

CLASS:-11TH,
HISTORY NOTES,
CHAPTER:-04

RISE OF ISLAM

(B) Books of moral lessons and amusement

- The catalogue (**Kitab al-Fihrist**) of a Baghdad bookseller, **Ibn Nadim** (d. 895), describes a large number of works written in prose for the moral education and amusement of readers. The oldest of these is a collection of animal fables called **Kalila wa Dimna** (the names of the two jackals who were the leading characters) which is the Arabic translation of a Pahlavi version of the **Panchtantra**.
 - The most widespread and lasting literary works are the stories of hero-adventurers such as **Alexander (al-Iskandar)** and **Sindbad**, or those of unhappy lovers such as **Qays** (known as Majnun or the Madman). These have developed over the centuries into oral and written traditions. The Thousand and One Nights is another collection of stories told by a single narrator, **Shahrazad**, to her husband night after night.
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- In his **Kitab al-Bukhala** (Book of Misers), **Jahiz of Basra** (d. 868) collected amusing anecdotes about misers and also analysed greed.
 - From the ninth century onwards, the scope of **adab** was expanded to include biographies, manuals of ethics (**akhlaq**), Mirrors for Princes (books on statecraft) and, above all, history (tarikh) and geography.