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## AN OTTOMAN LAṬİFE OF THE 16TH CENTURY

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One of Klaus Schwarz's most endearing qualities was his readiness to help his friends and colleagues. The following laṭife illustrates a truth Klaus Schwarz did his best to give the lie to : that it is nearly impossible to rely on a friend's help at all times. Incidentally, a feature of this laṭife is an imperial decree, something Klaus Schwarz was well-acquainted with in his field of study.

The laṭife in question is from the 16th century. That is to say, it is to be found in two separate Ottoman collections of leṭā'if which were compiled in the 16th century. One of these is that begun by Lāmi'ī (1472-1532) and completed by his son Lāmi'ī-zāde 'Abdullah<sup>1</sup>, the other is that compiled by the poet Faqīrī who owes his reputation to the original *Risāle-i ta'rīfāt* (Book of Descriptions) he wrote in 941/1534-5. Cf. the author : *The Leṭā'if of Faqīrī, Ottoman poet of the 16th century*, in : *WZKM 80* (1990), pp. 59-78.

Of the first of these, which we shall call Lāmi'ī-zāde's collection from now on, we have a published version giving us the prose text in modern Turkish only and the illustrative verses in their original wording followed by a «translation» into modern Turkish. Cf. *Lāmi'ī-zāde Abdullah: Lātifeler*, hazırlayan Yaşar Çalışkan, İstanbul 1978 (Tercüman : 1001 Temel Eser, 118). This publication does not contain all the leṭā'if of Lāmi'ī-zāde's collection as found in the two known MSS. of it. In particular it does not contain the laṭife to be presented here.

As to the MSS. of Lāmi'ī-zāde's collection, the two we know of are both at the İstanbul Üniversitesi Kütüphanesi, bearing the

1 Cf. the son's introductory narrative at the beginning of this collection.

numbers T.y. 3814 and T.y. 762.<sup>2</sup> They are not of equal length, MS. T.y. 3814 being by far the larger. Also, their wording of the laḫife in question is not identical, the difference lying in variant words and parts of sentences as well as in the omission in MS. T.y. 762 of an Arabic saying and a Persian verse.

We have chosen the version of this laḫife that is found in MS. T.y. 3814 as basis for our edition. It is interesting to note that this version is almost identical with the version found in the only MS. of Faḫīrī's leḫā'if collection we know of (apart from the fact that the beginning —about a fourth of it— is missing in the Faḫīrī MS.).

The so-called Faḫīrī collection makes up part of the MS. or quart 1988 in the Staatsbibliothek Berlin, filling up only (most of) the margins of folios 370a-377b. It is given as part 48 of this collective MS. (which consists of 52 parts) in its description under no. 283 in the catalogue *Türkische Handschriften, Teil 5, beschrieben von Hanna Sohrweide, Wiesbaden 1981 (Verzeichnis der Orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland, im Einvernehmen mit der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft herausgegeben von Wolfgang Voigt, Band XIII, 5)*. So this collection is very much smaller than Lāmi'ī-zāde's collection, seeing that MS. T.y. 3814 of the latter (the larger of the two MSS. of it) comprises 278 pages.

The laḫife under consideration is not the only one the two collections have in common, but one of thirteen. Of these thirteen, nine have to do with animals and four with various other things such as, for example, intelligence, the thumb, the north-east wind. That is to say, none of these thirteen have to do with people. On the other hand, not one of the twenty-two leḫā'if about people that are found in Faḫīrī's collection is present in Lāmi'ī-zāde's. Be that as it may, we see that a significant portion of the leḫā'if in the so-called Faḫīrī collection, namely thirteen out of a total of thirty-five<sup>3</sup>, are not restricted to this collection.

2 The third MS. given by Agāh Sırrı Levend in his *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, vol. I, Ankara<sup>2</sup> 1984, p. 156, namely İstanbul Üniversitesi Kütüphanesi, T. y. no. 7622, is in fact not a MS. of this collection.

3 We have erroneously given the sum total of leḫā'if as thirty-four in our above-mentioned article, failing to mention that two of these are incomplete. The first few lines of the first of these are immediately followed by the second, which is the laḫife to be presented here, that, in its turn, lacks about a

We would also like to point out the following two headings and introductory words in the Faqīrī MS. This starts with the heading

Bu leṭā'if ḥaylī inen merḡub Fuzūlī-yi zeman Mevlānā Faqīrī —raḥmetü llāhi 'aleyhi— leṭā'ifindendür ki zıkr ü beyān ve şerḥ ü 'iyān olunur.

These leṭā'if are from the leṭā'if of that exceedingly desirable person and Fuzūlī of the day, his Worship Faqīrī —may Allah's mercy be upon him!— and they are narrated and explained and commented upon and clarified.

This heading is followed by the twenty-two leṭā'if on individuals, twelve of which are about more or less renowned persons. The only point of interest in this heading is that the compiler of the collective MS. containing Faqīrī's collection (a certain Ahmed b. Mūsā; cf. Sohrweide, op. cit., p. 31) ignores, or possibly chooses to ignore, that the great, the true Fuzūlī, who died in 963/1556,<sup>4</sup> must have lived roughly at the same time as Faqīrī. For though we do not know when the latter died, we know that he wrote his Risāle-i ta'rifāt in 941/1534-5 and can deduce by means of references to some of the persons treated in the twenty-two leṭā'if on individuals (the mention of the word merḡum, deceased, among other things) that he must have written at least one laṭīfe in 940/1533-4 at the latest and another in 941/1535 at the earliest (cf. our above-mentioned article).

Immediately after these twenty-two leṭā'if, each of which is preceded by the word laṭīfe, we come to a second heading following the word leṭā'if. And this second heading is word for word the same as that given in Lāmi'ī-zāde's collection following the words beşinci bāb (fifth chapter). (Lāmi'ī-zāde's collection is divided into an introductory chapter, a concluding chapter, and five main chapters of leṭā'if.) This heading reads as follows:<sup>5</sup>

fourth of its text from the beginning. Obviously one or more pages of the MS. are missing here.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. Fuḡūlī.

<sup>5</sup> This reading is based on the Faqīrī MS. and on the Lāmi'ī-zāde MS. T.y. 3814. These two will be called F and L<sup>1</sup> respectively from now on. The heading is on p. 373b in F and on p. 250 in L<sup>1</sup>.

Aşhâb-ı dâm u dâne leṭā'ifindendür ki ḥıredmendân-ı<sup>6</sup> 'âlem ve nükte-şinâsân-ı benî âdem bi-ṭarîqî l-emşâl mânend-i 'âlem-i mişâl zümre-i bî-zebânân zebânından rengîn ḥikâyetler taqrîr ve şîrîn rivâyetler taḥrîr eylemişdür ki her birinün zımnında niçe<sup>7</sup> ḥikem ü meşâliḥ<sup>8</sup> ve ince 'iber ü neşâ'ih mündericdür<sup>9</sup>. Zîrâ nüfûs-ı ademî vü ṭabâ'î-i insânî nâdir eşerlere ve ğarîb ḥaberlere meyl edicidür tā bu behâne ile<sup>10</sup> bend-i<sup>11</sup> pend ü<sup>12</sup> 'ibrete ve bu dâne ile dâm-ı<sup>13</sup> fehm ü fikrete düşerler<sup>14</sup>. Beyt :

[muzâri': mef'ülü - fa'ilatü - mefa'ilü - fa'ilün]  
 Dârü-yı<sup>15</sup> telḥi şehd ile şîrîn eder ḥekîm  
 Tâ-kim qabûl ede dil-i her nâzenîn anı

These are among the leṭā'if of the masters of snares and baits. The wise of this world and those of the mortals who appreciate subtle, witty points have related colourful stories and written pheasant narratives in the manner of parables, as though it were a dream-world, in the language of the mute. In each of these many wise sayings and matters and subtle admonitions and counsels are contained. For the human souls and the dispositions of men are partial to rare works and strange news, so that under this pretext they are bound with the fetters of counsel and admonition and with this bait fall into the snare of comprehension and thought. Verse :

The physician sweetens the bitter drug with honey  
 So that every delicate person's heart consents to it.

These introductory lines are followed by the thirteen leṭā'if mentioned above in the Faqîrî MS. and by a far greater number

- 6 F : ḥıredmend.  
 7 L<sup>1</sup>: nice.  
 8 L<sup>1</sup>: followed by münderic; F: followed by mündericdür with the rest of the sentence up to zîrâ missing.  
 9 L<sup>1</sup>: m-n-d-b-ḥ-d-r.  
 10 F: followed by anları.  
 11 L<sup>1</sup>: followed by ü.  
 12 missing in F.  
 13 L<sup>1</sup>: dem-i.  
 14 F : düşüreler.  
 15 F : dârüyı telḥ.

of leṭā'if including these thirteen in the Lāmi'ī-zāde MS. In both cases each fable is preceded by the word laṭīfe.

In view of all this, we see that we must attribute the compilation of these thirteen leṭā'if to one or the other of the compilers: either to father and son or else to Faqīrī. At present, seeing a) that the only MS. of the Faqīrī collection we know of is so much shorter than the Lāmi'ī-zāde collection and b) that the Lāmi'ī-zāde collection was almost certainly started earlier —Lāmi'ī, to whom we owe a good portion of this collection, died in 1532 whilst Faqīrī was demonstrably writing leṭā'if in the years to follow (see above) — it is likelier that the version of the leṭā'if that the two collections have in common originated with the father and son's compilation rather than with Faqīrī's.

The version of the laṭīfe on fellowship we have taken here as basis for our edition is that which is identical in the two collections, whereas the deviations in the Lāmi'ī-zāde MS. T.y. 762 have been noted for comparison<sup>16</sup>.

#### Laṭīfe:<sup>17</sup>

Meger bir dilkü seyr-i kūh u<sup>18</sup> deşt ve köyler<sup>19</sup> eṭrafında gülgeşt ederken bir<sup>20</sup> pāre yazılmış kâğıd bulur. Ağzıyla<sup>21</sup> kâğıdı yerden alır<sup>22</sup>. İttifaq yolca giderken bir qurda quş olur. Qurd dilkünün ağzında kâğıdı<sup>23</sup> görüb teftiş qılır. Dilkü eydür: «Hük-m-i şahî ve qānūn-nāme-i pādşāhidür ki şimden gerü qurd qoyunla ve şahîn süglünle ve arslan geyikle ve<sup>24</sup> toğan keklük ile yürüsün. Ellere emīnlük ve beglere düzenlikdür. İns ü cinn, qurd ve quş içinde min

16 This MS. will be called L<sup>2</sup> from now on.

17 Cf. pp. 253-254 of L<sup>1</sup>, pp. 41r-41v of L<sup>2</sup>, and p. 374a of F on this laṭīfe.

18 omitted in L<sup>1</sup>.

19 L<sup>2</sup>: köyleri tavāf édüb.

20 L<sup>2</sup>: pāre pāre yazılmış kâğıdlar.

21 L<sup>1</sup>: ağızla.

22 L<sup>2</sup>: götürüb alır.

23 L<sup>2</sup>: kâğıd.

24 L<sup>2</sup> instead : barışub qarışub ellere.

ba'd yemek ve<sup>25</sup> içmek ve<sup>26</sup> şenlikdür» dër.<sup>27</sup> Qurd eydür: «İmdi, ey<sup>28</sup> qardaş, sürür eyyâmı ve huzûr<sup>29</sup> hengâmı imiş. Biz de 'işret quralum ve<sup>30</sup> şöhbete bünyâd uralum<sup>31</sup>. Şunda<sup>32</sup> bir qaşşabuñ sürüy-le qoyunları<sup>33</sup> vardır. Günde biri öyünümdür. Ezelden anlaruñla<sup>34</sup> süre-gelmiş oyunumdur. Gel berü, yine birin şikâr edelüm<sup>35</sup> ve 'azm-i kenâr edelüm» dër<sup>36</sup>.

Beyt<sup>31</sup>:

[ħafif: fâ'ilâtün - mefâ'ilün - fa'lün]

Furşat-ı rüzgâr kemyâbest  
Şöhbet-i döstân ğanîmet dân

Neşr : Dilkü eydür<sup>38</sup>: «Maşlaħatdur ve<sup>39</sup> bir nefes muşâhebet ni'metdür» dër<sup>40</sup>. Pes<sup>41</sup> sürüb bir sürü qoyuna gelürler. Çöbân<sup>42</sup> ve köpekleri ğâfil bulurlar. Qurduñ<sup>43</sup> hemân yüreginde<sup>44</sup> şecâ'at tamarları ħarekete gelüb alaya<sup>45</sup> deper, yıldırım gibi erişüb<sup>46</sup> bir semizlerini<sup>47</sup> içlerinden qapar.

25 omitted in L<sup>2</sup>.

26 omitted in L<sup>2</sup>.

27 omitted in L<sup>2</sup>.

28 omitted in L<sup>2</sup>.

29 L<sup>2</sup>: 'işret.

30 begin of the lañfe in F.

31 L<sup>2</sup>: followed by dër.

32 omitted in L<sup>2</sup>.

33 L<sup>2</sup>: qoyunı var.

34 omitted in F.

35 L<sup>2</sup>: edüb.

36 omitted in F.

37 omitted in L<sup>2</sup> up to and including neşr.

38 neşr and eydür are omitted in L<sup>1</sup>.

39 omitted in L<sup>2</sup>.

40 L<sup>2</sup>: dëyüb sürüb qoyuna gelürler.

41 omitted in L<sup>2</sup>.

42 L<sup>2</sup>: çöbân köpekleri ğâfil bulub qurduñ yüreginden (sic) şecâ'at tamarı.

43 begin of L<sup>1</sup> p. 254.

44 omitted in F.

45 L<sup>2</sup>: gendüyi alay içine deper.

46 L<sup>2</sup>: erüb bir semizin.

47 F: semizini.

Şi'r<sup>48</sup>:

[ḥafīf: fe'ilātün/fa'ilātün - mefā'ilün - fe'ilün/fa'lün]

Bulsa ehl-i hevā murādına rāh  
 Götürüb gendüyi atar nāra<sup>49</sup>  
 Şaldı deryāya keştī-i bedeni  
 Düşdi girdāba cān-ı bī-çāre

Neşr:<sup>50</sup> Köpekler ses<sup>51</sup> alub qurduñ ardına<sup>52</sup> düşerler. Hemān qurdı ortaya alub başına üşerler. Etini didim didim diderler<sup>53</sup> ve derisin buçuq getürmez éderler. Dilkü görse ki qurd çarḥe<sup>54</sup> cengine<sup>55</sup> girdi ve arslanlar çengine düşdi, iş neye varacağın sezer<sup>56</sup>, «Ër ésen gerek»<sup>57</sup> dēyüb<sup>58</sup> hemān köstegi üzer. Qurd görse ki<sup>59</sup> belā 'ummānı taşdı<sup>60</sup> ve iş başdan aşdı, dilküye ardından çağırur ki «Hay qardaş! Bire muḥanneş yoldaş! Qanda<sup>61</sup> gidersin ve<sup>62</sup> ne yere 'azm édersin? Getür yasaq ḥükmini oqusunlar, beni<sup>63</sup> şu zālimler ellerinden qosunlar!» dēr. Dilkü eydür: «Hay<sup>64</sup> oquyan kim, diñleyen kim! İqlīm érenlerine başlu başı qayısı. Baña başum qurtarmaq<sup>65</sup> cümlesinün eyüsidür» dēr ki<sup>66</sup> 'Men necā bi-rāsiḥī fe-qad re-biha'.

48 L<sup>2</sup>: qı' a; F: beyt.49 begin of L<sup>2</sup> 41v.50 omitted in L<sup>1</sup> and L<sup>2</sup>.51 L<sup>2</sup>: duyub derdmend qurduñ.52 omitted in L<sup>2</sup> up to (inclusive) üşerler.

53 F: éderler.

54 omitted in F up to (inclusive) ve.

55 L<sup>2</sup>: çengine girdi arslanlar cengine; L<sup>1</sup>: cengine ve arslanlar cengine.56 L<sup>2</sup>: bildi, hemān gendüyi kenāra uzar.

57 followed by evde gerek dēyü köstegi üzer in F.

58 L<sup>2</sup>: dēyü ḥalāşdan yaña yürür.59 omitted in L<sup>2</sup>.60 omitted in L<sup>2</sup> and F up to (inclusive) iş.61 L<sup>2</sup>: nereye.62 omitted in L<sup>2</sup> up to (inclusive) édersin.63 omitted in L<sup>2</sup> up to (inclusive) dēr.64 L<sup>2</sup>: Hay qardaş! Kim oqur, kim diñler!65 L<sup>2</sup>: qurtarmaqdur eyüsi dēyüb followed by y-l-'-z.66 omitted in L<sup>2</sup> up to qı'a; only ki omitted in F.

Qıta :

[müteqārib: fe'ülün - fe'ülün - fe'ülün - fe'ül]

Egerçi cihānda fütüvvet<sup>67</sup> budur  
 Qoyub gitmeye kişi yoldaşını  
 Velī 'ālem içre temām aşıdır  
 Deminde ḥalāş eylemek<sup>68</sup> başını

Qıṭ'a-i āḥar:<sup>69</sup>

[hezec: mefā'ilün - mefā'ilün - fe'ülün]

Bu 'ālem nefse<sup>70</sup> nefsi dēr qarındaş  
 Cihānda kimseden yoldaşlıq umma  
 Dem olur ki<sup>71</sup> qıyar oğlına baba<sup>72</sup>  
 Yüri biḡāneden<sup>73</sup> qardaşlıq umma

It so happened that as a fox was walking over hills and dales and strolling around the villages, he found a piece of paper with writing on it. He picked it up from the ground with his muzzle. As chance would have it, walking along the road he came face to face with a wolf. The wolf saw the paper in the fox's mouth and inquired about it.

The fox said, «It is an imperial decree, a royal law stating that from now on the wolf and the sheep, the falcon and the pheasant, the lion and the deer, the hawk and the partridge are to be companions. That means safety for the lands and order for the lords. From now on there's to be eating and drinking and rejoicing among the mortals and the spirits, among the birds and the beasts».

The wolf said, »Brother, now are the days of joy and the time of repose it seems. So let us make merry and fraternize. A butcher

67 F: mürtüvvet.

68 followed by kişi in L<sup>1</sup>.

69 L<sup>2</sup>: qıṭ'a-i diğeri; L<sup>1</sup>: just āḥar.

70 L<sup>2</sup>: n-f-s-y-d-r instead of nefse nefsi dēr.

71 L<sup>2</sup>: kim.

72 L<sup>2</sup>: ata; F: peder.

73 F: b-y-g-ā-n-.

has herds of sheep over there. One a day of these is my meal. That's been my fun with them since the beginning of time. Come here! Let us once more carry one off and get out of the way.»

Verse :

Rare are the chances that fortune grants;  
Grasp the fact that a chat with friends is booty!

Prose : The fox said, «That's the right thing to do, and a moment or two of companionship are a blessing.»

They then went on and came to a flock of sheep. They found the shepherd and the dogs off their guard. The blood of bravery immediately started coursing through the veins of the wolf and he attacked the huddle. Charging like lightning, he grabbed a fat one from among them.

If he who is ridden by his desires finds a way to what he covets,  
He throws himself into the fire.  
The body's boat he sent off to sea --  
The wretched soul fell into a whirlpool.

Prose : The dogs became aware of sounds and went after the wolf. In a moment they had surrounded the wolf and flocked around him. They tore his flesh to shreds and made of his skin a thing not worth a penny.<sup>74</sup> When the fox saw that the wolf had engaged in a skirmish and had fallen into the claws of lions, he foresaw how the matter would end. He said, «One must needs be safe and well» and at once broke away. When the wolf saw that the sea of troubles had overflowed and the problems had become crushing, he called after the fox, «Hey brother! You traitorous companion! Where are you going? Whither have you set out to go? Bring the decree of prohibition that they may read it, that these cruel ones let me go!»

The fox said, «Ha! Who'd read it, who'd listen?! The braves of the land have their hands full trying to solve their own prob-

<sup>74</sup> Cf. *Tarama Sözlüğü*, Ankara 1963-1977 (Türk Dil Kurumu Yayınları, 212), s.v. buçukluk.

lems.<sup>75</sup> The best thing for me is to save my skin,» for 'He who saves himself makes a profit'.

Poem :

Though brotherhood in the world is  
For one not to abandon his companion,  
Full profit in this world is  
To save one's skin in time.

Another poem :

This world says: Charity begins at home.  
Don't hope for companionship in this world from anyone.  
There are times when a father kills his son.  
Come on, don't hope for brotherhood from a stranger.

This tale is not represented in the Eberhard-Boratav index of Turkish folk-tales (cf. Wolfram Eberhard und Pertev Naili Boratav: *Typen türkischer Volksmärchen*, Wiesbaden 1953). Only a variant of type 2 in this index has a faintly similar aspect in that the fox comes to the cock with two letters, which he asks him to read to him as he has no eyeglasses. However, there is a Persian tale that bears a likeness both to our tale and to this type 2. Cf. Ulrich Marzolph: *Typologie des persischen Volksmärchens*, Beirut 1984, p. 43. In this Persian tale the fox who wants to eat the cock pretends that there is a new law ordering peace among all animals. When dogs come, the fox flees. The reason for this, as given on p. 43, is that the dogs probably have not heard of this law as yet. Marzolph also points to no. 47 in David Lockhart Robinson Lorimer and Emily Overend Lorimer: *Persian tales written down for the first time in the original Kermānī and Bakhtiārī*, London 1919. In this *Bakhtiārī* tale the fox boasts to other foxes that a paper is the new law. He then flees and the reason given for this is that dogs cannot read.

We hope to have shown by means of this one example that our knowledge of Turkish popular tales would benefit by an extensive study of the material available in the *leṭā'if* collections.

75 Cf. *ibid.*, s.v. *başlu başı kayusu olmak*.