, and not

Gregorian. The general resemblance between the music of the Iranian **ta'ziyeh** on the one hand and the Andalusian **saeta** is perfectly obvious, though it is difficult - though not impossible - to believe that one is derived from the other. If the Iranian **ta'ziyeh** originated during the Safavi period or even later, then obviously the Andalusian **saeta** could not possibly be derived from it. If, however, the Iranian **ta'ziyeh** indeed long antedates the Safavi period, as many believe, then it is possible or likely that the Andalusian **saeta** is indeed derived from the music of the Iranian **ta'ziyeh**, though, of course, the **saeta** does not, and apparently never did form part of a "passion play". If it is true - as it may be - that the Andalusian **saeta** is derived from or inspired by the music of the Iranian **ta'ziyeh**, then, over the centuries, Hispanic elements, both Celtic and liturgical, came to influence it. After all, as we have noted Persian music and Celtic music do indeed have a great deal in common, and liturgical modes - whether Mozarabic, Byzantine or Gregorian - are all heptatonic or seven-tone, and use quarter tones, as do Celtic music, Persian music and the music of the Iranian **ta'ziyeh**. Therefore, Persian music, Celtic music and the music of liturgical chants are all mutually - and easily - permeable, especially if one is dealing with Mozarabic or Byzantine chant rather than Gregorian chant. As we have said, because of the long, complex melismas used in the Andalusian **saeta**, any influence of liturgical chant must be Mozarabic or Byzantine rather than Gregorian. This has obvious

implications for the antiquity of the Andalusian **saeta**: though fascinating, this is becoming very complex and highly theoretical.

*During Holy Week processions in Andalusian villages and residential quarters of towns and cities, suddenly the mournful, haunting sound of a **saeta** will ring out from a balcony. The procession will then stop until the **saeta** is finished, and then continue on its way until another **saeta** rings out from another balcony. It is no surprise that Andalusian Holy Week processions usually continue until the wee small hours of the morning.*

Saetas are occasionally performed on stage or television, and have been recorded. However, the truth is that, from the emotional if not the purely aesthetic point of view, the **saetas** lose a great deal when removed from the Holy Week context.

It is easy to imagine Ashura processions in Muslim Spain in which the ancestors of the **saetas** rang out. Originally probably -

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almost certainly - of Persian origin, these **proto-saetas** would likely absorb Hispanic musical elements, as we have noted above.

In summary, like so many other elements, the Andalusian **saeta** is a manifestation of the fact that in Spain Shi'ism and Catholicism intermingled, becoming practically inseparable. In Spain Shi'ism and Catholicism "grew up together".

Let there be no confusion: I am NOT suggesting that the

Muharram or Ashura ceremonies in Iran and the Indian Subcontinent are influenced by Spanish Holy Week celebrations. It should be clear that if I am suggesting anything it is that said influence went the other way, from Persia to the Shi'as or those strongly influenced by Shi'ism in Muslim Spain and from there to Spanish Catholic Holy Week celebrations. The reader may draw his own conclusions.

It is sometimes thought that Islam and Traditional Christianity (Catholic and Eastern Orthodox) are diametrically opposed; however, those who say this are either grossly ignorant or else are secularists trying to play the "divide and conquer" game.

The truth is that Islam - especially Shi'a Islam - and Traditional (Catholic and Eastern Orthodox) Christianity have a vast amount of common ground, that they "overlap" so much that it is often impossible to say where one ends and the other begins.

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During my years at the University of Miami of Ohio, I worked summers in a steel mill to help meet my expenses. One fellow worker, of little formal education but much curiosity, was constantly asking me questions. I gave him a very brief description of Islam, and he said:

"But this sounds exactly like what I learned in Sunday School."

In India a Hindu asked me:

"What is the difference between Christianity and Islam? They seem the same to me."

In this book we have shown a great many examples in which the two faiths seem to merge. Many people, and not only in Spain, have been like Louis Massignon, drawing spiritual sustenance from both Traditional Christianity and Islam (Louis Massignon was a Catholic priest of the Melkite Rite, but a great many Muslims have said that he was "a Muslim at heart"). An example of the above whom we have not mentioned is Ramon Llull (b. 1235, d.1316:).(246)

Among many other things, the polyfacetic genius Ramon Llull (**Llull** is the correct spelling in Catalan) created Catalan as a literary language. Before Ramon Llull, Catalans spoke Catalan, but wrote only in Latin and/or Provençal.

To his great credit, Ramon Llull, like the Shi'a thinkers of Persia, was a bitter enemy of that intellectual and spiritual poison known as "Nominalism". Says Anthony Bonner:

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"No Muslim or Jew, for instance, could disagree that God is One, The He is the first cause of all things, that He is good, great, eternal and so forth. It was these latter divine attributes that Llull made into the cornerstone of his system. He called them Properties, Virtues, Reasons (**Rationes**), Perfections, or, most often, Dignities. In addition, to the usual meaning of the word, dignitas was also the common scholastic translation of the Greek axioma, and it may be that Llull chose the word because of its double meaning. In the Ars Brevis the list is as follows: Goodness, Greatness, Eternity, Power, Wisdom, Will, Virtue, Truth and Glory. Then Llull made a series of affirmations about these dignities: they are not only concordant, but convertible with one another, involving no plurality in God's substance. Moreover, they are real; one scholar (J.H. Probst) speaks of the

archetypal, Platonic nature of Llull's universe and stresses the extreme Realism (in this case, "Realism" means the contrary of Nominalism), citing a passage where Llull uses the dignities to show that the universals really exist outside the soul."(247)

Llull shows that the five predicables (genus, species, difference, property and accident) and the ten predicaments (substance, quality, relation, action, passion, habit, position and time) are real. Llull's later work Liber de quinque praedicabilibus et decem praedicaments (Book of the Five Predicables and the Ten Predicaments) is entirely devoted to proving the same thesis.(248)

St. John of the Cross was certainly familiar with the works of Ramon Llull. However, St. John of the Cross was a "mystic's mystic" and a supremely great poet. The polyfacetic Ramon Llull was indeed a mystic, but had a great many other interests. Though

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a poet and trobador of considerable merit, Ramon Llull was not comparable as a poet to St. John of the Cross. There are indeed similarities between the works of St. John of the Cross on the one hand and the mystical works of Ramon Llull on the other. Both St. John of the Cross and Ramon Llull were influenced by medieval western Christian mysticism, by the trobadors. Indeed, Ramon Llull, Catalan that he was, composed trobador songs in both Catalan and Provençal and by Sufism. However, there are indeed differences between the two.

St. John of the Cross was a Carmelite, an order of which we have spoken earlier. Being a Carmelite, an order of Eastern Origin, as we have said, gives to the works of St. John of the Cross a "flavor" of the great mystics of the Eastern Orthodox Church, said Eastern influence being arguably stronger than that of the medieval Catholic mystics, as we have said above.

Ramon Llull was a member of the Franciscan Order, founded by St. Francis of Assisi, and his works show the profound influence of the great Franciscan mystic Thomas a Kempis and his great work Imitation of Christ, which also influenced the Morisco scholar the Mancebo de Arevalo, as we shall see below. Typically Franciscan, many of Ramon Llull's mystical verses deal with the Passion of Jesus Christ, something absent in St. John of the Cross. Also absent in St. John of the Cross is the Franciscan ideal of

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poverty, as reflected in the following verse from Book of the Lover and the Beloved by Ramon Llull:

"The lover went from door to door begging alms, to remember the Beloved's love for His servants, and to practice humility, poverty and patience, all of which are things pleasing to the Beloved." verse 274

As we said above, mystical allegories and symbolism are abundant in trobador verse. Also, trobador verse and Sufi verse, both Arabic and especially Persian have many themes in common, as

we have said. To what degree this is due to Sufi influence is a matter of fierce debate, and for which there is no certain answer. We have said that the prosody of trobador verse does not derive from Classical Arabic verse, but rather has Celtic roots. However, the Islamic influence, both Persian and Hispano-Arabic, on the content of trobador verse is a fact, though the degree of said influence is highly debatable. Ramon Llull himself never denied the Sufi influence. To those surprised by the above, remember, the Inquisition was not introduced in Spain until 1484, 168 years after the death of Ramon Llull, so he had no fear of the Inquisition. Ramon Llull says at the very beginning of Book of the Lover and the Beloved:

"A Saracen (Muslim) told him that the Saracens had certain religious men, among whom the most highly considered were those called "Sufis", and that these men had words of love and brief examples which aroused great devotion in men."(249)

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Specifically Provençal trobador elements appear in the mystical works of Ramon Llull, such as birds singing at dawn, the bird messenger, the flowers of Spring, the albada or dawn. Feudal and chivalrous elements also appear, such as honor and dishonor, noble barons, counties, duchies, serfs and a long et cetera. Below are some examples of trobador and feudal elements in Book of the Lover and the Beloved a major mystical work of Ramon Llull:

"Our Lady (the Virgin Mary) brought her Son (Jesus) to the lover so that in his book he might write of the virtues of Our Lady." Verse 15.

"Tell us, o singing bird, have you put yourself in the care of my Beloved so that He may protect you from lack of love, and increase your love?" The bird replied: "And who is it who makes me sing, if not the Lord of Love, for whom lack of love is a dishonor?" verse 16.

"The birds sang of the dawn (alba, whence albada), and the lover, who is the dawn, awoke. The birds ended their song, and the lover died in the dawn for his Beloved." Verse 26. Note the albada of the trobadors.

"Tell me, o bird who sings of love to the Beloved, why does He Who has taken me as His servant torment me with love?" The bird answered: "If you did not suffer the pains of love, how else would you love your Beloved?" verse 35. (Note the "bird messenger" so typical of the Provençal trobadors.)

"The lover followed the paths of his Beloved absorbed in thought. He tripped and fell among the thorns, and it seemed to him that they were flowers and that he lay on a bed of love." Verse 36.

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"With eyes of thoughts and griefs, sighs and weeping, the lover gazed upon his Beloved. And with eyes of grace, justice, pity, mercy and generosity, the Beloved contemplated His lover. And a bird sang of the delights of the above sight." Verse 41.

"A bird was singing on a branch in leaf and flower, and the breeze stirred the leaves and bore with it the scent of the flowers. The lover asked the bird what the movement of the leaves and the scent of the flowers signified. The bird answered: "The stirring of the leaves signifies obedience, and the scent of the flowers suffering and sorrow." Verse 58.

"On a great feast day the Beloved held court for a group of noble barons, offering a great banquet and many gifts. The lover came to this court, and the Beloved

said to him, "Who asked you to come to my court?" The lover replied, "necessity and love impelled me to come so I could behold Your beauty and Bearing." Verse 96.

A bird was singing on a branch, saying: "I will give a new thought to the lover, and he will give me two." The bird gave the new thought to the lover, and the lover gave two to the bird to lessen his torments. But the lover felt his pain of love increase." Verse 116.

Tell us, fool, do you have money?" he replied, "I have a Beloved." "Do you have towns, castles, cities, counties or duchies?" He answered: "I have love, thoughts, tears, desires, hardships and suffering, which are better than empires or kingdoms." Verse 177.

"The Beloved, with his honors, bought a slave subject to cares, suffering, sighs and tears. He asked him what he ate and drank. He answered, "Whatever you wish." He asked him how he was clothed. He answered, "However you wish." The Beloved then asked, "Have you no will of your own?" He answered: "A serf and subject has no other will than that of obeying his Lord and Beloved." Verse 220.

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However, in his more abstract Sufi verses, Ramon Llull uses Provençal troubador themes less and relies on "the Arabic manner of speaking", with its constant repetition of key words, constant play of opposites and personification of abstract ideas. Perhaps the most obvious and unique Sufi influence found in the Book of the Lover and the Beloved is the masculine gender of the lover and the Beloved.(250) This radically separates Ramon Llull from the Provençal troubadors, for whom even the slightest hint of homosexuality was pure anathema. This is true of the troubador works which contain mystical symbolisms as well as the purely

profane works. It also separates Ramon Llull from St. John of the Cross, who was very much a "macho Spaniard" or **macho Iberico**. For St. John of the Cross, the human soul is the **amada**, feminine gender, the bride of her Beloved, the **amado**, masculine gender. I do not mean to insinuate that Ramon Llull was homosexual, something for which there is no evidence whatever.

In general the Provençal trobador influence is much stronger in the works of the Catalan Ramon Llull than it is in the works of the Castilian St. John of the Cross, as one might expect. This is not to say by any means that Provençal trobador influences are not prominent in the works of St. John of the Cross, merely that they are less prominent in the works of the Castilian poet and mystic than they are in the works of Ramon Llull.

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The Islamic or Sufi influence is stronger in the works of St. John of the Cross than it is in those of Ramon Llull. Also, said Islamic influence in the works of St. John of the Cross is far broader, far more extensive and far more comprehensive, including vastly more Sufi poets and Islamic thinkers.

In summary, Anthony Bonner says:

"In the history of Western (Christian) Mysticism, there is nothing quite like this work (Book of the Lover and the Beloved), with its curious blend of trobador, Franciscan and Islamic influences, mixed with Llull's own special outlook based on the Art (reference to Llull's works Ars Brevis, Ars Magna and Ars mystica theologiae et philosophiae) on the necessary equality

of the powers of the soul and on the concept of lover and Beloved separate yet joined through love. The result is a work of great subtlety, beauty and originality."(251)

As we said before, the influence of Suhrawardi and his philosophy of Ishraq is very prominent in the works of St. John of the Cross. Some, including Muhammad Suheyl Umar, have said:

"Needless to say, in medieval Christianity one could also distinguish between the (mystical) theology of a St. Bernard (of Clairvaux), the philosophy of (St.) Albertus Magnus, and the gnosis of a Meister Eckhart, not to speak of a Roger Bacon or Raymond Lull, who correspond more to the school of Ishraq of Suhrawardi than anything else if a comparison is to be made with the Islamic tradition."(252)

Though I cannot claim to have read all the works of Ramon Lull, I really do not see any close affinity with Suhrawardi and his school of Ishraq in the case of Ramon Lull. It seems obvious

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to me that al-Ghazzali is far closer to Ramon Lull than is Suhrawardi. In the works of St. John of the Cross the influence of Ibn Arabi al-Mursi, Suhrawardi the Shi'a Imams (particularly Imam Hussein, the 3rd Imam, and Ja'afar as-Sadiq, 6th Imam, and Imam Ali Reza, the 8th Imam), Ibn Abbad of Ronda and others too numerous to mention is obvious; I do not see such influences in the works of Ramon Lull.

We have already mentioned the Morisco scholar and author known as "The Mancebo de Arevalo" a number of times. One of the Mancebo's books is Sumario de la relacion y ejercicio espiritual

(Summary of Spiritual Relation and Exercise). Gregorio Fonseca of the University of Oviedo (Asturias, Spain) has demonstrated that one of the sources of the Mancebo's Sumario ... is the Catholic devotional classic Imitatio Christi (Imitation of Christ) by the great mystic of the Augustinian Order Thomas a Kempis.(253)

I hope the reader will pardon a brief digression concerning a fascinating subject, the libros plumbeos or "leaden books", perhaps the last books written in Arabic in Spain, or, to put it another way, "the last gasp of Hispano-Arabic literature".

During my years in Granada I read and heard a great deal about the libros plumbeos. I even knew people - no doubt of Morisco ancestry - who firmly believed in the authenticity of the libros plumbeos, in spite of all the evidence to the contrary.

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Near the Albaicin Quarter of Granada and accross the Rio Dauro from the Alhambra is a hill honeycombed with caves known as "Sacromonte". According to ancient and persistent legends, the caves of Sacromonte once served as catacombs and there were early Christians were martyred there during the Roman persecutions. Hence the name Sacromonte, which means "Holy Mountain".

From 1588 to 1595 in the Sacromonte were discovered engraved leaden tablets. On said tablets were inscribed very archaic-looking letters. The language of the tablets proved to be Arabic,

purportedly written by two disciples of St. James the Greater, disciple and cousin of Jesus. The tomb of St. James the Greater in Santiago de Compostela has been a goal of pilgrimages for more than 1,000 years. These supposed followers of St. James were Tesifon Ibnatar and his brother, Cecilio Ibnatar, Arabs (Nabataeans?) by birth. The discovery of these tablets, of course, caused great excitement and jubilation in Granada.

However, local scholars, including the Morisco Jesuit Fr. Ignacio de las Casas, S.J., soon noted that the **libros plumbeos** (lead books) were written in an angular calligraphic style of Arabic letters known as "Solomonic". This style was never common, and was obviously used to give the tablets an archaic look. However, despite the unusual calligraphy, the tablets were inscribed using a variant style of the Arabic alphabet, which was

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not invented, or rather adapted to the Arabic language from the Syriac alphabet, until some centuries after the time of St. James.

The **libros plumbeos** were therefore blatant anachronisms and forgeries, however much one might wish that they were authentic.

We will not go into details concerning the content of the *Libros plumbeos*. In large part said *libros plumbeos* appear to be an attempt to arrive at a synthesis between Catholicism and Islam, to emphasize the much common ground that the two sister faiths share, and to infiltrate purely Islamic teachings into Catholicism "by the back door". A striking example of the above is the

following phrase in the libros plumbeos:

"There is no god but God and Jesus (Christ) is the Spirit of God",

a close paraphrase of the Sunni version of the Islamic "Shahada" or profession of faith:

"There is no god but God and Muhammad is the Messenger of God" (the Shi'a version adds "... and Ali is the Friend of God").

How very Qur'anic and Islamic and at one and the same time how very Catholic!

As we said earlier, the Nimatullahi Order is a Shi'a Sufi Order numerous in Iran and the Indian Subcontinent; its present Master is Dr. Javad Nurbaksh.(254) "Spirit of God" is a title used for Jesus is used with great frequency among the Nimatullahi Order.(255) In fact, the use of "Spirit of God" as a title for

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Jesus is a commonplace among Shi'as in general; for example, as such it is very frequently used in ziyarat rituals at the tomb of Imam Hussein in Karbala. For example, we find the following expression in a ziyarah prayer composed by Muhammad ibn al-Hasan, the 12th Imam, to be recited only on Ashura at the tomb of his ancestor Imam Hussein in Karbala:

"Peace be upon Jesus, the Spirit of God and His Word".(256)

In the above one detects an echo of the 1st Chapter of the Gospel (Injil) of St. John.

The libros plumbeos also contain typically Morisco elements,

which are thus given a Christian Apostolic sanction.

The scholarly consensus is that the libros plumbeos were the work of those learned and ingenious Moriscos Alonso del Castillo and Miguel de Luna (there appears have been more than one author). They inscribed the leaden tablets using the Solomonic calligraphic style to make them look archaic, and planted them in Sacromonte because of its association with early Christian legends and, probably, history. Their motives were to exalt their native city of Granada and their people, the Moriscos, the "100% Granadinos", and, mainly to insure the survival of the Moriscos and their culture by means of what might be called spiritual and cultural infiltration of the Spanish Catholic community.(257)

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As we have seen, to a great extent the Moriscos did succeed in the spiritual infiltration of the Spanish Catholic community, though in ways that Alonso del Castillo and Miguel de Luna never foresaw (or maybe they did? Quien sabe? Who Knows?).

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