



The Story of Abū al-Ḥasan the Wag in the Tübingen Manuscript of the Romance of 'Umar ibn al-Nu'mān and Related Texts

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Abstract

First published in the ninth volume (1712) of Antoine Galland's French translation as "Le dormeur éveillé," the Story of Abū al-Ḥasan the Wag—better known in English as "The Sleeper Awakened" (Lane) or "The Sleeper and the Waker" (Burton)—is one of the somewhat spurious tales in the repertoire of the *Thousand and One Nights*. The present essay discusses the tale's textual history. Combining the results of a variety of previous studies with new findings, the questions guiding my considerations are the following: (1) In which sources is the story of Abū al-Ḥasan the Wag attested?; (2) How can the various attestations of the tale be analyzed in relation to each other?; and (3) To what extent do the results of this study contribute to the dating of the Tübingen manuscript of the romance of 'Umar ibn al-Nu'mān, where we find one of the tale's oldest attestations known to date?

Keywords

Thousand and One Nights/Arabian Nights – Sleeper Awakened (Tale of the) – 'Umar ibn al-Nu'mān (Romance of) – Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Mu'tī al-Ishāqī

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Introduction

The Story of Abū al-Ḥasan the Wag (al-khalū')—better known in English as "The Sleeper Awakened" (Lane)¹ or "The Sleeper and the Waker" (Burton)²—is one of the somewhat spurious tales in the repertoire of the *Thousand and One Nights*.³ The tale was first published in Galland's adapted French translation that introduced the *Nights* into world literature.⁴ It is thus reliably documented at an earlier stage than any of the numerous tales that were added to the repertoire of the *Nights* in the collection's post-Galland manuscript copies in Arabic.⁵ The chronological priority applies notably to what has been termed "Zotenberg's Egyptian recension" (ZER), a recension comprising a group of manuscripts of the *Nights* compiled towards the end of the eighteenth century.⁶ Galland, in turn, it has been assumed, must have borrowed the tale from elsewhere.

In Galland's French translation, the story of Abū al-Ḥasan occupies a prominent place as the first one in the ninth volume of the *Mille et une nuit*. As is well known, the tales from the old Arabic manuscript that Galland had used as his main source of translation (with the addition of the tales of Sindbad the seafaring merchant) had been exhausted with volume seven of his translation, and apparently Galland at first did not have access to other manuscripts of the *Nights* that would enable him to complete his work up to the limit of an actual "thousand and one" nights. As his enthusiastic readers expected the work to continue, Galland's publisher had issued volume eight of the *Mille et une nuit* without the author's authorization. In addition to the story of Ghānim ibn Ayyūb, supplied by Galland, the publisher had filled that volume with tales translated by Galland's colleague (and competitor) François Pétis de La Croix from an Ottoman Turkish manuscript of the *Faraj ba'd al-shiddah*-genre, tales

¹ Edward William Lane, The Thousand and One Nights, Commonly Called, in England The Arabian Nights' Entertainments (London 1958, reprint London: East-West Publications; and Cairo: Livres de France, 1980), 2: 313-337.

² Richard F. Burton, Arabian Nights with Introductory & Explanatory Notes (London, 1885; Beirut: Khayat, 1966), 11: 1-35.

³ Victor Chauvin, *Bibliographie des ouvrages arabes ou relatifs aux arabes publiés dans l'Europe chrétienne de 1810 à 1885* (Liège: H. Vaillant-Carmanne, 1892-1922), 6: 272-275; Ulrich Marzolph and Richard van Leeuwen, *The Arabian Nights Encyclopedia* (Denver: ABC-Clio, 2004), 1:392-393.

⁴ Les Mille et une nuits. Contes arabes, trans. Antoine Galland, eds. Jean-Paul Sermain and Aboubakr Chraïbi (Paris: GF Flammarion, 2004), 2: 425-503.

⁵ For the manuscript tradition of the *Nights* see Heinz Grotzfeld, "The Manuscript Tradition of the *Arabian Nights*," in Marzolph and Van Leeuwen, 1: 17-21.

⁶ See Marzolph and Van Leeuwen, 2: 740.

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of relief following an ordeal, other tales of which were later published as the *Mille et un jours*. The publisher's deliberate fraud together with the decidedly voiced demand by his French readership prompted Galland to complete his work by adding tales that until then had little or no relation to the *Nights*. It is commonly acknowledged that most of the tales Galland published in the final volumes of his *Mille et une nuit* derive from the oral performance of Syrian storyteller Hannā Diyāb, summaries of which Galland had jotted down in his diary. But research on the *Nights* has so far not been able to verify the source from which Galland drew his version of the tale under consideration here.

An Arabic version of the story of Abū al-Ḥasan the Wag, in fact the only printed version of the tale in Arabic up to now, was published as late as the second volume of Maximilian Habicht's Breslau edition of the *Nights* (1828).9 Although it differs in wording from Galland's translation, the Arabic text was widely regarded as sufficient proof that the tale should be considered an "authentic" component of the collection. This holds particularly true for studies by non-Arabist scholars of the *Nights* who took the text of the Breslau edition at face value without bothering to delve into the historical intricacies of the manuscript material upon which the Breslau edition was based. In particular Duncan B. MacDonald's minute assessment of Habicht's manuscript material (1909) that proved the "Tunisian manuscript" to constitute a deliberate mystification passed without notice. While Habicht's German version of the *Nights*, published in 1825, largely followed Galland (by way of the extended edition published by Edouard Gauttier, Paris 1822), ¹¹ translations of the Arabic

⁷ See François Pétis de La Croix, *Les Mille et un jours. Contes persans*, ed. Paul Sebag (Paris: Phébus, 2003); see also François Pétis de La Croix, *Histoire de la sultane de Perse et des vizirs*, ed. Raymonde Robert; *Les Mille et un jours. Contes persans*, ed. Pierre Brunel; Abbé Jean-Paul Bignon, *Les Aventures d'Abdalla*, ed. Raymonde Robert (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2006), 211-905.

⁸ See Marzolph and Van Leeuwen, 1: 582-583.

Tausend und Eine Nacht Arabisch. Nach einer Handschrift aus Tunis, Herausgegeben von Dr. Maximilian Habicht. Nach seinem Tode fortgesetzt von M. Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer (Breslau: Baarth und Comp., 1828), 4: 134-189.

Duncan B. MacDonald, "Maximilian Habicht and His Recension of the Thousand and One Nights," Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (1909), 685-704; see also Duncan B. MacDonald, "A Preliminary Classification of Some Mss. of the Arabian Nights," A Volume of Oriental Studies: Presented to Edward G. Browne on His 60th Birthday, eds. Thomas W. Arnold and Reynold A. Nicholson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922), 314-317.

¹¹ Dreihundert Jahre 1001 Nacht in Europa. Ein Begleitheft zur Ausstellung in Münster, Tübingen und Gotha, eds. Anke Osigus and Heinz Grotzfeld (Münster: Lit-Verlag, 2005), 53-56.

text he had edited were first published in the nineteenth-century English versions of the *Nights*. Comparatists have largely contented themselves with regarding the story of Abū al-Ḥasan the Wag as an "old" specimen of a tale on whose European versions they focused, such as Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* (1595) or Calderón de la Barca's *La vida es sueño* (1635).¹²

Rudi Paret's 1927 study of the romance of 'Umar ibn al-Nu'mān showed that the story of Abū al-Ḥasan the Wag was embedded in versions of that romance, an originally independent lengthy narrative that usually forms part of ZER. ¹³ The versions of the romance published in the Bulāq (1835) and Calcutta (1839-42) editions of the *Nights*, however, do not include the story of Abū al-Ḥasan the Wag. ¹⁴ Meanwhile, the tale is rendered in the Tübingen manuscript of the romance of 'Umar ibn al-Nu'mān, a manuscript that presents itself as a volume of the *Nights* in being structured by the regular formulas of Shahrazād's suspending the narrative at the break of dawn and taking up the thread the following night. ¹⁵ The importance of the Tübingen manuscript as a textual witness is, however, undermined by uncertainty as to its date. Judging from internal evidence such as paper, script, and illustrations, the manuscript has been dated by both Johann Gottfried Wetzstein and Christian Seybold to the fifteenth or early sixteenth century. The manuscript originates from the estate of Aḥmad al-Rabbāṭ al-Ḥalabī¹6 who died at the beginning of the

W.A. Clouston, "Variants and Analogues of Some of the Tales in the Supplemental Nights, 1-2: The Sleeper and the Waker," see Burton, 12: 291-295; Paul Blum, "Die Geschichte vom träumenden Bauern in der Weltliteratur," Jahresbericht der L.K. Staats-Oberrealschule in Teschen (Teschen: Karl Prochaska, 1908), 3-36; Felix G. Olmedo, Las fuentes de "La vida es sueño". La idea—el cuento—el drama (Madrid: Voluntad, 1928); Mia I. Gerhardt, The Art of Story-telling: A Literary Study of the Thousand and One Nights (Leiden: Brill, 1963), 443-449; Ferial J. Ghazoul, "The Arabian Nights in Shakespearean Comedy: "The Sleeper Awakened" and The Taming of the Shrew," in The Arabian Nights: A Structural Analysis (Cairo: UNESCO, 1980), 108-120; Elisabeth Frenzel, Stoffe der Weltliteratur (Stuttgart: Kröner, 2005), 78-82.

¹³ Rudi Paret, "Der Ritterroman von 'Umar an-Nu'mān und seine Stellung zur Sammlung von Tausendundeine Nacht" [1927], in *Schriften zum Islam*, ed. Josef van Ess (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1981), 17-70.

¹⁴ See Marzolph and Van Leeuwen, 1: 430-436.

¹⁵ For the most recent detailed assessment of the Tübingen manuscript, see Claudia Ott, Metamorphosen des Epos. Sīrat al-Muǧāhidīn (Sīrat al-Amīra Dāt al-Himmah) zwischen Mündlichkeit und Schriftlichkeit (Leiden: Research School of Asian, African, and Amerindian Studies, 2003), 114-116.

¹⁶ For Aḥmad al-Rabbāṭ al-Ḥalabī see most recently Claudia Ott, "Finally We Know... Why, How, and Where Caliph al-Ḥākim Disappeared! Sīrat al-Ḥākim bi-Amrillāh and Its Berlin Manuscript," in Fictionalizing the Past: Historical Characters in Arabic Popular Epic,

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nineteenth century, and it was acquired in Damascus by Wetzstein between 1860 and 1862. So the only unquestionable dating that can be inferred from the manuscript's documented history is its physical existence in the first half or, probably, at the beginning of the nineteenth century. All attempts in previous scholarship at dating the manuscript earlier than that are to a certain extent speculative and may or may not hold valid upon further scrutiny.

The present contribution, then, is to discuss the textual history of the story of Abū al-Ḥasan the Wag. Combining the results of a variety of previous studies with new findings, the questions that will guide my considerations are the following: (1) In which sources is the story of Abū al-Ḥasan the Wag attested? (2) How can the various attestations of the story be analyzed in relation to each other? And (3) To which extent do the results of this study contribute to the dating of the Tübingen manuscript? But first let me summarize the tale's content according to its best known version in the Breslau text.

Content

Abū al-Ḥasan is the son of a rich merchant. When his father dies, he divides the money he inherits into two equal parts. Stowing away one half of the money, he squanders the other half in *dolce vita* together with a group of young people. When his funds are exhausted, he is left shocked to find that none of his presumed friends are willing to help him, nor even give a sympathetic consideration to his desolate situation. His mother consoles him by saying that this is the way things work in a world that cares only for material possessions, and Abū al-Ḥasan returns to the money he had wisely stowed away. From here on, instead of spending his time with unreliable friends, he invites a stranger into his house every night. Meanwhile, he vows not to invite the same person twice nor even to look at anybody who had once been his guest.

As he passes by the bridge one evening, Abū al-Ḥasan happens to meet Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd who roams the city in disguise along with some members of his entourage. He convinces the caliph to accept his invitation and lavishly serves him food and drink in his house. When the caliph becomes curious as to his host's status, Abū al-Ḥasan warns him not to long for things past, since

ed. Sabine Dorpmueller (Leuven: Peeters, 2012): 63-72; Boris Liebrenz, "'Mit Gold nicht aufzuwiegen': Der Wert von Büchern im osmanischen Syrien (11.-13./17.-19. Jahrhundert)," Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft 164,3 (2014): 653-686, at 674-677.

mourning for what is bygone makes little sense. Since the caliph insists, Abū al-Ḥasan informs him that he has a story and that his story has a sting in its tail (literally: has a tail). Arousing the caliph's curiosity even further with his enigmatic remark, Abū al-Ḥasan proceeds to tell the story of the trickster and the cook.

A trickster (harfūsh) once was hungry but had no money to buy food. Confident that his tricks would eventually help him find a solution, he went to a cook, ordered food for a certain amount of money and started to consume his meal. Looking around the cook's stall, he happened to see the bloody tail of a horse that was barely hidden under a vessel. Deducing that the cook illegally mixed his food with horse meat, he got up intending to walk away. When the cook requested payment, he pretended to have paid already. The two of them started quarreling, and the people on the street gathered around them wondering what the quarrel was about. At one point, the trickster mentioned the tail and the cook immediately understood the allusion. In order to cover up his misdeed, he pretended to remember his customer's payment and even offered to return him some change.

Following this tale, the caliph insists on hearing his host's own story, and when Abū al-Ḥasan tells him about his experience, the caliph is amazed at his foresight, good breeding, and magnanimity. Wishing to return his host's kindness, the caliph finally asks him whether he had any wish he longed to see fulfilled. Abū al-Ḥasan informs him that his only wish was to be in the position of the ruler for a single day so as to punish his malevolent neighbors, the *imām* of the nearby mosque and four old men, who kept complaining about his merry feasting and had even threatened to report him to the authorities. He wants to have his malicious neighbors whipped, paraded through the streets, and finally have them deported to another city. The caliph decides to make his host's wish come true and puts a drug (*banj*) in his drink. His servants then carry Abū al-Ḥasan to the palace where everybody receives strict orders to hail him as the caliph when he wakes up the following day.

As Abū al-Ḥasan wakes up, he finds himself in the palace being treated as the caliph himself. Not trusting his senses, he asks various servants and is always reassured that he truly is the caliph. Finally he decides that his strange experience is not a dream but reality. Holding court with all the nobles, he acts as a just and considerate ruler. At one point he orders the vizier Jaʿfar to punish his malevolent neighbors, and Jaʿfar executes the order on the spot. In the evening, Abū al-Ḥasan dines together with his entourage, in particular enjoying the company of a number of female servants whom he calls by name. As the evening draws to a close, the caliph—who has been watching

everything in secret—has him drugged again, and Abū al-Ḥasan is brought back to his house.

When he wakes the next morning, Abū al-Ḥasan calls for the female servants, and to the great astonishment of his mother informs her that he is not her son but the caliph. Arguing with him, his mother step by step convinces him that his experience was the work of the Devil and that he is none other than her son. In order to console him further, she tells him the good news that his neighbors have been punished the day before in exactly the manner he had longed for; Abū al-Ḥasan flies into a fit, for he remembers issuing the order while being caliph. He now refuses to believe that his experience was a dream and asserts that, in fact, he was and still is the caliph himself. As the quarrel with his mother turns into a fight, they arouse the attention of the neighbors who come to his mother's rescue and have Abū al-Ḥasan confined to the mental asylum. Here, he is chained and given a heavy treatment of lashes for a number of days until his mother has him released.

Returning to his previous habit of inviting guests, he goes to the bridge to look for strangers to invite and once again meets Hārūn al-Rashīd in disguise. Even though Abū al-Ḥasan accuses him of being the Devil, the caliph manages to convince him that he did not do him any harm. Instead, he argues that whatever mischief Abū al-Ḥasan experienced must have been caused by the Devil, who must have entered through the door that he had accidentally left open. As on the previous occasion, Abū al-Hasan treats his guest lavishly, is drugged and carried to the palace. When he wakes up again, he is so confused by the dramatic changes he perceives that he asks a slave to bite his ear so as to prove to himself that he is not dreaming. The slave does so with such a vigor that Abū al-Hasan loses whatever is left of his senses, and to the great amusement of his entourage rips off his clothes and starts to dance in the nude, accompanied by music and the laughter of both the servants and the caliph in his place of hiding. Finally, the caliph shows himself and reveals his stratagem to Abū al-Hasan. He apologizes for tricking him and makes him one of his boon-companions.

Now married to one of the girls in the entourage of the caliph's wife, Abū al-Ḥasan and his wife enjoy their lives until their financial means are completely exhausted. Wondering what to do they devise a plan. Each of them is to pretend that the other one has died, hereby enabling both of them to collect money for the other's burial from Hārūn and his wife, respectively. As Hārūn and his wife come to pay respect to the supposedly dead couple, they wonder which one of them died first. The situation is resolved, and everybody lives happily ever after.

Structure

In her study of the tale, Sylvette Larzul analyzes the story of Abū al-Ḥasan as being composed of three different parts—an introduction, a main section, and a conclusion.¹⁷ The tale's introduction is an elaborate version of the narrative motif of the profligate son who wastes his inherited fortune before embarking on his own adventures (Mot. W 131.1).¹⁸ This motif sets into action a considerable number of tales in the different versions of the *Nights*, such as—to name but some of the better known ones—the stories of 'Alī the Cairene and the Haunted House in Baghdad, of 'Alī Shār and Zumurrud, of Jūdar and the Moor Maḥmūd, of Tawaddud, of Tuhfat al-Qulūb, and of Zayn al-Asnām.¹⁹

In contrast to all other attestations of the motif, the profligate son in the story of Abū al-Ḥasan, instead of unconditionally indulging in worldly pleasures, has taken precautions by setting aside half of his fortune for future use. In contrast to the self-indulgent irresponsibility of the standard protagonist, the hero's initial action is here presented as a conscious decision. And even though Abū al-Ḥasan is utterly disappointed when he is deserted by his former friends, the precautions he has taken suggest that their reaction was not altogether unexpected. In consequence, the hero here does not become the largely passive object of fate's mercy as in most of the other tales, rather he actively defines his agency. The turn of events on the one hand offers the opportunity for an—albeit short—moral consideration about the vicissitudes of presumed friendship. On the other, it structures the hero's future life in that his disillusion leads to a certain misanthropic behavior that, coupled with his obvious hedonism and inherent magnanimity, makes him invite a single guest for a single night only. Incidentally, this trait of behavior also links Abū al-Hasan to King Shahriyār in the frame-tale of the Nights in that both characters spend the night with a person they never plan to see again. It goes without saying that King Shahriyār's action is more dramatic; his disillusioning experience

¹⁷ Sylvette Larzul, "Un récit comique des *Mille et une nuits*: L'Histoire d'Abû Hasan, ou le dormeur éveillé," *Revue du monde musulman et de la méditerranée* 77-78: L'Humour en Orient (1995), 29-39.

¹⁸ Stith Thompson, Motif-Index of Folk-Literature: A Classification of Narrative Elements in Folktales, Ballads, Myths, Fables, Mediaeval Romances, Exempla, Fabliaux, Jest-Books and Local Legends (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, s.a.), 6: 490.

¹⁹ Marzolph and Van Leeuwen, 2: 808; Hasan M. El-Shamy, Folk Traditions of the Arab World: A Guide to Motif Classification (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995), 1: 390; Hasan M. El-Shamy, A Motif Index of The Thousand and One Nights (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2006), 399.

with the infidelity of women has led him to the misogynist action of spending a single night with a single woman whom he will have executed when the night is over.

It may be noted in passing that the locus Abū al-Ḥasan chooses to meet his potential guests is not the marketplace or any other crowded location in the city, but rather the bridge. Numerous people pass by in a casual manner without obliging himself to establish contact unless he feels inclined to do so. A similar role of the bridge is attested in early Arabic literature in at least two other well-known tales. One of these tales is an anecdote first documented in Abū 'l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī's (died c. 972) *Kitāb al-Aghānī* in which the historical jester Abū 'l-'Ibar (died 864/5) goes to the bridge to jot down casual remarks overheard from passers-by.²⁰ The other one, first documented in al-Tanūkhī's (died 994) *al-Faraj ba'd al-shiddah*, is the earliest known version of an internationally attested folktale (tale-type 1645)²¹ in which the protagonist dreams that he will find a treasure on a certain bridge in a distant town.²²

The main section of the story of Abū al-Ḥasan, in folklorist terms a version of tale-type 1531,²³ begins with Abū al-Ḥasan inviting the caliph to his home. Resulting from the elaborate introduction, the initial part of this section at first continues in the vein of events that have been laid out in the introduction. In other words, Abū al-Ḥasan at first is made to explain his unusual decision to invite a single guest for a single night, and in the stereotypical manner of

²⁰ I owe this reference to Julia Bray; see Julia Bray, "Samarra in Ninth-Century Arabic Letters," in A Medieval Islamic City Reconsidered: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Samarra, ed. Chase F. Robinson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 24.

The mention of tale-types follows the conventions of folk narrative research in referring to the system of international tale-types established by Antti Aarne in *The Types of the Folktale: A Classification and Bibliography*, trans. and enlarged Stith Thompson (Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 1961; 1973), and further revised by Hans-Jörg Uther, *The Types of International Folktales: A Classification and Bibliography. Based on the System of Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson* (Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2004).

Ulrich Marzolph, "Traum vom Schatz auf der Brücke," in *Enzyklopädie des Märchens* (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2010), 13: cols. 877-882; Ulrich Marzolph, "Das *Kitāb Laṭā'if 'aḥbār al-'uwal* von al-Isḥāqī als Quelle der Kompilatoren von 1001 Nacht," in *Orientalistische Studien zu Sprache und Literatur. Festschrift Werner Diem*, ed. Ulrich Marzolph (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2011), 317-328.

²³ Elisabeth Frenzel, "Bauer wird König für einen Tag," in *Enzyklopädie des Märchens* (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 1977), 1: cols. 1343-1346.

Todorov's "narrative men"²⁴ of the *Nights*, he does so by relating himself to his previous experience. Moreover, in addition to simply narrating his personal experience, he elaborates his message to the caliph with the somewhat enigmatic story of the trickster and the cook (*al-ḥarfūsh wa-'l-tabbākh*), a tale only attested in this context.²⁵ Presuming that the story of the trickster and the cook relates to the personal experience of the tale's main character, the embedded tale might be read as yet another elaboration of the main tale's major theme in that things are rarely what humans perceive them to be: in a similar manner as the trickster unveils the cook's secret of mixing horse-meat into his dishes, the protagonist's companions in the introduction eventually prove not to be the friends he had taken them for, as the main tale continues to play on the protagonist's constant doubt as to whether his experience is real or imagined.

The constitutive part of the tale's main section begins with Abū al-Ḥasan's unconditional hospitality, and his guest's reactive desire to repay his kindness. In terms of events, this part relates to a tale in the Chinese Buddhist *Tripitaka*, compiled in the third century C.E. that serves to demonstrate the relativity of human perception. While this aspect also plays a major role in the future adventures of Abū al-Ḥasan, the didactic component of the ancient Buddhist version is subdued; the protagonist's bewilderment here mainly prompts amusement in the atmosphere of an easy-going caliphal court. The tale's main section is itself structured in three consecutive episodes. The action of the first episode is more or less repeated in the third, and the two corresponding episodes are separated by the hero's short but dramatic sobering confinement in the mental asylum. Rather than disrupting the plot, this interlude constitutes a necessary element since it enables the tale to repeat the previous action in preparation for the eventual denouement.

²⁴ Tzvetan Todorov, "Narrative Men" [1977], in *The Arabian Nights Reader*, ed. Ulrich Marzolph (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2006), 226-238.

The story of the trickster and the cook is not included in Chauvin's summary; for an analogue see a short remark in René Basset, "Notes sur les Mille et une nuits. IX: Le Dormeur éveillé," *Revue des traditions populaires* 16 (1901), 83.

²⁶ Édouard Chavannes, Cinq cents contes et apologues extraits du Tripitaka chinois et traduits en français (Paris, 1910-35 (reprint 1962), 1: 340-344, no. 87; see Larzul, 31.

Incidentally, the tale is mentioned, albeit in passing only, by Michael W. Dols, *Majnûn: The Madman in Medieval Islamic Society*, ed. Diana E. Immisch (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), 129, note 48.

The tale's third and last section, corresponding to tale-type 1556,²⁸ has been read as Abū al-Hasan's revenge on Hārūn al-Rashīd: As Abū al-Hasan finds it difficult to figure out whether his adventures at the caliphal court are a dream or reality, so too does the ruler struggle to distinguish between the rumors what he has heard about the death of Abū al-Hasan and his wife—and apparent reality.²⁹ In his early commentary on the tale, René Basset had pointed out that this section is based on an originally independent anecdote.³⁰ The original anecdote is usually attributed to Abū Dulāmah, a black poet acting as a kind of court-fool for the Abbasid caliphs al-Saffāh, al-Mansūr, and al-Mahdī who died in the third quarter of the eighth century C.E.³¹ It is interesting to note that the anecdote already in the fourteenth-century Istanbul manuscript known as al-Hikāyāt al-'ajībah serves as a humorous appendix to another tale, namely a version of the story of Doctor Know-All (tale-type 1641).³² In twentieth-century Middle Eastern traditions, it has also been attributed to other popular jocular characters of the Abbasid period, such as Abū Nuwās or Buhlūl.³³ While the anecdote's occurrence in the present context is not totally devoid of a logical combination with the tale's main action, it constitutes such a clearly recognizable addition from an extraneous and originally independent source that it will not be considered in the following discussion.

Attestations and Versions

Besides the Breslau text and the Tübingen manuscript of the romance of 'Umar ibn al-Nu'mān, the story of Abū al-Ḥasan is attested in a variety of texts most of

²⁸ Ulrich Marzolph, "Pension: Die doppelte P.," in Enzyklopädie des Märchens (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2002), 10: cols. 709-713.

Jean-Paul Sermain, Les Mille et une nuits entre Orient et Occident (Paris: Desjonquères, 2009), 135-137.

³⁰ Basset, 86-88.

³¹ H. Fähndrich, "Compromising the Caliph," Journal of Arabic Literature 8 (1977): 36-47; Ulrich Marzolph, Arabia ridens. Die humoristische Kurzprosa der frühen adab-Literatur im internationalen Traditionsgeflecht (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1992), 2: 106, note 427.

³² Das Buch der wundersamen Geschichten. Erzählungen aus der Welt von Tausendundeine Nacht, Unter Verwendung der Übersetzungen von Hans Wehr, Otto Spies, Max Weisweiler und Sophia Grotzfeld, ed. Ulrich Marzolph (München: C.H. Beck, 1999), 325-326, in no. 9.

³³ W.H. Ingrams, Abu Nuwas in Life and Legend (Port-Louis, 1933), 60; Ulrich Marzolph, Der Weise Narr Buhlūl (Wiesbaden: Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft, 1983), 65, no. 119.

which have been listed by either Chauvin or Paret.³⁴ In addition to the Arabic manuscripts known under the names of Maillet, Sabbagh and Chavis, Chauvin lists the tale's occurrence in the seventeenth-century Ottoman Turkish manuscript of the *Nights* preserved in Paris and in the Arabic manuscripts preserved at Strasbourg and Berlin (Petermann). Paret adds to this list the Tübingen manuscript of the romance of 'Umar ibn al-Nu'mān and the Madrid manuscript of the *Nights*, both unknown to Chauvin. Paret, who is concerned with the romance rather than its embedded tales, disregards Chauvin's mention of the tale's analogous version in the *Kitāb Laṭā'if akhbār al-uwal* (Subtle Stories from the Forefathers) compiled by Egyptian historian Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Mu'ṭī al-Isḥāqī (died 1033/1623). This reference, as we shall soon see, is, however, of crucial importance for assessing the tale's textual development.

The attempt to classify the tale's various attestations at first leads us to dismiss the Chavis and Sabbagh manuscripts from further consideration. These manuscripts, as Muhsin Mahdi has convincingly argued, derive directly from Galland.³⁵ Much as they might offer interesting readings with regard to aspects of translation, they do not promise to contribute significantly to the tale's early textual history. The Maillet manuscript, dating from the second half of the seventeenth century, is fragmentary. The narrative runs from fol. 261a/line 24 to fol. 264a/line 5 and breaks off with the end of the volume just at the point when Abū al-Ḥasan is celebrating his first night as the caliph; up to this point it closely corresponds to the content as sketched above. The tale's version in the Tübingen manuscript is also fragmentary, running from fol. 165a/ line 22 to fol. 172b/end, since it lacks the original leaf (fol. 173) that contained the main section's denouement leading over to the final section. Aiming to fill this obvious lacuna, the manuscript's owner has inserted a single leaf containing his own unusual text, penned in an amateur attempt to link the final scene shortly before the main section's denouement to Abū al-Ḥasan's marriage to Zubaydah's favorite slave-girl in the tale's final section. The version of the tale in the Strasbourg manuscript has been classified as being "abridged

Chauvin, 6: 272-275; Paret, 47-49, 68-69. A detailed assessment and classification of all presently known Arabic manuscript versions of the tale under consideration here is to be published by the present author in the collective volume resulting from the research project MSFIMA (Les Mille et une nuits: Sources et Fonctions dans l'Islam Médiéval Arabe), coordinated by Aboubakr Chraïbi and funded by the Agence Nationale de la Recherche (ANR 2011 BSH3 003 01) at INALCO, Paris, France.

³⁵ Muhsin Mahdi, The Thousand and One Nights (Alf Layla wa-layla) from the Earliest Known Sources (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 51-86.

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at the beginning and the end, with several variants."³⁶ As a matter of fact, the only complete versions of the tale in Arabic besides the mysterious "Tunisian" manuscript edited by Habicht are thus contained in the Berlin manuscript that has been approximately dated to the middle of the eighteenth century,³⁷ and in the Madrid manuscript that is considered to be "fairly recent," at least post-Galland.³⁸ Both of these texts are embedded in the romance of 'Umar ibn al-Nu'mān, and Paret's survey shows that the structure of the romance of 'Umar ibn al-Nu'mān in both manuscripts is fairly close to the Tübingen version. The Madrid manuscript does not, however, show night breaks, though the Berlin manuscript does. Meanwhile, both Chauvin and Paret have pointed out the tale's occurrence in the seventeenth-century Ottoman Turkish version of the *Nights*,³⁹ a text that has not yet gained the attention it deserves.

A comparison of our tale in the Maillet, Berlin, Madrid, and Tübingen manuscripts shows that these four texts are closely related both in terms of content and language. In terms of language, the early sections of the text contained in the Maillet and Madrid manuscripts are often closer to the Berlin manuscript, while the text in the Tübingen manuscript offers variant readings. The only one of these four manuscripts that can reliably be argued to date from before the Galland translation is the Maillet manuscript. This manuscript was most likely prepared in the second half of the seventeenth century, and was acquired at the latest at the beginning of the eighteenth century by the French consul in Egypt, Benoit de Maillet. According to Herman Zotenberg, the Maillet manuscript was part of the Royal Library in Paris around 1738.40 On the basis of its particular characteristics, Zotenberg did not want to attribute the Maillet manuscript to any of the known redactions of the Nights. On the question of whether or not Galland had this manuscript at his disposal when translating the Nights, Zotenberg stood firm that Galland's text shows no special affinity to the Maillet manuscript. Meanwhile Paret has pointed to the fact that in Galland's translation, the story of Abū al-Hasan essentially follows that of Ghānim ibn Ayyūb as it often does in the romance of 'Umar ibn al-Nu'mān,

³⁶ Aboubakr Chraïbi, *Contes nouveaux des 1001 Nuits. Étude du manuscrit Reinhardt* (Paris: J. Maisonneuve Successeur, 1996), 253, no. 155 (fol. 110b–115b).

Wilhelm Ahlwardt, *Verzeichnis der arabischen Handschriften der Königlichen Bibliothek* zu Berlin, vol. 20 (Berlin: Königliche Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1896), 65, no. 9101 (Pet. 109).

³⁸ MacDonald, 308-309.

³⁹ See Chauvin, vol. 4 (1900), p. 201.

⁴⁰ M.H. Zotenberg, "Notice sur quelques manuscrits des Mille et une Nuits et la traduction de Galland," Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale 28 (1887), 182.

being separated only by the two tales in volume eight that Galland's publisher introduced without his permission. ⁴¹ While still today we do not know exactly which source text Galland relied on for his rendering, it is worthwhile considering the possibility of his having known and adapted the story of Abū al-Ḥasan from the Ottoman Turkish translation of the *Nights* kept in the Royal Library, a manuscript bearing the date 1046/1636-37. Zotenberg's argument against this possibility relates only to a general discrepancy of the sequence of stories in Galland and the Ottoman Turkish manuscript, without his going into the details of individual stories. It thus is no convincing argument for arguing against the fact that Galland might have translated some of his material directly from the Turkish, as Paret did. We know for certain that Galland read Ottoman Turkish, and since he had no other manuscript at his disposal containing the tale under consideration, a close textual comparison might reveal clues that he actually depended on the Turkish text.

One of these clues is provided by the fact that the slave girl Abū al-Ḥasan is married to at the beginning of the tale's final section in Galland's version bears the name "Nouzhatoul-Aouadat", or Nuzhah al-'Awwādah, meaning Nuzhah "the Lute-player". The same person's name in the Breslau version, given as Nuzhat al-Fu'ād, is obviously not the standard version, since the Tübingen, Berlin and Madrid manuscripts agree on her name as Nuzhat al-Zamān. At this point, it should be noted that the Breslau version abounds in misreadings to such an extent that is does not appear unlikely that the denomination 'awwādah might have been misread by Habicht (or the compiler of the "Tunisian" manuscript, Mordecai ibn al-Najjār) as *fu'ād* in a similar manner as, for instance, the word for people ($n\bar{a}s$; right at the tale's beginning, when Abū al-Hasan is said to join the company of "the people" = sāra yu'āshiru 'l-nās') has been misread in the Breslau text as fars ("the Persians")—inspiring both Payne and Burton to hilarious comments about the alleged debauchery of the Persians.⁴² The Tübingen, Berlin and Madrid manuscripts also agree on the fact that this slave girl was a lute-player ('awwādah). Only the Ottoman Turkish manuscript, however, introduces the girl explicitly as Nuzhah al-Awwādah (fol. 28b/5), and even though her full name is given as Nuzhat al-Zamān shortly after, the text continues to give her name in most cases either as Nuzhah al-'Awwādah or simply

⁴¹ Paret, 47-49 (31-33).

⁴² See Burton, 11, 2, note 2. "Arab. 'Al-Fárs'; a people famed for cleverness and debauchery. I cannot see why Lane omitted the Persians, unless he had Persian friends in Cairo." Payne had added a footnote to "Persians" reading "Always noted for debauchery." John Payne, Tales from the Arabic of the Breslau and Calcutta (1814-18) editions of the Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night (London, 1884), 1: 5, note 3.

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as Nuzhah. If Galland used this manuscript for his translation, the Ottoman Turkish version might have prompted him to regard the professional epithet *al-'awwādah* as part of the girl's personal name. In fact, Galland does not even once speak of her as Nuzhat al-Zamān.

Another clue suggesting that Galland might have relied on the Ottoman Turkish manuscript is somewhat more intricate. When Abū al-Ḥasan has his malevolent neighbors punished, he also orders them to be lashed with a whip. The number of strokes allotted to the <code>imām</code> and the four old men, respectively, differs in the various versions. The Breslau version mentions a thousand lashes each and the Maillet, Madrid, Berlin and Tübingen manuscripts give the number as four hundred. Only the Ottoman Turkish manuscript and Galland differentiate the number of lashes for each of the culprits. While the Turkish text mentions four hundred lashes for each of the four old men and one hundred for the <code>imām</code>, Galland has reversed numbers to result in a somewhat more logical distribution, i.e. a hundred lashes for each of the four old men, and four hundred for the <code>imām</code>. Similarities of this kind suggest that Galland might have relied on the Ottoman Turkish text for his version, an assumption that future research will have to study in detail.

The only version of the story of Abū al-Ḥasan that up to this point has not been discussed in detail is the one in the Strasbourg manuscript. This manuscript has been dated to the first half of the nineteenth century and is thus comparatively recent. Meanwhile, its version closely mirrors the earliest attested version of the tale that is contained in Isḥāqī's anecdotal history compiled at the beginning of the seventeenth century. This version deserves particular attention since it is not only reliably dated but also differs in content and wording from all other versions discussed so far.

Isḥāqī's compilation is a typical product of Egyptian Arabic compilation literature of the Ottoman period. It is occasionally mentioned in recent surveys on regional Arabic literatures, but it has never been studied in great detail.⁴⁴ This disregard probably results to some extent from the fact that researchers continue to regard the compilations of the period lying between the classical and modern eras of Arabic literature as repetitive, uninspired, and largely unoriginal. As a case in point, one might refer to the considerable number of judgmental evaluations Western orientalist scholars have addressed at the

⁴³ Chraïbi, 13.

Nelly Hanna, "The Chronicles of Ottoman Egypt: History or Entertainment," *The Historiography of Islamic Egypt (c. 950-1800*), ed. Hugh Kennedy (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 247-248.

adab-encyclopedia al-Mustaṭraf compiled by Isḥāqī's compatriot al-Ibshīhī at the beginning of the fifteenth century. These evaluations range from according the work "little individuality" (René Basset), to blaming the author for compiling his material without "trying to think himself" (Maurice Gaudefroye-Demombynes) because of his "limited intellectual capacity" (Hartmut Fähndrich), to seeing the Mustaṭraf as a "rather clumsy work" with a "rather haphazard arrangement" (Jean-Claude Vadet). 46

Daniel Beaumont, in his discussion of the textual editions of the Nights, has called attention to the fact that Ishāqī wrote his book only a few decades before Galland acquired the manuscript that is commonly acknowledged to be the oldest extant manuscript of the Nights. Beaumont, however, most probably misses the importance of his finding, since he concludes that the author of the K. Latā'if akhbār al-uwal had access to the Nights "in a version very much like the one we know".47 It is generally acknowledged that in compiling the manuscripts of the *Nights* in and after the seventeenth century, the compilers exploited different sources. 48 As for their sources, in practical terms they might have had less direct access to the works of the classical epoch than to contemporary compilations that besides secondary quotations from older works also contained additional material. It is, however, equally likely that in ideological terms the compilers felt that culture had moved on and that it would be jettisoning valuable material to go back to the oldest works and disregard the later ones that had grown out of them and that would, in fact, be more suitable in consciously interpreting traditional material for contemporary society.

As for Isḥāqī's K. Laṭā'if $akhb\bar{a}r$ al-uwal, a detailed comparison of the corresponding tales in this work and the Nights suggests that the compilers of the Nights copied directly from Isḥāqī's work. ⁴⁹ Thus, for the first time in studying

⁴⁵ For Ibshīhī, see Ulrich Marzolph, "Medieval Knowledge in Modern Reading: A 15th Century Arabic Encyclopedia of *omni re scibili*," *Pre-modern Encylopaedic Texts* (Proceedings of the Second COMERS Congress, Groningen, 1-4 July 1996), ed. P. Binkley (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 407-419; Kelly Tuttle, "al-Ibshīhī," *Essays in Arabic Literary Biography 1350-1850*, eds. James E. Lowry and Devin J. Stewart (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2009), 236-242.

⁴⁶ Marzolph, 413-415.

⁴⁷ Daniel Beaumont, *Slave of Desire: Sex, Love, and Death in "The 1001 Nights"* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson Press; and London: Associated University Press, 2002), 19.

For the general context, see Ulrich Marzolph, "Coining the Essentials: Arabic Encyclopedias and Anthologies of the Pre-modern Period," in *What is Kept—What is Discarded*, eds. Paul Michel and Anja Goeing (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 31-40.

For the following, see in more detail Ulrich Marzolph, "In the Studio of the *Nights," Middle Eastern Literatures* 17 (2014), 43-57.

the sources of the *Nights*, we get extremely close to what might be termed the "studio atmosphere" of the compilers. While the first two of the corresponding tales in Isḥāqī and the Nights are set in the time of the caliph Abū Bakr and the Umayyad caliphate, respectively, the analogies René Basset had noted between the Nights and Ishāqī's work are all listed in the latter under the time of the early Abbasid caliphs.⁵⁰ Hārūn al-Rashīd, the exemplary figure of the just sovereign in the Nights, occurs only in two of the tales. The first of these is the one about Ja'far and the Bedouin, in which the ridiculed bedouin redeems a mocking prescription with a fart; this story is also known from numerous pre-Mongol sources. The second tale relating to the time of Hārūn al-Rashīd is that of Abū 'l-Hasan or "the Sleeper Awakened." Attributed to the reign of al-Amīn is the "Story of the Noble-mindedness of the Barmecide Jafar against the Beanseller"; and the "Story of Ibrāhīm al-Mahdī," well-known from older historiographical literature, here takes place during the rule of al-Ma'mūn. Toward the end of the long chapter on al-Ma'mūn there is the "Story of the Rich Man Who Became Poor and then Rich Again".

The correspondence of tales between Isḥāqī and the *Nights* does not appear to be coincidental, since three of the corresponding stories in the *Nights* are also contained in Isḥāqī in the same order, although they are quoted at a certain distance from each other. The "Story of the Caliph al-Mutawakkil and the Slave Girl Maḥbūbah" is quoted by Isḥāqī with reference to al-Jāḥiz under the Abbasid caliph al-Mutawakkil, and the "Story of Wardān the Butcher with the Woman and the Bear" as well as the "Story of the Princess and the Ape" are quoted with reference to anonymous tradition (*ḥukiya*, $q\bar{\imath}la$) during the caliphate of the Fatimids. Another story of Isḥāqī that finds an analogue in the *Nights* is the combination of two relatively short anecdotes of the Qāḍī Abū Yūsuf, an eighth-century character who was renowned for his clever solutions to unusual legal problems.

As for the story of Abū al-Ḥasan, the version of the tale in Isḥāqī (and the Strasbourg manuscript) is short and does not contain the lengthy introduction nor the appended anecdote about Abū al-Ḥasan and his wife. Instead, the main section or, in other words, the tale's essential action, is told in a straightforward manner: Abū al-Ḥasan invites the caliph in disguise into his house, is drugged unconscious and made to believe that he is the caliph himself, etc. The tale ends with the caliph revealing his stratagem to Abū al-Ḥasan and making him one of his boon-companions. Rather than regarding this shorter version as an abridgment, the chronological testimony now suggests that the elaborate version is a later development. Given the demands on storytellers to tell more,

⁵⁰ René Basset, "Le Rêve du trésor sur le pont," Revue des Traditions Populaires 14 (1899), 111-112.

elaborating a short tale with additional elements appears to be just as if not more probable than shortening an originally long tale to its essential action.

Incidentally, neither Isḥāqī's version, attributing the various anecdotes to the reign of specific rulers, nor the version of the Strasbourg manuscript are embedded in the romance of 'Umar ibn al-Nu'mān. It remains open to speculation why both Galland and the Breslau version decided to eliminate the dominant embedding narrative of the tale's longer version they quote.

A Similar Tale in the Hundred and One Nights

Questions of the tale's ultimate origin and eventual international dissemination are beyond the focus of the present study. Yet it is important to mention that a tale similar to the story of Abū al-Ḥasan is documented in the framework of the North African variant of the *Thousand and One Nights*, the *Hundred and One Nights*. This tale, whose protagonist is introduced as "Old Hunchback" (*al-shaykh al-ḥadbī*), also develops the theme of a man being made to believe that he is the ruler. The tale does not belong to the standard repertoire of the *Hundred and One Nights* and is only documented in a single manuscript dated 1852.52

Old Hunchback, who works for a blacksmith, invests the money he earns every day in food and wine and spends his evenings all by himself out in the open, drinking and reciting poetry. When Hārūn al-Rashīd and his vizier Jaʿfar happen to pass by one night, Hārūn enjoys the old manʾs company so much that he orders to bring him to the palace. Being so drunk that he does not realize what is happening, the old man is properly washed, dressed up in the caliphʾs robes, and installed on the caliphʾs throne. When the old man is sobered up with the help of a certain potion, he soon comes to enjoy the courtly company so much that he believes himself to be the ruler and trusts the slave girls pretending to be his wives. As he is intent on having sex with one of them, the young woman insists on first having some food. She then exploits the occasion

General information on the *Hundred and One Nights* is given in Ulrich Marzolph, "The *Hundred and One Nights*: A Recently Acquired Old Manuscript," in *Treasures of the Aga Khan Museum: Arts of the Book & Calligraphy* (Exhibition Catalogue), eds. M.S. Graves and B. Junod (Istanbul: Aga Khan Trust for Culture, and Sakip Sabanci University and Museum, 2010), 206-215.

My special thanks go to Aboubakr Chraïbi for pointing out this tale to me. It has been published in *Mi'at laylah wa-laylah*, ed. Maḥmūd Tarshūnah (Libya and Tunis: al-Dār al-'Arabiyyah li-l-Kitāb, 1979), 370-410; the tale has been deleted in the book's second edition: Cologne: al-Kamel, 2005 (see remark on p. 341).

to make him swallow a drug (*banj*) that makes him unconscious. Following this, the old man is dressed again in his own clothing and taken back to his house. With some variation and a certain increase in tension, the events are repeated on three consecutive nights. On the third night, Hārūn, who has been participating in the scene without being recognized by the old man, discloses his stratagem and rewards the man generously for the pleasant entertainment.

Action and Motivation in the Story of Abū al-Ḥasan and Similar Tales

Similar to the story of Abū al-Hasan as it is, the story of Old Hunchback shows numerous different choices in terms of action and motivation. While caliph, even though confused, Abū al-Ḥasan remembers to have his dearest wish fulfilled by ordering the punishment of his malevolent neighbors. Yet he is not concerned with his own well-being. Only in the version of the Breslau edition does he send some money to his mother. Back in his previous "real" life, Abū al-Ḥasan's perceptual conflict is at first resolved by the consolations of his mother. The conflict surfaces, however, violently, when she tells him about the punishment of their neighbors, thereby reminding him how convincing his experience as a caliph had been. When Old Hunchback doubts his status as a caliph, the slave girls try to convince him that his "real" life as the blacksmith's assistant is actually the dream. The different layers of reality and makebelieve are further contrasted through the introduction of the blacksmith, Old Hunchback's master. As caliph, the old man entrusts to the blacksmith a certain amount of money, requesting him to share the money with him should it turn out that he had not really been caliph after all. When Old Hunchback is back in his real life the following day, the blacksmith, however, denies ever having received anything from him. So when the old man is caliph again the following night, he has his master severely punished. Later on, he is reconciled through the intercession of the young women at court and in the end awards his master an even larger amount of money than before.

In some ways, the story of Old Hunchback is closer to the old version of the tale in the *Tripitaka* than the one in the *Nights*. In both the *Tripitaka* and the *Hundred and One Nights*, the main protagonist is an old man of lowly profession (a cobbler, the blacksmith's assistant) who for a short period experiences the supreme bliss of utmost wealth and power. Meanwhile, being either stupid (*Tripitaka*) or unattractive (*Hundred and One Nights*) he does not constitute the least danger to the actual caliph's position. Furthermore, the physical deformity of the hunchback—well known from the story of the hunchback in

the *Thousand and One Nights*—enhances the tale's jocular potential in introducing a stock character of humorous narrative.⁵³ In the *Thousand and One* Nights, a "mirror for merchants" (Chraïbi)54 many of whose tales address the concerns of the trading business, the protagonist is a merchant's son whose adventures begin with a scene similar to numerous other tales. Though the audience is not informed about Abū al-Ḥasan's physical features, they known that he is neither of lowly status nor stupid, and although he is initially bewildered when he finds himself to be caliph, he soon gains a clear state of mind that enables him to listen to the cases brought before him and competently pass judgment for a full day. Already his initial decision to set aside half of his inherited wealth had proven his foresight. Abū al-Ḥasan does not endanger the caliph's power nor does he overtly exploit his temporary powerful position towards the women at court (as Old Hunchback tries to do). Essentially, Abū al-Hasan's good breeding guarantees that he will not abuse the power of his temporary position. And maybe it is precisely his breeding, selflessness, and foresight that inspire the caliph to risk transferring his position to him on a temporary basis.

Wine as one of the tale's essential ingredients links all three versions. In the versions in the *Tripitaka* and in the *Hundred and One Nights*, wine—whether offered by the ruler (as in the *Tripitaka*) or consumed on a regular basis (as in the *Hundred and One Nights*)—serves to intoxicate the protagonist to such a degree that he loses consciousness. In the story of Abū al-Ḥasan, the drinking of wine merely creates a convivial atmosphere in which none of the participants loses control. Interestingly, the *Hundred and One Nights* here betray an intermediary position, since the protagonist first drinks himself unconscious while later a lump of *banj* serves to knock him out when he is posing as caliph. The *Tripitaka* mentions wine for both occasions, and the story of Abū al-Ḥasan again has *banj*. Wine as a means of conscious intoxication and the protagonist's lowly status also link the versions of both the *Tripitaka* and the *Hundred and One Nights* to the tale's European versions.

Considering the discrepancies in both Arabic versions, the story of Old Hunchback can moreover be read as an explicitly sexualized version of the story of Abū al-Ḥasan. When Abū al-Ḥasan spends time with the girls, he simply enjoys their company without making explicit sexual advances (except for the inventive addition in the Tübingen manuscript). Old Hunchback, on

Hans-Jörg Uther, "Buckel, Buckliger," in *Enzyklopädie des Märchens* (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1979), 2: cols. 977-980, at col. 979.

⁵⁴ See Aboubakr Chraïbi, "Situation, Motivation, and Action in the *Arabian Nights*," in Marzolph and Van Leeuwen, 1: 6.

the contrary, after feasting and reciting poetry, is very explicit about his ideas and cannot wait until his favorite (who keeps changing every night) fulfills his sexual demands. When he tries to remember the events the following night, he is even reassured in explicit terms that he actually did have intercourse the night before. On the third night, the sexual component is accelerated to the point that in a fit of passion and anger he orders the execution of his previous favorite when she warns him not to make advances to Lady Zubaydah, Hārūn's wife, of whose true identity he is ignorant. Since Old Hunchback insists on his order being carried out, Hārūn himself decides to stage a mock execution by spilling a red liquid that looks like blood.

As for motivation, the stories of Abū al-Ḥasan and of Old Hunchback both demonstrate an agenda that sets them off against the tale's versions in other cultures. In the old Buddhist version, the ruler makes a lowly man king for a day so as to make him understand the concept of reincarnation that involves any living being's absolute dedication to its present status. In most, if not all, of the European versions, the ruler simply wants to enjoy himself by making fun of his lowly subject. In contrast, in both Arabic versions the ruler primarily enjoys the good company of a person who is educated and knows poetry. Even though the ruler utterly disregards the difficulties of his subject's everyday life in a manner that bespeaks the cruel arrogance of power, in the end he regrets having caused his subject hardship and compensates him generously.

Yet Abū al-Hasan's wish to have his malevolent neighbors punished can be read as much more than a simple act of retribution or revenge. Up to this point, the narrative has portrayed Abū al-Ḥasan as a hedonist who against the backdrop of his disillusioning experience with the company of those he took for friends prefers an individualistic way of life. The five characters Abū al-Hasan has been wanting to punish for so long, i.e. the imām of the mosque and the four old men, suggest that they be read as the representatives of religion (the imām) and law (the four legal schools of Sunnite Islam—Hanafī, Hanbalī, Mālikī and Shāfi'ī).⁵⁵ In this context, Abū al-Hasan's conflict constitutes an act of self-defense aiming to enable him to live his life the way he wants to without having to succumb to religiously motivated legal prescriptions. His wish to have the fundamental representatives of Islam punished and even exiled thus adds no less than a revolutionary dimension to the tale. In addition to his longing for a life based on individual responsibility and focused on joy, his wish unambiguously suggests a desire to do away with religion and law and leave a person's way of life to his (or her) individual decision. Driving this inter-

⁵⁵ I thank Aboubakr Chraïbi for suggesting this ingenious interpretation.

pretation even further, the caliph's decision to allow Abū al-Ḥasan to exercise supreme power for a day may also be seen in a different light. Religion and law lie at the foundations of political power as exercised by the caliph. Meanwhile, the caliph's power is also restrained by religion and law, without his having the least chance to challenge them directly. Abū al-Ḥasan's wish to be caliph for a day relaxes the conventions binding the regular caliph; Abū al-Ḥasan's rule is limited to a single day after which the regular caliph will return unchallenged to even greater power than before, his main rivals having been eliminated. As a critique of Islamic society, ultimate implications are no less than revolutionary.⁵⁶

Suggested Chronology

It has understandably been tempting for previous research to interpret the similarity of the tale's Arabic and European versions as an argument for regarding the latter to derive from the story of Abū al-Ḥasan. Considering the arguments discussed here, it appears, however, more likely that the European texts are based (through yet unknown intermediaries) on a version of the type with a lowly protagonist such as manifested in both the *Tripitaka* and the *Hundred and One Nights*.

In terms of a chronology for our tale, and without considering physical characteristics such as paper and ink, the following suggestions derive strictly from a textual point of view. In this regard, Isḥāqī's short version of Abū al-Ḥasan the Wag is the oldest documented one, being compiled before the end of the first quarter of the seventeenth century. We would need additional arguments to decide whether or not Isḥāqī is the first to document the tale in writing. The Strasbourg manuscript indicates that the shorter version as attested in Isḥāqī remained current in popular tradition until the middle of the nineteenth century. Isḥāqī's straightforward narration is given in a total of roughly 1,600 words. As a typical result of creative storytelling, the Strasbourg version, while not changing the action or adding any decisive elements, elaborates the

As a further *caveat*, we should remind ourselves that the story of Abū al-Ḥasan in the majority of textual testimonies does not stand by itself but constitutes an integral part of the romance of 'Umar ibn al-Nu'mān. It will be interesting to examine the consequences of the above interpretation for the tale's inclusion in the romance. Rather than being an "innocent" narrative, the story of Abū al-Ḥasan might well add an additional layer of meaning to the romance as well.

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narration to a total of just less than 2,600 words. One of the passages added in the Strasbourg version, for instance, mentions in considerable detail the death of Abū al-Ḥasan's father and his subsequent period of mourning, both of which are irrelevant to the further development of the tale's plot.

Against the backdrop of the tale's shorter version, the various attestations of the longer version such as contained in Galland and the majority of manuscripts also suggest themselves as deriving from a conscious process of creation, whether this process implies individual creative writing or, probably less frequently, traces of an oral performance of the tale. The storyteller or storytellers not only embedded the originally independent story of Abū al-Ḥasan in the romance of 'Umar ibn al-Nu'mān but also added the introduction (together with the tale of the trickster and the cook) and the ending. These elaborations result in versions of roughly 4,250 (Berlin and Madrid) and 4,400 (Tübingen) words. As has been noted before, the elaborations do not interfere with the core tale's essential plot but supply extra entertainment by framing the core tale with vaguely related and/or connecting elements, in particular the widespread introductory motif of the profligate son. The decisive point for assessing the position of the Tübingen manuscript lies in fixing the oldest occurrence for the shorter version, the elaborations marking the tale's proliferation.

While the short version in Ishaqī at the beginning of the seventeenth century is the tale's oldest documented occurrence altogether, the Maillet manuscript at the end of the seventeenth century contains the earliest reliably dated Arabic attestation of the elaborated version. Meanwhile, the Ottoman Turkish manuscript proves that the elaborate version had already been known quite some time before its oldest documented version in Arabic in the Maillet manuscript. The Turkish manuscript dates from early in the second quarter of the seventeenth century and was thus compiled only a decade after Isḥāqī's death. As this interval appears to be quite short for a process of gradual development in storytelling, whether oral or written, one might rather argue that at the beginning of the seventeenth century, both the shorter and the longer versions existed simultaneously. Ishaqi's text would then relate to an earlier, yet unknown, attestation of the shorter version similar to the manner in which the Strasbourg manuscript relates to Ishaqi. If this assumption holds true, the elaborate version that is first attested in the Ottoman Turkish manuscript would also relate to Ishaqī's model and would constitute the result of a process of elaboration, whether spontaneous or gradual, as effected by an unknown Arabic author in Ottoman Egypt.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Considering the complexity of the elaborated version with its numerous intricate allusions and implications, the author of this version presumably was an educated person.

Appendix

The following Arabic text is a rendition of the tale's text as contained in the Tübingen manuscript. It should be noted that the version given here follows the original as closely as possible. In particular, no attempt has been made to harmonize the text in terms of "correct" Arabic. Readers should be alerted that the text has been written in a variety of Arabic known as "Middle Arabic". This variety occurs mainly in the numerous narrative texts of the *Thousand and One Nights* kind. In addition to inconsistencies resulting from the particular scribe's style and/or limited knowledge of Classical Arabic, Middle Arabic texts are generally characterized by features such as colloquialisms, an uneven hold of i'rāb (i.e. in this tale, the main character is always الحسن ابو المعنى المعنى

Words written in red in the manuscript are here given in **bold**. The formula linking the nights is given in *italics*. All additions to the original text are given in square brackets [...]; besides the page references, these additions include a number of single words or short passages added by the former owner in places where the manuscript was incomplete. The text of the missing fol. 173 has here also been supplied from the Madrid manuscript so as to have a point of comparison for the former owner's imaginative version.

حكاية النائم واليقظان من مخطوطة توبينجن [٥٦١ م ب] الزمان وسالف العصر والاوان على خلافة امير المومنين هارون الرشيد رجل / تاجر وله ولد سماه ابو الحسن الخليع فمات والده وخلف لابو الحسن مال جزيل / فقسم ماله شطرين وادخر عنده شطر من المال وتصرف في النصف التاني و صار / معاشر الناس واولاد التجار وامتحن بشرب الخمر حتى نقد جميع ما معه فراح يوما / الي اصحابه وعشرايه وندمايه وشكي اليهم من قلت ما بيده فلم يلتفت اليه احداً منهم / ولا وافاه

The process of elaboration would likely have occurred some time before Isḥāqī, probably in the second half of the sixteenth century. It is impossible to ascertain the exact position of the Tübingen manuscript in this process, since it might well have been compiled either before, at the same time as, or later than the earliest attestation of the tale's elaborated version. Without having access to additional documents, and considering Rudi Paret's trenchant assessment of the Nights as resulting from the unrestrained rule of "whimsical fantasy and coincidence" (Paret, 53 [37]), in respect of the dating of the Tübingen manuscript, this is as far as the textual analysis of the story of Abū al-Ḥasan the Wag can possibly take us.

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بالسلام فعاد الي امه وهو مكسور الخاطر واحكي لها ما جرا عليه وما تم له مع / اصحابه وانهم لم ينصفوه في السلام فقالت له امه يا ولدي اولاد هدا الزمان كده / طبعهم ان كان معك شي حبوك وان فرغ ما معك ابعدوك فوجعه قلبه وجرت دموعه / على خده وانشد **يقول**

انقل مالي فلاخلايصاحبني وان زاد مالي / فكل الناس خلائي كم من صديق لاجل المال صاحبني واخرعند فقد المال عاداني /

قال ثم ان قام على حيله واخرِج نصف ماله الدي خباه وعاش به طيب وحلف يمينا / انه ما بقا يعاشر من يعرفه ولم بقا يعاشر الاجنبيين ولا يعاشره غير ليله واحده / واذا اصبح الصبح لا يعود يصاحبه ولا يقربه فيقاكل ليله يقعد على الجسر بجانب من الدجله/ وكلمن يجوز عليه فاذا آراه احداً غريب يحلف عليه وياخذه الى منزله ويتنادم هو واياه / تلك الليله الى الصباح ويصرفه يروح وما يرجع يسلم عليه ولا يعاوده مرة تانيه / فصار يفعل هذا الحال مدة سنه كامله وبعد السنه بين ما ابو الحسن على الجسر/علي عادته ينتظر من يقدم عليه حتى يا خذِه وينام عنده واذا بالخليفه وهو مختفي على/ عادته فجا ابو الحسن الخليع فلما راه ابو الحسن قام له قايماً وهو لا يعرفه وقال يا مولاي / هل لكَّ ان تاتي معىاليموضعىفتاكل ما حضر وتشرب ما تيسر وهو خبز مطبق / ولحم معرق ونبيذ معتق ومروقٌ فامتنع الخليفه من ذلك فاقسم علي الخليفه / وقال له بالله عليك يا سيدي امشي معي فانت ضيفي الليله ولا تخيب فيك املي ولا / زال يلح عليه حتى انعم له ففرح ابو الحسن ومشي قَدامهُ ولا زال يحادثُه حتى اتى وهو / [١٩۶٤] [قد دخل الي] القاعه [عظيم] فدخل [الرشيد] واقعد غلامه على الباب فلماً جلَّس اتاه ابو الحسن بشيء / [من الأكل] وابو الحسن ياكل معه حتى يطيب له الأكلُّ ثم رفع الأكل وقدمانية / [الشراب] وجلس الي جانبه يملا ويشرب ويملا ويسقيه *وادرك شهرزاد الصباح |* [فلما كانت] ليلة ا ربعماية وخمسين قالت شهرزاد بلغني ايها الملك السعيد ان ابوا / [الحسن قعد] الي جانب الخليفه وصارينا دمه ويملا ويشرب ويملا ويسقيه ويحادثه / [فاعجب] الخليفه من كرمه وحسن صورة فعاله الخليفه هارون الرشيد وابو الحسن تتنادموا / فقال له الخليفه يا فتا ما كنت تعرفني بنفسك حتي اكافيك علي احسانك فتبسم / ابو الحسن الخليع وقال يا سيدي هيهات هيهات ان يرجُّع ما فات وأرَّجع احضر / معك في وقت من الاوقات فقال الخليفه ولما ذلك وما تعلمني بحالك قبل ان ادخل لك / [١۶۶ ب] ولدارك فقال ابو الحسن حكايتي عجيبه وان هذا الامر ليس له [فايده فقال] / الخليفه ايش لها سبب فقال لها سبب وللسبب ذنب فضحك [الخليفه] / من قوله فقال ابو الحسن انبي اقول لك

[حكاية الحرفوش مع الطبّاخ] اعلم يا سيدي ان بعض الحرافيش [ان] / يوماً من الايام لا يملك شيًا فضاق صدره وعيل صبره واتي اليه الظهر وثم علي جاء [ته] / الي العصر فاحرقته الشمس فطلعت حشايشه ولم تجد معه شي فجاز علي دكان / طباخ فراي فيها قدر قد راقت اذانها وفاحت ابزارها والطباخ واقف علي تلك / القدور وقد مسح ميزانه وغسل زباديه وكس جوا الدكان ورق فجاء /

الحرفوش وسلم وقال له ازن لي بنصف لحم وربع طعام وربع خبز فوزن له / الطباخ ودخل الحرفوش وحطهم قدامه وجلس على اللحم والطعام بخبر الجميع ولحس / الشقفه وبقا حاير ما يصنع مع الطباخ في ثمن ما أكل فبقا يدور بعينه في الدكان ويجول / بطرَّفه ويفتش على شيء لاضاع له فبينما هو يفتشُّ في الدكان وينقلش فلقي ماجور مكب / على فمه فشاله عن الأرض يلتقي تحَّته دنب فرس طري دمه فعرف ان الطباخ يخلط / اللحم بلحم الخيل فلما اتطلع على هذه الزله فرح بها وغسل يديه وطاطا براسه وتم رايح / والطباخ قد مسك ميزان الفضه لان ما عنده غيره فلما راه راح ولم يعطيه شيئاً / فصاح عليه اقف يا صدام يا هجام فوقف الحرفوش ثم التفت اليه وقال له تصيح على / وتنادي بهذا الكلام يا قرنان فاغتاض الطباخ ونزل من الدكان وقال ما هو بقولك / تاكل لحمى وطعامي وخبزي والايدام وتخرج بسلام كان الشيء ما كان ولا وزنت له اثمان / فقال الحرفوش تكذب يا ابن الف قرنان فصاح الطباخ وتعلق باطواق الحرفوش / وقال يا مسلمين استفتاحي واكل طعامي ولا وزن له اثمان فاجتَّمعت الناس عليه / ولاموا الحرفوش فقال اعطيته درهم من قبل ما ادخل الدكان فقال الطباخ /كان يكون كل شيء بعته في هذا ال[نهار حر]ام ان كنت اعطيتني ولا في ميزاني / شيء لافلوس ولا فضه والله ما ا[عطاني بل]كل طعامي وخرج راح بلاش فقال له /[١١٤٧] بل اعطّيتك درهم وشتمه فرد عليه الطباخ فلُكمه الحرفوش فتماسكًا وتخانقا هذا / والناس قد انقلبوا عليهما وقالوا ماً هذا الضراب الدي انتما فيه ما له سبب فقال الحرفوش/اي والله له سبب وللسبب دنب فقال الطباخ والله فكرتني بروحك وبدرهمك والله / نعم قد اعطيتني درهم وجا اربعة الثمن ارجع خذ بقيته وفهم الطباخ السبب عند/ ذكر الدنب وانا يا اخي لحكايتي شبب فيما قلت لك فضحك الخليفه وقال والله حكايه / لطيفه فاحكى حكايتك فقال حباً وكرامه

اعلم يا اخي ان اسمي صورة الخليفة وابو الحسن / وادرك شهرزاد الصباح فلما كان يلة اربعماية واحد وخمسين قالت شهرزاد / بلغنى ايها الملك السعيد ان الجارية بيالون قالت لكان ما كان ياولدي ان الغلام / ابو الحسن قال للخليفة اعلم ان اسمى ابو الحسن الخليع ومات والدى وخلف لي مال جزيل ان فقسمته شطرين وجزيته وشلت النصف الواحد واقبلت بنصف مالي الثاني علي الاحباب / ١٩٧٧ ب] وعاشرت الندما والاحباب والاولاد التجار وما خليت احداً الا ونادمته ونا /دمني وافنيت جميع مالي علي الاحباب والعشرا فلم يبقا شي من دلك المال فرحت / الي الاحباب والندما الدي افنيت عليهم مالي لعلهم يقوموا بحالي فرحت اليهم و درت / عليهم الجميع والله فلم اجد منهم واحد ينفع ولا كسر في وجهي رغيف فبكيت علي / نفسي وانقلبت الي امي وشكيت اليها همي فقالت العشره هكدا ان كان معك شي / قدموك واكلوك وان كان ما معك شي ابعدوك وطردوك فعند دلك اخرجت / نصف مالي التاني واليت علي نفسي اني ما بقيت انادم احداً غير ليله واحده واصبح / ما ارجع اسلم عليه ولا التفت اليه وهدا قولي لك هيهات هيهات ان يرجع / ما فات لانني ما بقيت اختمع بك عير هده الليله

فلما سمع الخليفه ضحك ضحكا / عظيما وقال والله يا اخي انت معذور في هده الامر والساعه كما عرفت السبب / وللسبب دنب الا انا ان شا الله تعالى ما بقيت انقطع عنك فقال ابو الحسن ما / قلت لك يا نديمي هيهات ان يرجع ما فات لانني ما بقيت اجتمع باحداً ثم انه / قام وقدم له صحن فيه جوز اوز مشوي وشقة كماجه وجلس ابو الحسن وصار يقطع / حتي الاكتفا ثم ان الخليفه صارياكل معه وهو يلقمه ويقول له صحه وعافيه ثم قدم / له طشت وابريق وقليل اشنان وشكب علي يدين الخليفه ثم بعد دلك اوقده / ثلاثه شمعات وثلاثه قناديل وفرش سفرة المدام واخرج له نبيد مصفي وملا / الكاس الاول فقال يا نديمي قد رفع الاحتشام من بيننا بدستور عبدك عندك / فلا بليت بفقدك / ولا ببعدك ثم شرب فخدمه الخليفه وقد اعجب الخليفه فعاله / وحسن احواله وعدبة ما قاله فقال في نفسه والله لا اكافيه ثم ان ابو الحسن الخليع / ملا القدح ونا وله للخليفه وقبله واشار الي الخليفه وانشد يقوله هذا

لو علمنا قدومكم / لسيرنا مهجة القلب ام سواد العيون وفرشنا خدودنا للقاكم ودع يكون / المسير فوق الجفون

قال فقبله الخليفه من يده وباسه وشربه وناوله فاخذه / ابو الحسن الخليع وملاه تانيا وشرب وملا وناول الخليفه وقبله تلات مرات وانشد / [١١٤٨] يقول هدا

وانا بدلك الفضل معترف فان عبستموا عنا فلاعوض لنا عنكم ولاخلف

ثم ان ابو الحسن الخليع قال للخليفه اشرب صحه وعافيه هذا يقطع الادا ويزلي / الدوا ويجري في مجاري الصحه فلم يزالوا يا سيدي كان ما كان يشربوا ويتنادموا / الي ان دخل الليل فقال له الخليفه يا اخي اتر في خاطرك شهوه تريد تقضيتها / فقال له والله ما في قلبي حسره الاانني اتمني من الله ان يعطيني الحكم فامر وانهي واعمل / ما في خاطري واشتفي ممن اريده فقال له الخليفه يا الله يا اخي قلي ما في خاطرك حتى تطلب / الحكم فقال له كتت انتقم من جماعة جبراني فان بجواري مسجد وفيه اربعة / مشايخ فانهم يتغامزوا علي ادا جا عندي ضيف يغلظوا علي في الكلام ويوذوني / في الملام ويهددون في كل يوم ويهتوني بانهم يشكوني لامير المومنين وقد / جاروا علي وبغوا علي كثير فاتمني من الله ان يعطيني ولو حكم يوم واحد حتي كت / اضرب كل واحد منهم اربعماية صوت وكذلك امام المسجد اولهم فهو الدي علي / يقومهم وبعد ان اضربهم اجرسهم علي تيران بمدينة بغداد وامر ان ينادوا عليهم المومنهم أخير فاه منهم فقال الخليفه يعطيك الله ما تطلب وهو علي كل / شي قدير

ثم قال له الخليفه اختم بنا شربنا ودعنا نقوم فقد قرب الصباّح وانا ليله / غدا اكون عندك نديمك فقال له له ابو الحسن الخليع لاهيهات ثم ان الخليفه ملا / قدحاً وحط فيه قطعة بنج قريطي وناوله له وقال له بحياتي علي قلبك خده من يدى فقال ابو الحسن اي وحياتك اشربه من / يدك ثم شرب القدح فما هو الا ان شرب حتي سبقت راسه رجليه وتلقح علي

الارض / مثل القتيل فخرج الخليفه وقال لغلامه ادخل الي هده الصبي صاحب البيت واحمله واذا / خرجت رد الباب واتيني به الي القصر ثم مضى ودخل غلامه واحتمل ابو الحسن ورد الباب / وتبع مولاه الخليفه ولم يزل به حتى طلع الي القصر وقد تهود الليل وصاحت الديوك / [١٤٨ ب] فدخل الخليفه قصره وابو الحسن راقد بين يديه والخليفه يضحك عليه ثم انه / ارسل يطلب جعفر البرمكي فحضر بين يديه فقال له اعرف هذا الشاب واذا / رايته غدا جالس في منصبي وعلى كرسي خلافتي ولابس بدلتي فاقف في خدمته / واوصي الامرا والكبرا واهل دولتي وخواص مملكتي انّ يقفوا في خدمته ويتمتلوا / ما يامرهم به وانت اذا قال لك على شيى اسمع منه ومهما امرك به افعله ولا / تخالفه في هذا اليوم الطالع فامتثل جعفرالامر بالسمع والطاعة وانصرف / الخليفه الي جوا القصر واقبلوا عليه فقال لهم خُدا هدا النايم اذا استيقظ / غداً من منامه فقبلوا الارض بين يديه واحدموه ودوروا حواليه والبسوه / البدله واعطوه خدمة الخلافه ولا تنكروا من حاله شياً وقولوا له انت / الخليفه ثم وصاهم ما يقول لهم وبما يفعلون في حقه ودخل في مكان / محجوب عنه وارخا عليه ستاره ونام واما ابو الحسن الخليع فانه لا يزال / يخبط في نومه الي ان طلع الصباح وقرب اشراق الشمس [فاتي اليه خادم وقال يا مولاي] والساعة تقومك / الصلاة صلاة الصبح فلما سمع كلام الخادم ضحك وفتح عينيه ودار بعينيه / في القصر فنظر الي قصر قد دهنت حيطانه بالذهب واللازورد وسقفه ينقط / ذهب واواني معتده وفرش وبسط مفروشه واواني غير معدوده وجوار وخدم / ومماليك وغلمان ووصايف وولدان فتحير في عقله وقال والله انا في منام / وهذه الجنه ودار السلام فغمض عينه ونام فقال الخادم يا سيدي ما هذه عوايدك / يا امير المومنين ثم جا اليه هو وبقية الجوار واقعدوه فقعد على حيله يجد روحه / على فرش علوه من الارض دراعين كله محشى بالقز فجلس واستند علي مخدَّه ونظر / الي القصر والي كبره وراي الي ذلك الخدام والجوار في خدمته وقوف فضحك على نفسه / وقال والله يا اخي انا في اليقظه ما انا نايم ثم قام وقعد والجوار ينظروا اليه / ويضحكُوا ويستتروا منه وتحير عُقله وعض اصباعه فأوجعه فتاواه والخليفه ينظر / اليه من حيث لإ يراه ويضحك فالتفت ابو الحسن الي جاريه وصاح اليها فاتته / [١٤٩] فقال لها بستر الله يا جاريه انا امير المومنين فقالت اين وستر الله انت / في هدا الوقت امير المومنين فقال تكذبي والله يا الف قحبه ثم نظر الي الخادم / الكبير وصاح به فاتي اليه وقبل الارض بين يديه وقال نعم يا أمير المومنين / فقال ومن هو امير المومنين فقال انت فقال تكذَّب يا الف كوره ثم اقبل علي / طواشي اخر فقال له يا كبيري بستر الله انا امير المومنين فقال والله يا سيدي انت / في هذا الوقت امير المومنين وخليفة رب العالمين فضحك ابو الحسن في نفسه / وقد تخبل في عقله وتحير فيما راي في فرد ليله يبقا امير المومنين الاانا البارحه /كنت ابو الحسن الخليع واليوم انا امير المومنين فتقدم اليه الخادم الكبير وقال / يا امير المومنين اسم الحمد حواليك انت امير المومنين وخليفة رب العالمين لا / يداخلك في هذا شك ولا ريب قم الان ثم داروا به الجوار والخدام حتى قام وبقا / متعجب من حاله

وقدم له المملوك شمسك مصنوع بالابريشم الاخضر مرصع بالذهب الاحمر / وادرك شهرزاد الصباح فلما كان ليلة اربعماية اثنين وخمسين قالت شهرزاد بلغني / إيها الملك السعيد ان قدم اليه المملوك الصغير شمسك مصنوع بالابريشم الاخضر/ مرصع بالذهب الاحمر فاخذه ابو الحسن وحطه في كمه فصاح المملوك الله الله يا سيدي / هدا شمسك مداس لرجلك حتى تدخل فيه المستراح فخجل ابو الحسن الخليع ورماه من /كمه ولبسه في رجله والخليفه قد مات من الضحك عليه ومشي المملوك قدامه الي / بيت الراحه فدخل ابو الحسن وقضي شغله وخرج الي القصر فقدمت الجوار اليه / طشت من الذهب والابريق من الفضه وصبوا عليه الماء وتوضأ وبسطوا له سجاده / وصلى فما عرف ما يصلي وصار يركع ويسجد عشرين مره وهو يحسب ويقول في / نفسه والله ما انا الا امير المومنين حق ولو لا هو حق ما كان ذلك والا فما هذا منام / والمنام ما يجرا فيه هده الجري جميعه ثم انه حقق وجزم بانه امير المومنين فسلم / وفرغ من صلاته فدارت به المماليك والسلحداريه ثم البسوه بدلة الخلافه واعطوه / [١٤٩ ب] في يده قضيب الملك وخرج الخادم الكبير قدامه والمماليك الصغار وراه / ولا زالوا به وهم شايلين ادياله حتى دخلوا به الي مجلس الحكم جوا القصر / واجلسوه على سرير المملكة فلما جلس على سرير الملك ورا الستاير / والابواب الاربعين والعجلي والرفايش وعيادان وحريم وابو اسحاق النديم / ونظر الي سيوف مجذبه ولتوت محرفه وصماصم مذهبه وقسى موتره وعرب وعجم /صورة الشاب ابو الحسن الخليع جالس علي سرير المملكه عوض الخليفه / وخواص أكابر الدوله / وترك وخلق وامم وامراً ووزرا واكابر وارباب الدوله واهل الصوله وبانت / له الدوله العباسيه والهيبة النبويه فجلس على الكرسى وحط النمشه في حجره / كعادة امير المومنين فاقبلوا الجميع يقبلون الارض بين يدي امير المومنين / [٧٠١] و دعوا له بطول العمر والبقا وتقدم جعفر البرمكي وقبل الارض وقال الله / يرعاك ويجعل الجنه متواك لاعدالك على جاره ولا خمد لك انواريا خليفة / الامصار وحاكم الاقطار فزعق عليه ابو الحسن الخليع وقال له ياكلب بني برمك / انزل في هذه الساعه انت ومتولي المدينه وروح الي المحلة الفلانيه الي الدرب / الفلاني وهات الاربع مشايخ الذين في المسجد واضرب كل واحد منهم / اربعماية صوط وبعد ان تضربهم ركبهم علي تيران مقلوب بمثل ما هم ودورهم / المدينه جميعها وبعد ذلك انفيهم لبلد غيرها فخرج جعفر البرمكي وفعل ما امره / به فامر المناديه فنادوا عليهم وهم راكبين التيران هدا جزا واقل جزا على من / يكثر الفضول والكلام ويشوش على الناس ويبغض عليهم لذتهم واكلهم و شربهم / ثم ان ابو الحسن الخليع اقام في الخلافه يأخد ويعطي ويامر وينهي ويحكم وينفد / احكامه دلك النهار بطوله الي وقت العشا فاعطا لهم اذن ودستور

فانصرفوا / الامرا وارباب الدوله الي بيوتهم واتته الخدام ودعوا له بالبقا والدوام قدامه / ومشوا في خدمته وشالوا السنر ودخل لقصر الحريم فوجد شموع بتقد وقناديل / بتشعل ومغاني بتضرب فحار في عقله وقال والله انا امير المومنين حقاً فلما / اقبل قامت الجوار اليه وطلعوه الايوان وقدموا له مايدة

عظيمه من افخر / الطعام فاكل منها جهده وطاقته حتى اكنفا فزعق علي جاريه وقال لها ما / اسمك قالت اسمي راحه وقالت اخري اسمي تفاحه وقالت اخري اسمي مسكه / وقالت اخري اسمي طرفه وقالت اخري اسمي تفاحه وقالت اخري اسمي عقده واحده وقام من دلك طرفه وقالت اخري اسمي تحفه وصار يسال عن اسامي الجوار / واحده بعد واحده وقام من دلك المكان وانتقل الي مجلس النقل والفاكه فيجد / عشرة اطباق كبار عليها من جميع الفواكه والخيرات وعليه الحلويات فاكل / علي حسب الكفايه والنهايه والغايه تم انه بعد ذلك انتقل الي مجلس الشراب / والمدام فيجد ثلاثه جوق جوار مغاني ومهاني وملاهي قد حاز واكل المغاني / [٧٧٠ ب] فجلس وجلست الجوار وغنوا بطيب الالحان فجاو بهم دلك المكان وزعقت / المواصل وضربت تلك العيدان فتخيل دلك الوقت لابو الحسن الخليع انه / في الجنان وطاب وانشرح واتسع صدره وانطرح مع دي ويلقم / دي الي ان توهد الليل وانهدم والخليفه يطلب اليه ويضحك ولما تهود الليل / امر الخليفه مع دي ويلقم / دي الي ان توهد الليل وانهدم والخليفه يطلب اليه ويضحك ولما تهود الليل / امر الخليفه بعض الجوار ان تذوب قطعة بنج في قدح وتسقي لابو الحسن الخليع / ففعلت الجاريه دلك وشرب بعض الجوار ان تذوب قطعة بنج في قدح وتسقي لابو الحسن الخليع / ففعلت الجاريه دلك وشرب عض المحدا الغلام / واطرحه في مكانه ورد عليه الباب فحمله الغلام الدى اخذه من بيته في ابتدا الامر وقال له احمله هدا الغلام / واطرحه في مكانه ورد عليه الباب فحمله الغلام الوقته وساعته ووضعه في / فاعته ورد عليه الباب فاعته ورد عليه الباب فحمله الغلام الذي له

ولم يزال ابو الحسن الخليع نايم حتي طلعت الشمس / واحرقه الحر وصاح يا راحه يا تفاحه يا مسكه يا طرفه يا تحفه يا خيزران يا ناريج / يا قمر وادرك شهرزاد الصباح فلما كان ليلة اربعماية ثلاثة وخمسين قالت شهر/زاد بلغني ايهاالملك السعيد ان ابو الحسن الحليع لم يزل يصبح للجوار واحدة بعد واحده / فسمعت امه اسما جوار غريبه فقامت لوقتها واتت اليه وقالت له يا ولدى اسم / الله حولك بتدعوا باسم من هم ففتح عينه يجد خرابه ويجد عجوزه عند راسه / قاعده فانكر ذلك الحال وقال من تكوني انتي قالت له يا ولدي انا امك قال تكذبي / يا عجوز النحس ومن هو ولدك وما انا الاامير المومنين وخليفة رب العالمين وحامي / حوزة الموحدين ثم تفكر الجوار والقصر والخير الدي كان فيه فقال والله ما كنت / في منام وما كنت الا في يقظه فليس انهيتني يا عجوز النحس ثم افكر وقال والله / انا ابو الحسن الخليع وُكاني رايته في المنام وحلمت اني الخليفه ثم انه افكر وقال / والله يا اخي ما هو منام وإنا امير المومنين على الدوام ثم قالُ والله يا اخي والله / امرت والله نهيت واوهبت وأعطيت فقالت امه بالله يا ولدي لا تضيع عقلك / [١٧١] تروح المرستان وانت ولدي ابو الحسن الخليع وانما ما الدي جراكله من / الشيطان جا اليك وصور لك هدا الحال فقال يا امي الشيطان يصور الانسان / فقالت نعم يا ولدي واظنه دلك الانسان الدي وضيفته وصحبته فما اظن هدا / انسان وماكان الاشيطان فافتكر وقال اي والله وانا عزمت عليه ونادمني ونادمته / وسالني عن حالي وعن قصتي فاخبرته وعهدي به انه نديم فما اعرف ما جرالي وهو / الشيطان بعينه والساعه كما صدقتكي وان الدي جرا لي كُله من فعل الشيطان فقالت / امه

اي والله يا ولدي وما دلك كله الافعل الشيطان فاستعيد بالله لكن يا ولدي / اني ابشرك بشاره تفرجها فقال لها يا امي قولي وبشري لما كان انبارحه في الساعه / الثالثه من النهار جا الي حارتنا وزير الخليفه جعفرابن يحيي البرمكي وجماعته واخدوا / المشايخ الدي في المسجد والامام وضربكل واحد منهم اربعمايه صوطً وبعد دلك / احضر لهم تيران وركبهم عليهم مقلوب وجرسهم في المدينه وشوارعها ونادوا عليهم / المناديين ثم بعد دلك انفاهم من مدينتنا الي بلد بعيده وهذا كله يا ولدي بصرنا / عليهم واديتهم لنا فعل بهم هده الفعال فلما سمع من أمه دلك الكلام صاح وزعق / في وجهها وقال لها قلت لك يا عجوز النحس اني انا امير المومنين الرشيد قلتي لي لا / ما انت الإابو الحسن الخليع والله ما امرهم ان يفعلوا هده الفعال بهم الاانا / وإنا والله امير المومنين بلامحال حقاً حقاً وانتي يا عجوز النحس كذابه ثم قام لها / وبرك فيها بعلقه حتى استغاتت وعيطت فبقا يضربها وهي تستغيت فلا تغات / وتقول له يأخي انت امير المومنين فسمعت الجيران صياحها فاتوا ودخلوا لهم يجدوا / ابو الحسن اهر اجلدا مه من الضرب وهي تقول له انت امير المومنين وخليفة رب العالمين / فلما نظروه الجيران على تلك الحاله [قالوا] هدا مجنون وما دواه الا المرستان فاغلظ عليهم / فاخذوه وودوه المرستان فقالوا لهم اهل المرستان ما لهذا الشاب فقالوا لهم هدا / مجنون وابو الحسن زعق عليهم وقال لاهل المرستان بكدبوا على هولاي الجيران ما انا / [١٧١ ب] الا امير المومنين وخليفة رب العالمين فقالوا اهل المرستان تكدّب / يا اخس الجانين ثم انهم اخدوه وعروه من تيابه وحطوا قوام في رقبته / جنزير حديد طويل وربطوه في سكه حديد من خارج الشباك وراحوا وخلوه / فبقا العرفشه يضربه مايه صوط بكره وخمسين في العشيه مدة عشرة ايام / فحن قلب امه عليه فجاته الي المرستان ونظرته على تلك الحاله فاغتمت وقالت / يا ولدي ارجع لعقلك وخلي عنك جهلك وخلي عنك هذا الخيال الدُّي هو / من فعل الشيطان فقال لها يا أمي صدقتي انتي وأدرك شهرزاد الصباح / فسكنت عن الحديث فلما كان ليلة **اربعماية اربة وخمسين** قالت شهرزاد / بلغني ايها الملك السعيد ان الجاريه بيالون قالت لكان ما كان يا ولدى فقال / ابو الحسن لامه صدقتي وانا تايب عن هدا الكلام وعن هدا الجنان والخرافات / فخلصيني يا امي وارحميني فقد اشرفت علي التلف فحن قلب امه عليه وشفعت / فيه وخلصته واتت به الي قاعته فقعد يداوي في اجنابه الي تمام الشهر /

فشم الهوي فاشتاق لعادته ولشربه ومنادمته ففرش المكان وهيا الطعام وروق / المدام وخرج الي الجسر وجلس ينتظر من يعزم عليه واذا هو بامير المومنين / الخليفه جاي عليه وهو مستخفي فلما راه ضحك وسلم عليه فلما عاينه ابو الحسن / الخليع عرفه فما رضي يرد عليه السلام وقال لا اهلاً للقادمين ولا مرحبا بالشياطين / وقال والله انت من الشياطين فقال له الخليفه ومن هو الشيطان فقال / ابو الحسن والله انت الشيطان بعينه وجلس الخليفه الي جنب ابو الحسن / ووطاه بالكلام وخادعه فقال له والله يا خرجت من عندك وخليت / الباب عليك مفتوح فقال له ابو الحسن يا نديمي فايش خطر بك حتى نسيت الباب / مفتوح حتى دخل على الشيطان وجرا لي كيت وكيت واتهلوست فايش خطر بك حتى نسيت الباب / مفتوح حتى دخل على الشيطان وجرا لي كيت وكيت واتهلوست

في عقلي واجننت / وودوني المرستان ولي عشرة ايام وانا اداوي جسدي من الضرب الدي ضربوه / [١٧٧٦] لي العرفشه ويا ما جرا على ثم حدته بما جرا له جميعه والخليفه امير المومنين يسمع / كلامه ويضحك علي الدي جرا له ويقول له يا اخي لو لم يكن فيها الا انك قضية / شهوتك وراحت غصتك فخدني الليله عندك نديمك فقال له الم اقول / لك هيهات ان يرجع ما كان او نتغير عادات ثم لاطفه بالكلام واقسم عليه / بعظم الاقسام فاخده معه الي القاعه ودخلوا وجلسوا للمنادمه فقدم له الطعام / ونادمه بالكلام وقعد تحدثه صورة الخليفه متخفى ويتنادم هو والشاب ابو الحسن ويعيد عليه ما جرا له والخليفه يوريه انه متعجب ولم يزالوا حتي فرغوا [من اكل] / الطعام فقدموا المدام فملا ابو الحسن وشرب وملا قدح ثاني وناوله [الي الخليفه] / وقال يا نديمي عندك عبدك يا نديمي شعر لاخير في العيش فا تيكم من المرح [١٧٧ ب] ادا تسلم بعد سكرانا ولم ترح من معتقة ضيا الشمس بهجتها تنفي الهموم / بانواع من الفرح ما زلت اشربها والليل معتكر حتي اركب الكراراسي / علي قدح ما زلت اشربها والليل معتكر حتي اركب الكراراسي / علي قدح قاله من المرح المنادم وشهره ما بالاقد احالكان ماله فاد / ما نااما شهره احتراك ما والدي المنادم احتراك ما والحدة علي قدح قاله من المرح المنادم والله فاد من معتكر حتي اركب الكراراسي / علي قدح

قال فطرب الخليفة وشرب وتنادموا وشربوا بالاقداح الكبار والصغار / ولم يزالوا يشربوا حتى طلعت الخمر في روسهم فقال ابو الحسن يا نديمي والله انا حاير / في امري كاني كنت امير المومنين وحكمت وامرت ونهيت واوهبت واعطيت / وما هو والله منام فقال له الخليفه يا اخي دع عنك هدا الكلام فهدا اضغات احلام / اصرف الله عنك الشيطان فلا تتوسوس بهدا الوسواس فيعيد عليك الشيطان / الخناس وتصير مثلا بين الناس ثم ان الخليفه دلا القطعه البنج في فنجانه وناوله له / وقال يا اخي بحياتي عليك اشرب هدا من يدي فقال اي والله اخده من يدك / واشربه فاعجب الخليفه افعاله واخلاقه فقال في نفسه والله لاجعل هذا نديمي / وجليسي في حضرتي واما ابو الحسن فانه ما استقر القدح فقال في نفسه والله لاجعل هذا نديمي / وجليسي في حضرتي واما ابو الحسن فانه ما استقر القدح ما الشراب في بطنه حتي / مال براسه الي الارض ونام فنهض الخليفه من عنده وخلاه راقد وطلع الي قصره وطرحه بين يديه فامر الجوار ان يدوروا حواليه وتوارا عنه الخليفه / في موضع لا يراه وادرك شهرزاد الحسن الصباح فلما كان ليلة اربعما ية خمسة وخمسين / قالت شهرزاد بلغني ايها الملك السعيد ان ابو الحسن الخليع استفاق اخر الليل

فسمع / حس الطارات وصراخ القصب وتصفيق الجوار بالكفوف ففتح عينه الواحده فراي / وقيد الشموع واشتعال القناديل والقصر والجوار والمماليك والغلمان والعبيد والخدام / [فقال] استغفر الله العظيم فسمع الجاريه تقول يا امير المومنين اعقل علي جوارك / [واصحي من] نومك فضحك وقال اذهب لعنك الله ما انت الاشيطان رجيم / [وكان مرادك تودني] المرستان ثاني مره يا الف قرنان حتي اكل الصفع فضحك / [الخليفه حتي غشي عليه قال فصار] يفتح عينه ويقفلها ويقول لاحول ولا قوة الابالله

[مخطوطة مدريد ٢٧٢ ب] ويقول لاحول ولا قوه الا بالله العلي العظيم اخزاك الله يا شيطان رجيم ثم انه حط راسه في طوقه وصار يضحك / ويشيل راسه فيجد الجوار والقصر فجاه الخادم وقعد عند / راسه وقال يا امير المومنين اجلس وانظر لقصرك وجوارك / وتمه ليلتك معهم فلما سمع الكلام قال وستر الله انا امير / المومنين في حق وصدق لانبي تلك الليله و هو امس ما خرجت / وحكمت الي العشا ودخلت القصر وجلست اشرب مع جواري / واكلت واشتغلت بمجلس النقل والفاكهة ثم انتقلت الي / مجلس الشراب و كانني شربّت قليلا ونمت وهذا الخادم / ينبهني وجلس وقعد ثم افتُكر ما جرا له وكيف ضرب امه / ودخوله الي المارستان ورآي اثر الضّرب على اجنابه وهو / فيّ المارستان فتخيل في عقله واحتار في امره فقال / والله ما بعرف اني في المنام هذا اثر الضرب والسياط / على اجنابي وقعدت اداويهم عشرة ايام وما اعلم ايش قضيتي / ثم انه اقبل على جاريه وقال لها ويلكي يا جاريه انا امير / المومنين من حقّ قالت وعيشك يا امير المومنين نعم حقًّا / فقال تكذبي يا قحبه تستاهلي الف ضربه ثم قال عضّي على [٣٧٢] اصبعي فكزّت علي اصبعه كادت ان تقطعه فاستغاثً / وقال اطلقيه يا عشرة الاف قحبه بلاكي الله بالف نكبه / ثم اقبل على الجاريه ويلكانا امير المومنين وخليفة رب/العالمين فقالت نعماي والله فتركها وراح ومشا وقد خرج من عقله ولبه وتجنن وقال هذا منام والله العظيم / ثم انه اقبل على مملوك ظريف وقال له بعد ان اغنا له / ويلك عض ودني قوي وتقدم اليه وحط ادنه في فم الصغير / وهذا ولد ضغير وما له عقل ولا تدبير فعند ذلك طبق / اسنانه ذلك المملوك الصغير على ودن ابو الحسم الخليع / وهو يعتقد انه يقول له قوي قوي فصار ابو الحسن الخليع / يصرخ ويعيط ويقول لالاهذا والجوار تضرب بالطارات / وتقد على الكاسات وتزعق بالمواصبل ويضحكوا وابو الحسن / يستغيث فلا يغاث هذا والخليفه يضحك عليه وماسك / فواده بيده ثم انه خرِج من ثيابه وتنس ودنه وبقا عريان / وهو بالفلس مكشوف والراس مثل يوم ولدته امه وقد / جري ودخل بين الجوار وصار في وسطهم ونط ورقص [273 ب] وتشقلب فطربوا له وشدّوا له بالطارات وضربوا له علي /كفوفهم وماتوا من الضحك عليه وصار يرقص وينط وزبه / مطرطر بين سيقانه والجوار تضرب بالطارات واما الخليفه / هارون الرشيد لما ان رآه بتلك الحالة مات من الضحك / وغمي عليه وصاح ويلك يا ابو الحسن امسك نفسك قتلتني / وقتلت والدتك وقتلت مشايخ الحاره وقتلت امام المسجد / ثم الخليفه هارون الرشيد رحمة الله عّليه اقبل على ابو / الحسن الخليع واخلع عليه خلعه سنيّه وقربّه لدّيه وقد / ازوجه محضيه من محاضيه واسكنه عنده في القصر منَّ دور وَّجعله نديمه وقربَّه اليه حتى صار عند / الخليفه اقرب من ندماه العشره المشهوره . . .

[مخطوطة توبينجن ١٧٧٣] [العلى العظيم اشي هذه الوقعه مع هذا الشيطان الذي تسلط / على ومراده كل يوم يوديني المارستان ولسعان اجنابي / ما طابوا من القتل والعذاب ثم انه رد غمض عينيه فقالت / له نزهة الزّمان العواده جارية الست زبيده يا امير المومنين / ما تعقل على جوارك وخدمك وحشمك وتنهض الي صلاة الفجر / وتفطر قبل ما تخرج الديوان فرفع على راسه ايده وغطا / اعيانه بكمه وقله ولك شيطان الكلب لسعانك ما شبعت / من عذابي والله العظيم اطعموني قتل يكفاني ليوم القيمه روح / واعمل غيري امير المؤمنين وانا ماني الاابو الحسن الخليع يا رقيع / فغشي علي الخليفه وزبيده من الضحك وعمزوا نزهة الزمان / عليه فاتت لعنده وقالت له يوه يا امير المؤمنين ما هي عادتك / اذا ناغشتك تصد عني وتبعد وكان كلامها رخيم فتحرك عليه / الا له فقعد وقال لهاً لكان انا صحيح امير المؤمنين قالتُّ والا يا حبيبي / في هذا شك فقال لها لكان ان كنت انا امير المؤمنين وانتي جاريتي / اعطيني بوستين من هذا الثفر اللطيف ومديده اليها وضمها لصدره / ولذها عليه وصار يبوسها ويشمشمها فلما رات منه الجد ارادت تتخلص / منه ما كانت تقدر وهو يقول لها والله وصالك بالف مارستان / والف عذاب رخبص وما هو غالي والخليفه وزبيده غشيوا من / الضحك ثم ان الخليفه كشف الستر واظهر حاله على ابو الحسن / الخليع وقله ينضحك فتلتني من كثرة الضحك فلما حققه انه هو / [١٧٣ ب] امير المُؤمنين وهو الذي كأن ضيفه بالامس وثب على قدميه / وسكع بين يديه وقله امان افندم اعطيني الامان بحيات راسك / ان كان ظهر مني هفوه فبحر حلمك يسعني فقال له الخليفه وحيات / راسي عليك الامان انت في زمامي وتحت امانتي تمنا علي / مهما شئت يا ابو الحسن فقال بتمني على حضرة الخليفه نزهة / الزمان هذي بقيت مناي من الدنيا باقي والسلام فقال / الخليفه تمنا غير نزهة الزمان لانها هذه الجاريه هي ليس / الي هذه للست زبيده فقالت زبيده وحيات راسك اجته نزهة / الزمان بطقمها وكلما معها فقال الملك واجاه مني صراية ما بين / بفرشها وطقمها وجعلته من جملة ندمائي . . .