A study on the effect of the Arabic Literature on the European Literature
-Focus on the transformation of the Buddhist legend-

This paper studies on the rapid flourishing of Arabic culture in Spain under Muslim rule, the wide social and cultural fusion and the spread of Arabic as a language of culture and literature in Andalusian society, common to both Christians and Muslims of Spain. The result was the rise in the late ninth century of a new form of Andalusian poetry, the muwashshah distinct from the conventional Arabic poem. Western scholars, particularly in Spain made efforts to the study of the effect of the muwashshah on the provençal troubadours. This is followed comparison between lyrical European poetry and the muwashshah with analysis of points of resemblance and difference in prevailing themes and concepts.

This paper further surveys the Arabic story collections which found their way into Europe, the Latin translations of such books as

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"Kalila and Dimna" and "The Thousand and One Nights" and their effect on Spanish and neighbouring European literature.

Lastly this paper focuses on the story "Barlaam and Josafat". The Indian origin of this legend revolves round the life of Buddha and his penance. This old Indian legend known as "Lalita Vistara" has been recently discovered, has managed to invade all religions, cultures and languages. It seems that the legend found its way into Arabic through an old Persian translation. And Spain knew this legend through Arabic. Most probably there were two Arabic translations of it which were popular in Muslim Andalusia. The progress of the story reveals a profound influence exercised upon it by an Arabic text of Islamic cast.

The middle ages, with their religious feuds and sharp disputation about the ideal and true religion, were the proper soil for the propagation of this originally Indian legend. This accounts for its popularity in mediaeval literature in different languages. It has thus become the basis of many religious stories and the plays from its transmission up to the beginning of the modern age.

[Key Words : Arabic Literature, European Literature, Muwashshah, Kalila and Dimna, Thousand and One nights, Transformation of the Buddhist legend]

I. 서 론

세계 문명과 문화의 흐름을 살펴볼 때 중세시대는 유럽문화의 암흑기 었고 이와는 대조적으로 아랍·이슬람 문화는 문화적 전성기를 이룬 시 대였다. 아랍 문화가 전성기를 이루게 된 요인은 다문화 수용과 융합의