The Story of Abū al-Ḥasan the Wag in the Tübingen Manuscript of the Romance of ʿUmar ibn al-Nuʿmān 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 ʿUmar ibn al-Nuʿmān, 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) – ʿUmar ibn al-Nuʿmān (Romance of) – Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Muʿṭī al-Isḥāqī

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The Story of Abū al-Ḥasan the Wag (al-khalīʿ)—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 tale was first published in Galland’s adapted French translation that introduced the Nights into world literature. 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. 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. 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

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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.
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). 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), translations of the Arabic

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


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


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


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,*
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

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 (ḥarfūsh) 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-Ḥasan 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-Ḥasan 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-Ḥasan. 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 Tuḥfat 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-Ḥasan 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

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 ʿl-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī’s (died c. 972) Kitāb al-Aghānī in which the historical jester Abū ʿl-ʿIbar (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 baʿd 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

21 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).
Todorov’s “narrative men”\textsuperscript{24} of the \textit{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 (\textit{al-ḥarfūsh wa-’l-tabbākh}), a tale only attested in this context.\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{26} 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.\textsuperscript{27} 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.


\textsuperscript{25} 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,” \textit{Revue des traditions populaires} 16 (1901), 83.


\textsuperscript{27} Incidentally, the tale is mentioned, albeit in passing only, by Michael W. Dols, \textit{Majnūn: 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,\textsuperscript{28} has been read as Abū al-Ḥasan’s revenge on Hārūn al-Rashīd: As Abū al-Ḥasan 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-Ḥasan and his wife—and apparent reality.\textsuperscript{29} In his early commentary on the tale, René Basset had pointed out that this section is based on an originally independent anecdote.\textsuperscript{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-Saffāḥ, al-Manṣūr, and al-Mahdī who died in the third quarter of the eighth century C.E.\textsuperscript{31} It is interesting to note that the anecdote already in the fourteenth-century Istanbul manuscript known as \textit{al-Ḥikāyāt al-ʿajībah} serves as a humorous appendix to another tale, namely a version of the story of Doctor Know-All (tale-type 1641).\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{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 ʿUmar ibn al-Nuʿmān, the story of Abū al-Ḥasan is attested in a variety of texts most of


\textsuperscript{29} Jean-Paul Sermain, \textit{Les Mille et une nuits entre Orient et Occident} (Paris: Desjonquères, 2009), 135-137.

\textsuperscript{30} Basset, 86-88.


\textsuperscript{33} W.H. Ingrams, \textit{Abu Nuwas in Life and Legend} (Port-Louis, 1933), 60; Ulrich Marzolph, \textit{Der Weise Narr Buhlūl} (Wiesbaden: Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft, 1983), 65, no. 119.
which have been listed by either Chauvin or Paret. 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 Latāʿif akhbār al-uwal (Subtle Stories from the Forefathers) compiled by Egyptian historian Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Mu’tī al-Ishāqī (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. 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

34 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.

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 ʿUmar ibn al-Nuʿmān, and Paret’s survey shows that the structure of the romance of ʿUmar ibn al-Nuʿmān 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-Ḥasan essentially follows that of Ghānim ibn Ayyūb as it often does in the romance of ʿUmar ibn al-Nuʿmān,

38 MacDonald, 308-309.
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-ʿAwwādah, meaning Nuzhah “the Lute-player”. The same person’s name in the Breslau version, given as Nuzhat al-Fuʿād, 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 it does not appear unlikely that the denomination ʿawwādah might have been misread by Habicht (or the compiler of the “Tunisian” manuscript, Mordecai ibn al-Najjār) as fuʿād in a similar manner as, for instance, the word for people (nās; right at the tale’s beginning, when Abū al-Ḥasan is said to join the company of “the people” = šāra yuʿāshiru ‘l-nās) has been misread in the Breslau text as fārs (“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 (ʿawwādah). Only the Ottoman Turkish manuscript, however, introduces the girl explicitly as Nuzhah al-ʿAwwādah (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-ʿAwwādah or simply

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41 Paret, 47-49 (31-33).
42 See Burton, 11, 2, note 2. “Arab. ’Al-Fārs’; 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.
as Nuzhah. If Galland used this manuscript for his translation, the Ottoman Turkish version might have prompted him to regard the professional epithet *al-ʿawwādah* 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 *imām* 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 *imām*, 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 *imām*. 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. 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

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43 Chraïbi, 13.
adab-encyclopedia *al-Mustatraf* compiled by İshāqī’s compatriot al-Ibshihi 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 *Mustatraf* as a “rather clumsy work” with a “rather haphazard arrangement” (Jean-Claude Vadet).

Daniel Beaumont, in his discussion of the textual editions of the *Nights*, has called attention to the fact that İshāqī 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. Laṭāʾif akhbār al-uwal* had access to the *Nights* “in a version very much like the one we know”. It is generally acknowledged that in compiling the manuscripts of the *Nights* in and after the seventeenth century, the compilers exploited different sources. 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 İshāqī’s *K. Laṭāʾif akhbār 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 İshāqī’s work. Thus, for the first time in studying


46 Marzolph, 413-415.


48 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.

49 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 Ishāqī 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 Ja’far against the Bean-seller”; 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 Ishāqī and the *Nights* does not appear to be coincidental, since three of the corresponding stories in the *Nights* are also contained in Ishāqī 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 Ishāqī with reference to al-Jāḥiẓ 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, qīla) during the caliphate of the Fatimids. Another story of Ishāqī 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 Ishāqī (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,

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 ʿUmar ibn al-Nuʿmān. 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-hadbī), 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 man’s 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 caliph’s robes, and installed on the caliph’s 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


52 My special thanks go to Aboubakr Chraïbi for pointing out this tale to me. It has been published in Miʾat laylah wa-laylah, ed. Mahmūd Tarshūnah (Libya and Tunis: al-Dār al-ʿArabiyyah 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-Ḥasan 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 make-believe 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-Ḥasan’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

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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-Ḥasan’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-Ḥasan 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—Ḥanafī, Ḥanbalī, Mālikī and Shāfiʿī). In this context, Abū al-Ḥasan’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.
interpretation 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

56 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 ʿUmar ibn al-Nuʿmān. 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.
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 ʿUmar ibn al-Nuʿmān 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 Isḥāqī 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. Isḥāqī’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 Isḥāqī. If this assumption holds true, the elaborate version that is first attested in the Ottoman Turkish manuscript would also relate to Isḥāqī’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

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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 أبو حسن, never ابي او ابي or ابي), inconsistent use of letters such as ذ (most often, but not always, written as د) and ت/ث, and final ي/ي as well as final ه/ه, and inconsistent use of the hamzah.

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.

حکایة النائم والیقظان من مخطوطة توبینجن

[۱۶۵] قالت الجاریة: يا سیدی انھہ کان فی قدیم / [۵۶۱] الزمان و سالف العصر والآوان

علي خلافة امبر المومنین هارون الرشید رجل / تاجر وله ولد سماه أبو الحسن الخلیع فمات والده وخلفه لأبو الحسن مال جزیل / فقسم ماله شطرين وادخر عنه شطر من المال وتصرف في النصف

التانی و صار / معاعیر الناس ولولاد التجار وامتحن بشرب الخمر حتی نفد جمیع ما معه فرح مها

الی اصحابه و عشراهی و ندماهی و شکی اليهم من قلت ما بیده فلم بلقت الیه احدا منهم / ولا وافاه

The process of elaboration would likely have occurred some time before Ishāqī, 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.
بالسلام فعاد الي امه وهو مکسور المخاط واحكي لما جرا عليه وما تم له مع / اصحابه وانهم لم
يصفوه في السلاف فقائلت له يا ولدي أولاد هذا الزمان كده / طبعهم كان معك شي حبوه وان
فوع ما معك ابدوquier نجمه قلبه وجرت دموعه / على خده ويشدقول
ان قيل مالي فلا انا صاحبي / وان زاد مالي / انا الناس خلناني
كم من صدوق اجل المال صاحبي واخر عند فقد المال عاماني / قال ثم ان قل علي حيله وانحر فضف ماله الذي خنا وعاش به طيب وحلف بينا / انه ما بقا
يعاشر من يعرفه ولم يقايعاشر الاجنبيين ولا يعاضرهم غير ليه واحده / وإذا أصيح الصحابه لا يوجد
يا صاحبي ولا يقاسه فقوه كل ليه يقدر على الجسر يجان من الادله / وكلم يجوز عليه اذا اراد احدا
رغب بحفل علي وباخذة مع الغزاة ومتنام ووايه / تلك الليلة الى الصحابه واصبحه يروح وما يرجع
يسلم عليه ولا يعاوذه مرة تانيه / فصبر يمشي هذا الحال مدة ستة كماله وبدع الله بين اصبه / عن
عادته فجأ الحسن خلب وملاه راراً باحسن قام له قاكاً وهو لا يعرفه وقال يا مولاي / هل لك ان تأتي
معي وموضعي فكا ما حضر وشبيبه ما تيسر وهو خرب طبقي / ثم معرق ونيد مقعد وروق
فامتع الفضفف من ذلك قارس على الصلبه / وقال له بالله عليك يا سيدي امشي مع فاتو ضففي
اللبابة ولا يحبب فيك ملما ولا / زال يتح عليه انى له ففرح ابو الحسن ومتشق قدما ولا يزال يحادته
حتي ان وهو / [ 166 ] قد دخل الى الدخانه [ عظيم ] فدخل المشرد / ولا يهتم عليه ابابه على الباب
فلم جلس اتاه أبو الحسن بشيء / من الاكل / وابو الحسن يأكل معه حتى يطيب له الاكل ثم رفع
الفلا وقادة [ الباب ] وجلس اتاه يملا ويشرب ويبا ويسقيه وادرك شهرواد الصباح /
فلم كانت لبابة / رعماية وخمسين قاتله شهرواد بلغه / بها الفلك السعيد ان ايا / [ الحسن قد
ايبا جناب الحلمه والدم يبانه ويدرح ويملا ويدره ويسقيه ويكحدها / [ غايجب ] الحلمه من كره
وجس صورة فطاع الحلمه هارون الرشيد وابو الحسن شادواوا / قال له الحلمه يا فانا ما كت
تعرفي بنفسك حتي أتفكفي على احياسنا فقسمي / ايا يا سيدي سيتياه هيات
ان يرجع ما مات وأرحب احمر / معك في وقت من الاوقات فقال الحلمه وما والا تعلمي محاك
قبل ان ادخل لك / [ 166 ] وللاسك فالتو الحسن حكايته عجبه وان هذا الأمر ليس له [ فايده
قالة ] / الحلمه ابيه لها سبب فقال لها سبب وللسبب ذات فضحك [ الحلمه ] / من قوله فقال ابو
الحسن انني أقول لك
لا بكرهية مع الطباخ / ان يا سيدي ان بعض الحرافيش [ ان ] / يوماً من الايم الهالاب في شبا
فاضق ظروف والامه الذي فزاه وصمم على حليفه [ لن ] / الي الغبر فاقرفه الشمس استطعت
حليه ويوجد معه مشي فحار علي دكان / طباخ فتاه فيها قد رقت إذنها وفاحج ابراه
والطباخ وافق علي ذلك / القدور وقت مسح مياهه وعمس زياه وكس جوا الدكان ورق فهجاء /
الحرفوش وسلم وقال له أزن لي بنصف لحم وربع طعام وربع خبز فوزن له / الطباخ ودخل الحرفوش وحطم قدمه وجلس علي اللحم والطعام جنباً جنباً وخشى / الشقفه وقبس حيضاً لاضاع له فبينما هو يفتش في الدكان وبنقلة فلقية ماجور مكب / علي فمه فساله عن الأرض ينتهي ذبه دنب طري دمه فزعم أن الطباخ يخلط اللحم بلحم الخيل فلم يطلع علي هذه الزلة فرحها وغسل يده وطاطه براسه وتم راجح / والطباخ قد مسك ميزان الفضه لأن ما عده غيرة فلما راه ولم يطيع شيئاً / فصاح عليه افقت بأصام يا هجام ووقف الحرفوش ثم الفتى إليه وقال له تصح علي / وتداري بهذا الكلام يا قرمان فاغتصب الطباخ ونزل من الدكان وقال ما هو يبولك / يتألق وطاعمي وبنيتي وأبابي والأبدام وخرج بسلام كأنه شيء ما كان ولا رهن له أثنا / فقال الحرفوش كتب يا ابن الف قرنان فصاح الطباخ وتعلق بالحرفوش / وقال يا مسلمين استفتشوا وكل طاعمهم ولا ورن له أثنا فاجتعم الناس عليه ولاموا الحرفوش وقال ما هو بقولك تأكل لحمي وطعامي وخبزي والطابخ السبب عند / الذكر الدنب وانا يا أخي لحکيتي سبب فيما قلت لك فضح دمي الطباخ وقال والله حکیك حكاياك فقال حباً وكرامه أعم يا أخي ان اسمي صورة الخليفه وأبو الحسن / واردك شهرزاد الصاحب فلانا كان ليلة ارمها وحود وميسى قاتل سهثراد بلغتني بها الملك / السعد أن الجار يباولون قاتل مكان ما كان يا رجلي / ان الغلام وأبو الحسن قال للمخبر فلان اسمي أبو الحسن الخليل ومات والدتي وخلفي في مال جزيل / فقسمته شطرها وجزيتها وشتلت النصف الواحد واختلفت بنصف ماي الثاني علي الاحباب / [ ۱۶۷ ] وعاشرت الندما والأحباب والأولاد التجار وما خللت احداً ولا وادمتها ونا / ودمني واختيرت جميع ماي علي الاحباب والعشر فلم يبيا شي من ذلك المال فرحت / في الاحباب والندما الذي افتبت عليهم ماي لعلهم يقوموا بحالي فرحتهم لهم ودات عليهم الجميع والله فلم أجد منهم واحد ينفع ولا أكبر في وجهي ورغب فليكست علي / تفيصي وانقبشت لي ماي وكبدت لها همي فسائر الفصوهي وها انا كان معك شي قدموك وكأوك وإن كان ما معك شي لبودك وطردوك فعدد ذلك اخترخت نصف ماي الثاني والنبي علي نفسى اني ما بقيت أداه احداً غيرة ليه واحداً وأناجح أيضاً فلم تعلمه ولا تفتني إليه يه وأناجح لئني ما بقيت تجمع بك عبر هذه الليلة
فلما سمع الخليفة ضحك ضحكة / عظيمة وقال والله يا أخي انت معذور في هده الامر والساعة كأ / لقت لك يا نديبي هيهات ان يرجع ما فاتي مني ما بقيت اجتمع باهدا ثم أنه / قام وقدم له صحن فيه / جوزا ومشوى وشفقة كمأيه وجلس أبو الحسن وصWAR بقع / حتى الأکفا ثم أن الخليفه صار يأكل معه وهو يلبسه ويقول له صحبه وعافية ثم قدم / له طشت وأبرق وقبل أشان وشکب علي دين الخليفه ثم بعد ذلك وقده / ثلاثة شماعات وثلاثة قناديل وفرق وصفة العدد ولا خليفه 1 الاانا بما قد فعل في / الكأس الأول فقال يا نديبي قد رفع الاحتشام من بيننا ودست عبد عدنك / فلا بلبت بفقدك ولا بعدك تمت صفحته الخليفه وقد أعجب الخليفه فعالة / وحسن أحواله وعذبة ما قاله فقال في نفسه والله لا أکفيه ثم أن أبو الحسن الخليف / ملا القدح فانطل الخليفه وقبله وشارب إلي الخليفه وانشد يقول هذا / لو علمت قدوتمكم / تسيرنا مهجمة القلوب ام سواد العيون وفرشنا خدومنا لفقان الخليفه قال فقيل الخليفه من د ود ودر ود奢华 / زاذنه / أبو الحسن الخليفه والحانه ثانيا وبشر وحولا ونابل الخليفه وقبله ثلاث مرات وأناد / [۱۶۸] يقول هذا واذا بدل الفضل مغرفة / فإن عيسىتو عنا فللا عوض لنا عنكم ولا خليف / ثم أن أبو الحسن الخليف قال الخليفه امر صحبة وعافية هذا يقتل الاد ورئي / ادروا ويجري في مجاري الصحن فلم يزالوا يا سيدي كأ ما كان يشربوا وتبنت وما / الي ان دخل الليل فقال الخليفه يا الخيرية في خاطرك شهوه ترد تقضيتها / فقال له والله ما في قلبي حسرو الائي في رأي الله ان يعطيي الحكم فارى وامنا وامل ما في خاطرك وافشي من اربدة فقال الخليفه له يا اخي قلي ما في خاطرك حتي تطلب / الحكم فقال له كت انتم من جماعة جيراني فإن حواري مسجد وقبيه اربعة / مشايخ فلنا بتعنوا عليا إذا جاء عندنا ضيفا يغلظوا علي في الكلايم وبودون / في الملام ويهددون في كل يوم ويوتينون بانهم يشكوني لامير الميمنين وقد / جاروا علي ويوتي علي الناس的东西 من الله / بطناني ولو حكم يوم واحد ملكة وكذاك ماما المستجد / ويمه فهو الدي علي / يتمهم وبعد ان اضرهم اجبرهم علي تزادة بهداد ومرا بنادوا عليهم / هدا جزا وافضل جزا على من يكثر فضله وينقي الناس وبكر عليهم وسراهم قد فدها / الذي اريد لا غيرهم منهم فقال الخليفه بعليه الله ما تطلب وهو علي كل ضي في / ثم قال له الخليفه امتحنا بشننا ودعنا نقوم فقد قرب الصباح وأنا ليله / عدا كونه حزن بنيان إذا دمك فقال له أبو الحسن الخليف لا هيهات ثم ان الخليفه ملا / قدما وحذ حذ صحته ودنا وانطلوتو له وقال له جيات عليكم يا اخي فد اشرب / هدا الفدح جيات علي فكل خده من ديده دع خويل أبو الحسن أي وحياتك اشرب من / بكلم شرب الفدح فما هو الا ان شرب حتي سبقت راسه جرائه وتفتق علي
وقد قدم له المسلم مصنوع بالبريشم الأخضر مرصع بالذهب الأحمر / وادرك شهرزاد الصباح.
قالت شهرزاد بلغني / ايا الملك السعيد ان قدم اللى المسلم
بعمارة اثنين وخمسين لهم رحمه في رجليه وخليةه قدم من الضحكات عليه ومنع المسلم
قدامه إلى / بيت الراحة فدخل أبو الحسن وفضل شغله وخرج إلى القصر فقدمت الجوار عليه / طشت من الذهب والأباق من الفضية وصوب على الماء ووضعت وسطوا له مسجده / وصلوا في
عرف ما يصبح وصار يرتفع ويسجد عشرين مرة وهو يسحب وينبقي في / نفسه والله ما أنا الامير
المؤمنين حق ولا هو حق ما كان ذلك والأف عن هذا منام / والتما ما منا فيه من الجري جمعه
ثم اندخل ورحم بما نهر المؤمنين فشمل / وفر من صلاته لدانت إلى المسلمين والسلمادريه ثم
البوسadesh دلالة الخلافة واعطوه / [169 ب] في بد قضية الملك وخرج الحداد الكبير فيدماه والململاك
الصغير وراءه / ولا زالوا به وهم شاهين داهيلين حتى دخلوا بهي مجلس الحكم حول القصر / واجسوسه
علي سير الملاك فلما جلس علي سير الملك ورا السبار / والأبواب الأربعين والعجلية والقابيش
وعيداون وحذر وباء اسحاق التذبذب / ونظر الي سيف جذببه وثوت خرره ومصمم منهبه
وقس دمته وعربي وتعغم / صورة الشاب أبو الحسن الخليل جامع علي سير الملك عوض
الحليفة / وخواص أخرى الدولة / وترك وخلق وامام وامام ووزراء وأكبر وأياب الدولة واهل
الصويله وبانت / له الدولة العباسية والطيبية التوبية فجلس علي الكرسي وحات المشهه في
حجه / / كعاده المؤمنين فاقبلو الهم يقبلون الأرض بين أبي الامير المؤمنين / [171 آ]
ودعوا له بطول العمر والباقي وتقدم جعفر البرمكي وقيل الآدم وقال الله / برعك ويجعل الجنه مترابع
لا عدل لك علي جاره ولا حمد لك نور يا خليله / الآمال حاكم الاقطار فزعم عليه أبو الحسن
الخيله وقال له يكبب نوموك / انزل في هذه الساعه انت ومستوى الدنيا ورود إلى الحلة الفائقة إلى
الدرب / وانقال إلى نحو مشابك الذين في المسجد وأضرب كل واحد منهم / اربعة مسحة ضرط
وعدد ان تضرهم ركبهم عليه ريان مقبل خباثة ما هم ودورهم / فيدماه جميله بعد ذلك اثلمهم ليد
غيرها فيض جعفر البرمكي وفعل ما أمره / بفأمر المنادة فدأوا عليهم وهما أركان القرار هذا جوا
واقل جوا علي علي / يكن الفضول والكلام ويشوع علي الناس وبغض عليهم دفترتهم وأكلهم وشفهم
ثم أن أبو الحسن الحليه راح في الكلام يا وعيي ونومي ويجسد وينف / احكمه ذلك
انهار بطوله بفي وقت العناب فاعط لهما اذن ودروور
فالSRCوا / الآما وأياب الدولة ونبوتهم وانته الخيام ودعوا له بالباقم والدلوقدماءه / ومشوا في
خدمتهم ونشدوا السهر ودخل لحيج الخير وجه شموع يبعد وقائدا / يشبع ونمائي بضرب فحار
في عقله وقال والله أنا أمر المؤمنين حقا فلما / اقبل قام الجوار إليه وظهو الأبوان وقدموا له مادة
عظیم ممن افخرب/ الطعام فاخر منها جهده ووقتیا حتى آخفا فزع علی جاریه وقائل لما/ اسمه قائل اسمی راحه وقائل اسمی تفاحه وقائل اسمی تفاحه/ وقائل اسمی مسکه/ وقائل اسمی مشاکه/ وقائل اسمی مسکه/ وقائل اسمی مشاکه/ وقائل اسمی مسکه/ وقائل اسمی مشاکه/ وقائل اسمی مسکه/ وقائل اسمی مشاکه،
وعنی الحلویات فاخر/ على حسب الكفاية والیاهاء والغایه تم انه بعد ذلك انتقل إلى مجلس الشراب/ والدمام فیجد ثلاثة قرو جوار مغانی ومیانی ومالییه قد حاز وآکل المغانی/ ۱۷۱ [فجلس وجلس الجوار وغناه بطل الاحنا فجاو به ذلک المكان ووعقت/ المواصل وض Nộiت ذلک الاعدان فتحی ذلک الوقت لا أبو الحسن الخليلی ان/ في الحناب وطلب وانشروع واتسع صدره وانطرح ولعب وفرح وخلع على ذلک الجوار/ ووهب وصار فزع علی ذلک دی ورسق دی ويلعب مع ذلک دی وسؤم/ ذا لی ای ای ان توهد الیت والیهم والخليفة تطلب الیت ویضحو وما تهود اللی/ امر الخلومیه بعض الجوار ان تدوب قطعة نیحی فی قدح ودسری لاي أبو الحسن الخليلی/ ففعلت الجاریه ذلک وشربت الفح ونام فانماي أبو الحسن لوقت قفقا الخليلی/ وفزع على الگلام الذي اخذه من بینه في ابدا الامر وقال له اجمل هذا الگلام/ وأطرحو في مكانه ورد عليه الباب فحمله الگلام لوقت وساعه ووضعه في/ قاعدة ورد عليه الباب ذلک،
ولم يزال أبو الحسن الخليلی نایم حتی طلعت الشمس وواحیره الحر ووصح/ براحة راحه يفاعبه عن/ اسمه ضارع باي خبریه با تاريخ/ يکمر وادرک شهیرزاد السفاح فاذا كان للیة عربیة/ ثلاثة فخمین قامت شهر/ زاد بابنی/ امر الملک السبیع/ امر أبو الحسن الخليلی/ لم بزل يصبح للجوار/ واحدة بعد واحدة/ فسعفت امرها اسمها جوار غربه فقامت لوقته واتت الیت وقائل له يا وليدة اسم/ الله حولك بتدعوا باسم من هم ففیت عیهنه يبی خرابه ویبی عقوبته عند راسه/ قاعدة ذلک الحال وقائل من تکونی انتی قائل له يا وليد انا امک قائل تکذبی/ يا عزیز النحس ومن هو ولدک وما انا الامیر المومنین وخليفة رضی الله اعلاه/ حوزة المومنین حتی قلبه مسکة/ ثم تفكر الجوار/ والفصیر والخیر الذي كان فيه فقال واللها ما كنت/ في منام وما كنت الا يفیط فلیس الفینیه/ عجوج النحس ثم افکرو وقال واللها/ انا أبو الحسن الخليلی، وكأنی رایت في المنام وحلمت أنی الخلیفه/ ثم انه افکرو وقال/ والله يا اخي ما هو منام/ انا امیر المومنین علي الدوام ثم قال والله يا اخي والله/ امرت والله نهیت وامبولت وفعلت فقائلا مني الباب بالدی/ ۱۷۱ [ امرت والله نهیت وامبولت وفعلت فقائلا مني الباب بالدی]
تروح المرستان وانت وليد الامیر المومنین وحیبنا ما الدی جرا كله/ الخشن جا يا البیك وصار
لک هذا الحال فقال يا امی الشیطان يصیح للجوار/ فقالت نعم يا لید وواطنه ذلک الأنسان الذي/ وضیفت وسکبة فما أظن هدا/ انسان وما كان الامیر المومنین افکرو وقال يا واللها/ انا عزمت عليه ونام ووابنة وسائل عن خیابی وعن قضیة فافسره ووعدهي به انن دولم فا اعرف ما جرا في/ وهو/ الشیطان بعنه والباسه كما صدقنا وان الذي جرا في كله من فعل الشیطان فقائلا/ امی
فيه:

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اي والله يا ولدي وماذا كلام الشيطان فاستغد با الله لكي يا ولدي / اي ابكر بشاره تجوزن
فقلها يا امي قولي و wszى ما كان انابرجه في الساعه / الثلث من النهار جا لي حارتنا في مزاح
ما عليه صرط وبعد ذلك / احضر لهم تيران وركهم عليهم مقالب وجرسهم في المدينة وشوارها
ونادوا عليهم / المنادين ثم بعد ذلك اقفاهم من مديتنا اني بلدي بعيدا وهذا كله يا ولدي يصبرنا /
عليهم
وادتهم لنا فعل بهم هذه اللفظة سمع من امه ذلك الكلام ضمن ورقة / في وجهها وقال لها قلت لها
يا عجوز النحس اني امير المومنين السديد قلبي لا / ما نف الك الحسن الخليل واللهما امرهم
يعلو هده اللفظة بهم لا انا / يا والدها امير المومنين بلا محل حقا وانبي يا عجوز النحس كاذباه
ثم قام لها / ورك في بعقه حتى استغالت وعفرت فيها اصرها وهي تستغيل فقنت / ونقل له
يا اخي امير المومنين قسمت الجنان صبحة فاتوا ودخلوا لهم بعدا / الك حسن امر اجدها
من الضرب وهي تقول له امير المومنين وخلية الدارين / لما ظروف الجنان على تلك الحالة
قالوا / هذا مجهول وما دأوا الا المرستان فذاع عليهم / فأخذوه وودوء المرستان قفاهم هم اهل
المرستان ما هذى الشاب قفاهم لهم هدا / مجهول وابو الحسن زعق عليهم وقال لهم اهل المرستان
علي هوالي الجنان ما انا / [ 177 ب ] الا امير المومنين وخلية الدارين قفاهم اهل المرستان
اندب / يا اخس الجنان ثم انهم اخذوا ورعوا من بطية ورحقوا قواب في رقبة / جنود حديد
 طويل ووريثو في سكة حديد من خارج الشباك وراحوا وخلوا / فيهما العفره يضرب ماه صرط
بكرو وخمين في الشمشية بعد عشرة أيام / فحن قلب امه عليه فيجاهوها اهل المرستان ونظرت عليه تلك
الحالة غمت وقالت / يا يا ارجه لعقلك و خفي عنك جهلك وخلي عنك هذه الحالة الذي هو
من قبل الشيطان قفاهم لها يا امي صدقني اني واركر شهxAD الصباح / فسكنت عن الحديث
فلم كان ليلة إرحبه اربه وخمين قفاهم شهxAD / شها / اني الملك السعيد ان الجاره يبانون
قالت لكان يا يا ولي فقول / يا الحسن لامه صدقني انا اتبا عن هذه الكلام وعن هذا العطار
والخرافات / فيهما يامل وارخمينهم فقد أشبرت على التلف فين قلب امه عليه وشفعت / فيه
وخلصته واتت به ابي قاهته فقعد بعدا في اجتانه اني ثم الشهر

فبشي الهوي فاشتاق لغدت ونشربي ومنادته فرش المكان وحيا الطعام ورود / المدام وخرج الي
الجسر وجلسين ينتظري من يعزم عليه يا ولي بيار المومنين / الخليله جا لي عليه وهو مستحق فيكما
راه ضحك وسلم عليه فلما غابه ابي الحسن / الخليل غرفه فر ظبي على السلام وقال لأهلا للقدام ولما مرحا بالشباطين / وقال والله انت من الشيطانين قفاهم له الخليلة ومن هو الشيطان قال
ابو الحسن والله انت الشيطان بعينه وجلس الخليلة الي جنب ابو الحسن / ووجه بالكلام و خادعه
قال له والله يا اخي انا خرجت من عدو و خليت / الباب عليكم متفوق قفاهم له يا الحسن يا ذمتي
فايش خطر بك حتى نسيت الباب / متفوق حتى دخل علي الشيطان وجرا لي كبت وركت وانهوسه


في عقلي واجننت / وودوني المرستان ونلي عشرة ايباء واننا ادعا جسدي من الضرب الذي ضربوه

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ویقول: لا حول ولا قوه الا بالله العلي العظيم اخزاك الله یا شیطان رجیم

ثم انقلت الي / مجلس الشراب وكان نشب قليلا وقت هذا الحادم / ينحني وجلس وقد افتكر ما حثه وکيف ضرب امه / ودخوله الى المارستان وآتي اثر الاضرب على اجناه وهو / في المارستان فتخفى في عقبه واختار في مرهقال / والله ما يعرف اني في المناها اثر الاضرب والسباط / على اجناه وعقداهم عشرا عابما وما اعلم ايش قضيتي / ثم انقلت على حاوري وقال لها / وليكسي يا حاوري ان امیر المومنين / المومدين من حق قالت وعیشك يا امیر المومنين وصامت / فقال تکذبی اصبعی فکزّت على اصبعه کادت ان / يا قحبه تستاهل الف ضربه ثم قال عضّي علي / وعند اجل وانظر لقصرك وجوارك / وتمم لیلتك معهم فلما سمع الکلام / قال وستر الله انا امیر / المومنين في حق وصدق لانى تلك الليله وهو امرس ما خرجت / وحکمت الامش ودخلت القصر وجلسن اشرب مع جواري / واكبت واسعتة بجلس النقل والفأكة / ثم انقلت الي / مجلس الشراب وكان نشب قليلا وقت هذا الحادم / ينحني وجلس وقد افتكر ما حثه وکيف ضرب امه / ودخوله الى المارستان وآتي اثر الاضرب على اجناه وهو / في المارستان فتخفى في عقبه واختار في مرهقال / والله ما يعرف اني في المناها اثر الاضرب والسباط / على اجناه وعقداهم عشرا 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[مخطوطة توبينجن ۳۷۱ ب] [العلي العظيم اشي هذه الوقعه مع هذا الشيطان الذي تساطع / علي ورماده كل يوم يوديني المارستان وسعان اخباره وما طبا من الذليل والعذاب ثم ان رعد حمض عينيه فقالت / له زهرة الزمان العواء جارية السنت زبيده يا امير المؤمنين / ما تقل علي جوكر وخدمك وحشماط وتتهض إلي صلاة الفجر / وتنظر قبل ما تخرج الديوان فرفع علي رأسه إله وغطى / أعيانه بكه ووقله ولى شيطان الكلب لسعانك ما شعبت / من عزابي والله العظيم اطمحوني فتـ بكمائي يوم الفيروز روح / واعلم غيري امير المؤمنين وانا ماني الا أبو الحسن الخليل يا رفع / فغشي علي الخليلة وزبيد من الضحك وعمموا زهرة الزمان / عليه فأنت لعندها وقالت له يو ما امير المؤمنين ما هي عندك / اذا ناغستك تصد عني وتعد وكان كلها رحيم فتحرك عليه / الا أنه فعد وقال لها فكان أن اصبح امير المؤمنين قالت والله يا حبيبي / في هذا شك فقال لها فكان ان كنت انا امير المؤمنين وليلي جارتي / اغطيتك يوستين من هذا السلم الطيب ومد وجهها وضمها لصرده / ولذا عليه وصار يبوسها وبنمشمها فما رات منك ارادت تتخلص / وما كانت تقدر وهو يقول لها والله وصالك بالف مارستان / والفرد عذاب رخيص وما هو غالي والخليفه وزبيده خشوا من الضحك ثم ان الخليفه كشف السمان واظهر حاله علي أبو الحسن / الخليل وقله ضحك قتالي من كرزة الضحك فلما حققه أنه هو [۱۷۳ ب] امير المؤمنين وهو الذي كان ضيفه بالاس ووث علي قدميه وسكت بين يديه وقله إبان اقدم اغطلقاني الأسان بحات راسك ان كان نظر متي هفو 폴 حلمك يسعني فقال له الخليفه وحيات / راسي عليك الأسان ورثي امانتي بما على مهما شئت يا أبو الحسن فقال بجيتي علي حضرة الخليفه نته / الزمان هذي بقيت من الدنيا يا بقجي والسلام فقال الخليفه ت ata زهرة الزمان لاتها هذه الجارية هي ليس / يا هذه السنت زبيده فقالت زبيده وحيات راسك اجته زهرة / الزمان بطتمها وكلما معها فقال الملك واجاه ميا صرابة ما بين / بفرشها وطقمها وجعلته من جملة ندمائي . . .