

Embedded Narrative and Its Thematic Impact in *Kalila wa Dimna*: A Case Study of “The Chapter of the Lion and the Bull”

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Abstract

Abdullah Ibn Al-Muqaffa's Kalila and Dimna is considered a masterpiece of classical Arabic literature. As an inspiring literary-political fable, it has to be revisited and given what it deserves of research. This study aims to shed light on the frame-story which makes the book interesting and exceptional. The unconventional narrative technique of adopting embedded stories – stories within stories – was the writer's secret success to convey moral lessons and implicit political messages in a literal and subtle way. It will critically discuss how this technique is one of the major causes of the persistence of Kalila and Diman as a prominent literary text in the world of Educational Literature.

Key Words: *Ibn Al-Muqaffa, Kalila and Dinma, narrative technique, embedded-story*

1. Introduction

The book *Kalila wa Dimna* is considered one of the pillars of the Arab literary heritage. It was translated into Arabic by the well-known essayist Abdullah Ibn Al-Muqaffa, instructed by the Abbasid Caliph Abu Ja'afar Al-Mansour. The Abbasids were interested in literature and arts and encouraged writers and translators to communicate with other civilizations in the East or the West and benefit from their heritage and translate their valuable books in philosophy, literature and other sciences. Indeed, translation has played a major role in the prosperity of all pillars of the state and its sciences in various fields.

Abdullah Ibn Al-Muqaffa, originally named Ruzbeh Bin Dadueh, was born in 106 A.H, 756 A.D. of Persian origin. He was born a Magian, but moved to Basra and settled there, and after he became Muslim, he changed his name to Abdullah. He mastered Arabic and his knowledge of Persian helped him translate many books from Persian into Arabic, the most famous of which is *Kalila wa Dimna*.

Abdullah Ibn Al-Muqaffa was a philosopher and a well-versed intellectual in literature, politics and logic. He was distinguished by the multiplicity of cultures, as he combined the Arab and Persian cultures and the wisdom of the Indians and Greek philosophy that followed them. The Persians translated the books of India and Greece after Alexander conquered Persia, and Greek philosophy spread in it. His masterpiece *Kalila wa Dimna* is considered one of the first prose writings in Arabic literature.

The original version of *Kalila wa Dimna* was the Indian book of wisdom *Panchatantra* which was written in Sanskrit verse about 200 B.C. by a great Hindu scholar, Pandit Vishnu Sharma. In the course of time, this collection of stories has been translated into "50 or more languages of the world" (Sharma v). It is claimed that "a version of the *Panchatantra* was composed in

the Pahlavi language of pre-Islamic Iran sometime in the 6th century A.D., being followed by an Arabic one in the 8th century A.D. The Greek translation was made towards the close of the 11th century A.D. from which it was translated into various European languages" (v).

In the reign of Khosrov Anuşirev (531-579 AD) the work was brought from India and translated into the Middle Persian (Pahlavi) language. It was first translated into the Syriac language in 570, then into Arabic in 753. However, "the original Indian version brought to Iran was lost as well as the first translation into the Middle Persian was lost, the Syriac translation was forgotten. Thus, the translation by Ibn Al-Muqaffa replaced the original and served as a resource for translations performed in all languages" (Ktas 46-47).

The other source of *Kalila wa Dimna* is the Indian book *Mahabharata*. Abdulwahab Azzam and Taha Hussein divided the Arabic manuscript, which they investigated and published in 1941, into four sections; introductions, the first five chapters which are found in the Indian origin *Panchatantra*, three chapters which are known in *Mahabharata*, and finally the chapters which are found in some Arabic versions and missed in others (*K&D* 36).

2. The Embedded Narrative as a Literary Device

The embedded narrative is a literary device or technique where a story or more are embedded in the main story. It is also called a 'frame story' as it is "enclosed within a frame narrative as a tale-within-the tale, like the pilgrims' stories in the *Canterbury Tales*, which are embedded within Chaucer's account of the journey to Canterbury" (Baldick 77). When the writer presents a story within a story, a frame narrative takes the reader from the first story to another on different levels, which is within the larger story. This phenomenon, as Gervas claims, has

received a lot of attention in narratology “where the stories inserted into other stories are known as embedded stories and the different stories so connected are known as different narrative levels” (23). This orientation allows the narrative frame to set the context for the embedded narrative and pay attention to the situation in which the story is being told.

The frame story is in the introductory story which is the first level or layer of the narrative. Then a character or characters in the narrative begin telling/narrating the embedded stories. However, a frame tale is not simply an anthology of stories. It is rather “a fictional narrative (usually prose but not necessarily so) composed primarily for the purpose of presenting other narratives” (Irwin 28). In his attempt to help readers understand and analyse embedded narrative, Genette suggests a model for the analysis of narrative levels which is centered on the concept of *diegesis*, the narrative’s entire created world or an act of telling. According to him, when a story is told, the narrator and the audience standing outside the story being told which is the *extradiegetic* level. “If a character within the story tells a second story, this creates a second narrative level, considered *intradiegetic* – inside the telling – with respect to the enclosing main story” (Qt. in Gervas 24). Furthermore, if more stories are told within the second story, then the same situation can be replicated. So, each level of telling is considered a narrative level or *diegetic* level. Waldron called this system ‘the narrative hierarchy’ stressing that subordination in this sense indicates dependency rather than inferiority:

Narrative B is subordinate to Narrative A if Narrative B is mediated by Narrative A — that is, when the discourse of B is represented as an event on the story level of A. B is subordinate because it depends on A for its transmission and is thus, logically speaking, further removed

from the reader. Where this subordination relationship exists, we can say that one narrative is embedded in the other narrative or that the other narrative embeds it. Where a text consists of three rather than two narratives, it is possible for a narrative to be both embedded and embedding: for example, if Narrative A embeds Narrative B, which in turn embeds Narrative C. I will refer to this pattern of embedding, regardless of the number of narratives involved, as vertical embedding. Alternatively, Narrative A could embed B and C — horizontal embedding. It is also possible for A and B to be on the same level, but for one of them to embed C. With more narratives, the possible permutations increase. (14)

Hence, the question arises: What is/are the purpose/ purposes that the writer wants to accomplish in the embedded narrative technique? Actually, multiple purposes could be achieved whether aesthetic, dramatic or thematic. It can be used as a means of adding diversity and complexity to the narrative act. It also can develop certain and diverse themes in multiple plots from different perspectives. Shlomith Rimmon Kenan argues that the ‘Hypodiegetic’ narrative may have various functions in relation to the narratives within which they are embedded. She then illustrates three main functions:

- 1- Actional Function: Some hypodiegetic narratives maintain or advance the action of the first narrative.
- 2- Explicative Function: The hypodiegetic level offers an explanation of the diegetic level.
- 3- Thematic Function: The relations established between the hypodiegetic and the diegetic levels are those of analogy, i.e. similarity and contrast. (Kenan 93)

The embedded narrative is noticeably a traditional technique. It appears to have been an eastern invention, most likely originating in India, where it can be traced back at least three

millennia and then moving through the Near East. Referring to many well-known embedded narratives, Irwin divided the 'frame tale' into two major groups. The first one is the student/teacher tale; "primarily didactic in intent, this type has a single narrator who is a teacher or counselor telling stories to educate his student, usually a prince" (29). This group of tales falls within a larger genre of advice books, sometimes called "Mirrors for Princes." The other group is primarily entertaining "and can have any number of narrators, listeners, and themes, thus depicting a variety of performance contexts" (30).

3. The Thematic Impact of the Embedded Narrative in *Kalila wa Dimna*

Through a careful and critical reading of Ibn Al-Muqaffa's *Kalila wa Dimna*, the conscious reader can easily conclude that it is not a literal translation of the Indian heritage *Panchatantra*, but Ibn Al-Muqaffa, undoubtedly, found in this book and in the encouragement of the Abbasid Caliph Abu Jaafar al-Mansur his aspiration to express his own philosophical and political views without facing any potential punishment. He found in the fable the most effective, fastest and safest way to convey the idea and teach moral lessons, so he contributed to introducing it into Arabic literature and making it, with his refined style, one of the most important literary forms of his time. Thus, critics such as J. D. Latham commend Ibn Al-Muqaffa for having introduced literary prose narrative to Arabic literature at a time when lyric poetry as a genre was highly regarded and for having forged an effective and pleasing prose style (Marroum 514).

Politically, *Kalila wa Dimna* belongs to a genre called "mirrors for princes" which refers to works of advice offered to rulers. These works were intended to provoke self-examination on the part of the ruler by providing him or her with standards of conduct and examples of virtuous

leaders to imitate. The hope of the advice literature was that "it might be used to educate a ruler, to shape his or her character for the good of his subjects" (Blaydes et al 6). Hence, Ibn Al-Muqaffa was aware, as a royal secretary and adviser, of the power of language and literary discourse to achieve double objectives simultaneously. Firstly, to fulfill the desire of the ruler to legitimize his rule and leave a legacy like his fellow kings. Secondly, to, implicitly, convey his socio-political thoughts. In the words of Sangaryi and Ahmadpanah, he successfully applied the remarkable discursive concepts through which discourse analysts study power relations which are "persuasion" and "legitimization" (21).

Elif Aktaş and Adem Beldağ in their article "*Kalila and Dimna* as One of the Traditional Antecedents of Modern Classifications of Values" (2016) focusing on the political and moral values of *Kalila wa Dimna* considered it as "a political morality and advice book that is still in effect thanks to the knowledge of wisdom it offers" (46). The book, they claimed, "describes the qualifications of an ideal executive (ruler, viziers)" (47). Through the mouths of the animal heroes, the author "could imply criticisms and suggestions to rulers, courtiers and the society which could not be brought openly" (47).

In his preface to the book, Ibn Al-Muqaffa hinted at what he aims at from this book, its importance and how to benefit from it, trying to distance himself from direct responsibility for what may be understood from the hidden objectives of the tales. He introduces that the book "is among the tales of wisdom that the scholars of India have put together, which they sought, the most eloquent they can find of speech in the manner they wanted... And they summarized in it the eloquent and elaborate speech on the mouths of birds and beasts" (K&D 45). As the book combines both wisdom and

entertainment, the author advised readers to read it well so that they understand its meanings and deduce its wisdom and advice. In this sense, Marroum argued that

Ibn Al-Muqaffa uses his prefatory annotations as tools to pave the way for his grafting unto the medial part of the text his philosophical views on rationality, knowledge, active engagement, and destiny, to name a few. Suffice to say that in this section, he also produces a literary work artistically and didactically on par with the original Pahlavi fables. (530)

Then Ibn Al-Muqaffa concludes his preface by insisting the readers pay more attention to the moral lessons rather than just entertainment; “Whoever reads this book, let him follow what is in this chapter [his preface]. I hope that it [the book] will increase his insight and knowledge, and if he knows it, he will be satisfied and dispense with others, and if he does not know it, he will get any benefit” (K&D 51).

For Ibn Al-Muqaffa, the embedded narrative was the best and most appropriate technique to create a bulk of stories that carry multiple themes and, thus, convey his thoughts and send his messages to readers through the mouths of the animals. These stories were interspersed with deep dialogues full of wisdom as if they were between great philosophers and not just simple animal characters, and this is what distinguishes Ibn Al-Muqaffa’s version from the Indian and Persian versions.

Ibn Al-Muqaffa has successfully built a complex frame narrative of four levels with a combination of twenty tales in chapter one (The Lion and the Bull) which will be under focus in this study. His success lies in the good selection of the locations of the embedded stories and their connection to the main idea, which does not lead to any possible distraction of the reader from the main content of the discourse. Thus, it goes beyond the defect discussed by Hansen in his article “Reading Embedded Narration” when

he warns that a frame narrative of more than three levels may distract the reader from getting greater profit. “The greater the number of levels there are”, he claims, “the less likely they are to be relevant to the aims of the primary narrator, and deep embedding is difficult for a narrator to handle clearly and for an audience to follow comfortably” (115). On the contrary, Ibn Al-Muqaffa could make his text a system for generating meaning and wisdom at every level in the embedded narrative.

The present study is not intended to attempt a linguistic approach to the narrative technique of *Kalila wa Dimna*; it rather focuses on the ideological aspect generated from this specific device of narratology. In “The Chapter of the Lion and the Bull”, the writer creates a fictional animal world with a government system that mimics what is really practiced in his age. All the animals in this book are examples, allegories or symbols of real and ordinary human beings that are formed in the objective and social conditions of their personalities. Their personality is born of social requirements, and their actions, behaviors, and speech correspond exactly to those of human beings with whom we are familiar in human societies.

Under the umbrella of the major theme, which is the necessity of reforming the relationship between the ruler and the ruled and avoiding what might spoil and destroy it, each embedded tale presents a moral lesson and wisdom between the characters in the form of an elegant philosophical debate. The embedding narrative which is a brief scene that sets the context for a much larger story that is the real body of the narrative is narrated by the third person omniscient and the narratee is the reader or the audience. The scene opens up with a conversation between the king of India Dabshalim and Paidapa, the head of his philosophers which states the major theme of the narrative in a form of a request: “Give me an

example of two loving men who are separated by a liar and deceiver man and lead them to enmity and hatred” (K&D 73).

Tale	Level of Narrative	Narrator	Narratee	Characters	Theme
King Dabshalim and his vizor Paidapa	ONE	Third-person omniscient	The readers/ the audience	1- Dabshalim 2- Paidapa	The wise ruler is the one who does not dispense with the advice of people of sound opinion.

Now the reader is introduced to the second level of the narrative and the main body of the story which has multiple levels of frames narrated from different perspectives by multiple narrators. Besides the frame story (embedding narrative), there are 19 embedded stories in which 1 is narrated by Paidapa, 8 by Kalila, 6 by Dimna, 1 by the jackal, 1 by the bull, 1 by the sandpiper and 1 by the cunning man’s father.

The second level of the narrative is the story of the lion and the bull which embeds the third and fourth levels of the narrative. It is the story of a wealthy merchant who has four sons who do not know a trade and who dispose of their father’s money without any account. When their father noticed this, he gathered them together and instructed them to be careful with money and not to spend it on something other than what it

deserves. His elder brother decided to have a trade journey to Mathura. He had two bulls one is called Shatraba and the other is Nandaba. He came on his way to a very muddy place where Shatraba fell and could hardly move. After being saved the dull was very tired to move so the merchant decided to leave with him one of his servants. But after a while, the servant got bored and decided to leave the bull and falsely claimed to his master that the bull had died. But Shatraba recovered and his strength returned to him. When the king of the jungle, the lion ‘Binkala’ heard the roar of the bull, he got frightened by the strange voice. The two jackals ‘Kalila’ and ‘Diman’ noticed that and after consulting each other, Dimna decided to help the king.

Tale	Level of Narrative	Narrator	Narratee	Characters	Theme
The Lion and the Bull	TWO	Paidapa	Dabshalim	- The merchant - The merchant’s four sons. - The bull (Shatraba) - The jackals (Kalila and Dimna) - the lion (Binkala)	A great friendship and deep love may be spoiled by the lying traitor.

The third and fourth levels of the narrative raise the recurrent argument of the true and strong relationship between the ruler and his people, particularly his entourage and advisers. In this respect, we have two primary political ideologies represented by the two heroes of the narrative, Kalila and Dimna. The first political

strategy is seeking power and influence in various ways, regardless of their legitimacy and morality. The representative of this attitude is Dimna who is mostly driven by the instinct of control, envy and keenness not to lose what he has reached in terms of prestige and place with the ruler. On the other hand, Kalila represents

the conservative approach based on obedience to the ruler, adherence to his choices and directions, and providing positive advice in a way that does not affect the unity and stability of the state. In other words, the embedded narratives with their subthemes are used by the heroes/narrators to give logical support to their political beliefs.

4.1. Kalila: The Symbol of Obedience and Satisfaction with Social Status

Kalila believes that a person should always be grateful and content with his social status and that illegitimate ambition will cause many problems and its consequences may be catastrophic for society and individuals, rulers and ruled. Thus, all the tales narrated by Kalila show that he tries his best to convince his brother Dimna of the need to abandon his negative interventions between the king and his entourage, and his diabolical plans to entrap the lion and his close friend the bull, and what he would only gain from these evil plots is loss and regret.

The debate starts when Dimna consults Kalila about his decision to know what is happening to the king and offer his help. Kalila was very cautious and unenthusiastic about the idea for fear of repercussions and began telling him the tale of the monkey and the carpenter:

A monkey once saw a carpenter splitting a log using two wedges, straddling it like a knight on horseback. Whenever he split a cubit's length, he would drive in a wedge, sitting astride the log like a rider on a mount. At one point, the carpenter got up to relieve himself, and the monkey dashed over to try his hand at something that was none of his business. He straddled the log, with his back toward the split and his face toward the wedge, with his testicles dangling in the split, and pulled out the wedge. When the wedge came out, the log closed with his testicles deep in the split. He fell over in a

faint, and the beating he received from the carpenter was worse still. (*Kalila wa Dimna* 76) But Dimna turned down Kalila's advice and politely argued: "I have believed in what you said and understood it, but I know that he who does not experience horrors will not attain what he desires, and who abandons a matter that may fulfill his need for fear of what he may face will not attain what he wants" (78).

Kalila continued his warnings to his brother Dimna about the consequences of his interference in the affairs of the king and his entourage, and that it might cause him pain and heartbreak, narrating the tale of the hermit and thief which embeds three more tales:

A hermit once got a luxury livery as a gift from some kings but a thief saw him and decided to make a trick to steal it. He pretended that he was eager to accompany him to learn from him. The hermit welcomed him and later on trusted him for being a polite and good servant. But the thief took the hermit's clothes and disappeared. The hermit went out looking for him in one of the cities where he witnessed a series of events that taught him a lesson. Firstly, the hermit came across two bleeding ibexes that butted each other, and a fox came to lick their blood. While he was licking, they suddenly attacked and killed him. Then, the hermit went to the city and spent the night in the house of a promiscuous woman, and her maidservant was in love with a man. On that night, the woman decided to kill the lover of her maidservant, so she made him drunk, then she put poison in a reed and wanted to put it in his anus, but he issued a smell that pushed the poison into her mouth, and she died. The next day, the cobbler hosted the hermit in his house. When the cobbler left the house, the hermit discovered that the cobbler's wife was in an illegal affair with a man and the mediator between them was the cupping therapist's wife, her neighbor whom she sent to tell her paramour to come in the evening and wait in front of the

door. While he was waiting, the cobbler caught him and decided to punish his wife. He beat her and tied her to one of the pillars of the house. She then requested her neighbour to replace her for a while. Soon, the cobbler got angry with her and cut her nose with a knife. So, she went to her house and she did not know what to say to her husband and how to tell him about the one who cut her nose, so she decided to provoke his

anger until he threw a piece of the razor at her, and she claimed that he had cut her nose, so she complained to her family and they went to the judge. (83-84)

All the remaining stories that Kalila narrated confirm his political view based on contentment with the social position he lives in and not interfering in the affairs of government except with positive advice

Tale	Level of Narrative	Narrator	Narratee	Characters	Theme
The monkey and the carpenter	THREE	Kalila	Dimna	-The monkey -The carpenter	Do not meddle in other than your business and what does not concern you.
The hermit and the thief	THREE	Kalila	Dimna	-The hermit -The thief	A person may fall into the evil of his evil plans.
The two ibexes and the fox	FOUR	Kalila	Dimna	-two ibexes -fox	Even the opponents may unite to attack their enemy
The immoral woman and her maidservant	FOUR	Kalila	Dimna	-immoral woman -maidservant maidservant's lover	A person may fall into the evil of his evil plans.
The cobbler and his wife	FOUR	Kalila	Dimna	-the cobbler -his wife -her lover - the cupping therapist -his wife	A person may fall into the evil of his evil plans.
The monkeys and the bird	THREE	Kalila	Dimna	-monkeys -a bird -a man	Do not seek to correct what is not fair, and do not explain to someone who does not understand.
The cunning man and the stupid man	THREE	Kalila	Dimna	-the cunning man -his father -the stupid man -the judge	Deception and cunning may degrade and destroy their owner
The toad and the weasel	FOUR	The cunning man's father	The cunning man	-the toad -the weasel -the black snake	The evil plot does not encompass except its own people
The merchant and his friend	THREE	Kalila	Dimna	-the merchant -his friend -his friend's son	If you deceived someone who trusted you, expect betrayal from him.

3.2. Dimna: The End Justifies the Means

Dimna demonstrated a great ability to persuade and defend his political strategy through sober dialogue and supporting stories. He was able, from the first moment, and at the first meeting between them, to obtain the respect and trust of the king (the lion) and to take his advice on the necessity of getting to know the bull closely and not give in to feelings of fear of it. He narrated the tale of the fox to the king to support his view: They claimed that a hungry fox passed by a bush in which there was a drum hanging from a tree, so the wind blew and made the bars of the tree strike that drum, and it made a loud sound. He thought that it was due to his large amount of fat and flesh, so he treated him until he split it, and when he saw it was hollow, he said: I do not know, perhaps the least valuable things are the ones that are big and loud. (80-81)

Despite the success of Dimna in gaining the trust of the lion and introducing him to the bull, he began to feel very jealous of the position that the bull had become with the king, as he became his most important advisor, so Dimna decided to spoil and destroy this relationship and went again to take advice from his brother Kalila and the second session of the debate started.

Kalila reminded Dimna of his expectations that came to be true and warned him not to do more foolishness so that he would not get into more trouble. However, Dimna argued that he is confident in his ability to achieve what he aspires to and that his intelligence will be the weapon by which he overcomes troubles and difficulties. He then supported his argument with the narration of the tale of the crow and the black snake:

There was a crow that lived in a tree and a snake that lived at the bottom of its burrow. However, the serpent ate the crow's eggs. In revenge, the crow intended to gouge out the snake's eyes but was discouraged by a jackal who told him to

play it smart. The jackal advised the crow to steal a human's jewelry and pretend to throw it down the snake's burrow. When the crow did this, the humans followed the crow to the burrow and after finding the snake, killed it and retrieved the jewels, thus relieving the crow from the snake. (86-87)

Kalila was not convinced by what Dimna said and assured him that the lion, in addition to his strength and big size, has a mind and wisdom with which he can reveal Dimna's tricks and plans. But Dimna showed great confidence in himself, adhering to his view that cunning is more powerful than physical strength, supporting his argument with the story of the lion and the rabbit:

There was a lion ruling over a jungle and frightened other animals. So, they gathered together and offered to present the lion a meal of one animal a day as an offering, so that he would not hurt or hunt them. One day the draw fell to a smart rabbit to be the offered meal to the lion. The rabbit planned to escape his destiny. He did not arrive on time and kept the lion waiting hungrily. When the rabbit arrived, he was empty-handed. Furiously, the lion demanded to know why. The rabbit claimed that he was going to present another rabbit as a meal, but this rabbit refused and claimed that he was going to feed on the real king of the jungle, another lion. The lion exasperated by this challenge of authority and asked the rabbit to take him to see the other lion. The rabbit took the lion to the edge of a well and showed the lion their reflections in the water. The lion roared and jumped into the well and drowned. (87)

In this way, Dimna continued to use tales to confirm the legitimacy and validity of his strategy in dealing with the ruler to obtain a high position with him and his participation in the administration of government through opinion and advice.

Tale	Level of Narrative	Narrator	Narratee	Characters	Theme
The fox	THREE	Dimna	The lion Binkala	- The fox	It is better not to be deceived by the outward appearance of things.
The crow and the black snake	THREE	Dimna	Kalila	-The crow -The black snake -The jackal	Fraud may be rewarded for what strength does not.
The toad and the crab	FOUR	The jackal	The crow	-the toad -the crab -the fish	Some tricks destroy their owner.
The lion and the rabbit	THREE	Dimna	Kalila	-the lion -the rabbit -wild animals	The owner of resourcefulness and deception may overcome the owner of strength and tyranny.
The three fish	THREE	Dimna	The lion (Binkala)	-three fish - two fishermen	Too much reluctance to make decisions leads to losses.
The louse and the flea	THREE	Dimna	The lion (Binkala)	-the louse -the flea -a noble man	Do not insure yourself with a person whose nature or morals you do not know.
The crow, the jackal, the wolf, the camel and the lion	THREE	The bull (Shatraba)	Dimna	- the crow -the jackal -the wolf -the lion	Do not believe in bad friends, and do not wait for the fulfillment of the covenant from a killer.
The toad and the weasel	FOUR	The cunning man's father	The cunning man	-the toad -the weasel -the black snake	The evil plot does not encompass except its own people
The sea agent, and the sandpiper	THREE	Dimna	The bull	-the sea agent -the sandpiper - the sandpiper's wife - the Phoenix	He who does not hear the beneficial sayings of his friends will suffer loss
The turtle and the two ducks	FOUR	the sandpiper's wife	the sandpiper	-the turtle -the two ducks	He who does not hear the beneficial sayings of his friends may lose his life.

4. Conclusion

Through a critical reading of *Kalila wa Dimna*, it is clear that Abdullah Ibn Al-Muqaffa was fully aware that what he found in the Indian and Persian heritage of tales on the tongues of animals would achieve his goals and ambitions in building a solid base for his political philosophy that defined the nature of the relationship between the ruler and his people without direct confrontation with the arrogance of the rulers. He has also found in the embedded narrative his way to communicate his complex messages and multiple ideas through which he seeks not only to entertain the readers but also to guide and educate them. In "The Chapter of the Lion and the Bull", the two main characters in the tale represented a clear picture of the serious philosophical debate that relies on strong arguments supported by purposeful stories and the superior ability to persuade the opponent and through him the readers.

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