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## THE EARLIEST PRINTED COLLECTION OF PERSIAN PROVERBS

**Abstract:** Some proverb bibliographies mention *Proverbiorum Et Sententiarum Persicarum Centuria, A Hundred Persian Proverbs and Aphorism*, compiled by Levin Warner and published in 1644 in Leiden. No special review or almost no mention of this collection can be traced in scholarly literature concerning the recording of Persian proverbs. In my opinion, even though Warner's collection is of more historical than paremiological value, it has unfortunately been largely forgotten. Levin Warner's work should be considered as the first collection of translated Persian proverbs, rather than that of Thomas Roebuck published in Calcutta in 1824. It is worth noting that *A Hundred Persian Proverbs and Aphorisms* is the oldest printed collection of Persian proverbs.

**Keywords:** aphorism, earliest, "Golestan", Latin, paremiography, Persian, printed collection, proverb, Sa'adi, Warner.

### **Introduction**

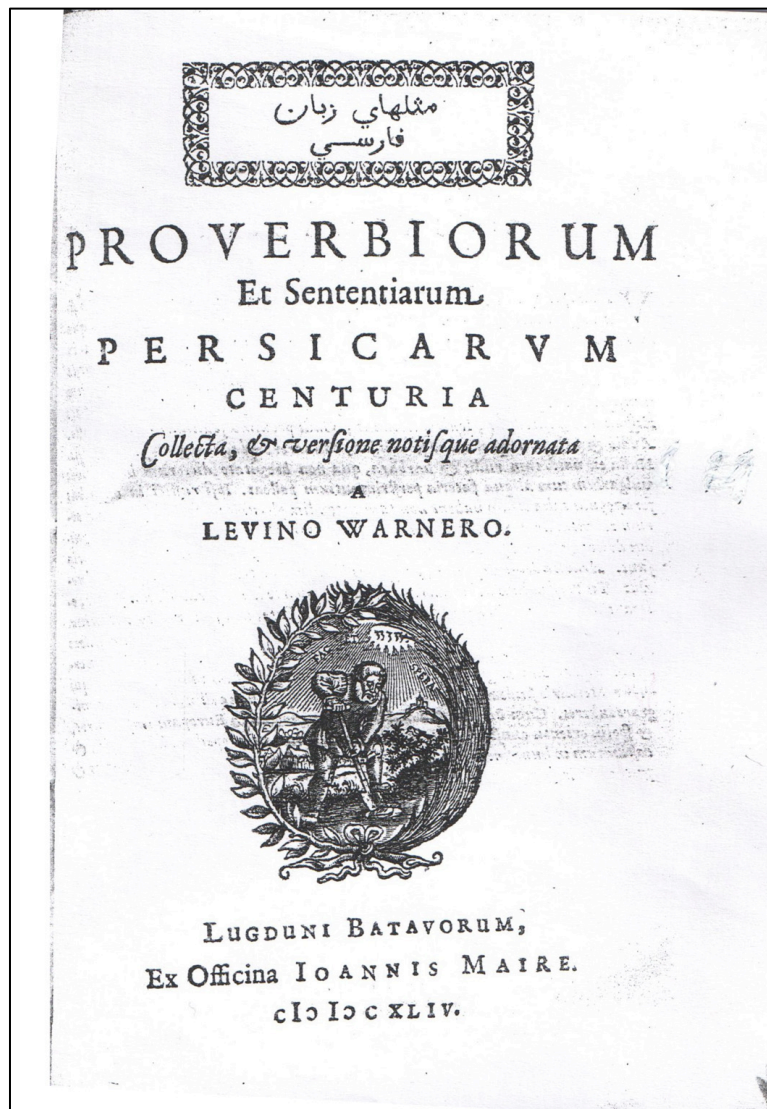
According to the view of both Iranian and world paremiology, *Majma' Al-anthāl* (Collection of Proverbs), compiled by Mohammad Ali Hablerudi in 1049 AH (1639/40) in India, is considered to be the most ancient collection of Persian proverbs, and Thomas Roebuck's *A Collection of Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases in the Persian and Hindustanee Languages*, edited by H.H. Wilson and published in Calcutta in 1824, is believed to be the most ancient collection of Persian proverbs translated into a foreign language.

In the scholarly literature concerning the recording of Persian proverbs, no mention was made of *A Hundred Persian Proverbs and Aphorisms*, compiled by Levinus Warner and published in Leiden in 1644<sup>1</sup> by the Ioannis Maire Publishing House. Since then the collection has not been published<sup>2</sup> and no special investigation into the subject has been made by researchers. Moreover it also remains unknown to Iranian specialists. No copy can be found in the librar-

ies of Iran.<sup>3</sup> To the best of my knowledge, L. Warner's collection has only once been mentioned in Persian scholarly literature, viz in Hamid Nayyer Nouri's work *Iran's Contribution to World Civilization*. The author restricted himself to three sentences, one of which is a quotation from Levinus Warner's work. It seems that H. Nayyer Nouri was not familiar with the collection itself and used some other source, as proved by the fact that: 1. the place of publication is stated incorrectly, i.e. London instead of Leiden; 2. only the translation of the Latin title of the collection is given, while the Persian title Warner gave is not indicated and therefore it differs from Warner's one; 3. more importantly, it is not clear what were the services rendered by Levinus Warner to Persian language and literature, as H. Nayyer Nouri limits himself to the statements only and fails to indicate the reasons. He writes: "One of those who rendered great services to the Persian language and literature is a Dutch scholar by the name of Levinus Warner, who published in 1644 the book *A Hundred Persian Proverbs and Aphorisms in London* (here and the following italics are mine – T.S.)" (Nayyer Nouri 1976: 518). This is followed by a quotation from Warner's work regarding the sweetness of the Persian language. Later I will return to this statement of Warner. It should be noted that in the chapter "*The commencement of Publication of Iranian literature in Europe and America*" in the work of Nayyer Nouri, some other inaccuracies can be found.

The primary goal of the present paper is to estimate the paremiographical and paremiological value of the most ancient bilingual collection of Persian proverbs that was compiled by Levin Warner, a man with a very interesting biography and fate. His outstanding service for the development of Western Oriental Studies is well known and universally recognized; unfortunately his contribution, particularly to Persian paremiography, remains largely unknown.

If we read the collection carefully, it turns out that the work makes it partially possible to reveal a portrait of Levin Warner both as a person and a scholar, as well as the tendencies and traditions of Oriental Studies of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Dutch in particular, and of the Europeans in general. With this reasoning, I think this



small collection goes far beyond the realm of interest in paremiography or paremiology and deserves more attention from some other branches of the humanities.

Prior to a discussion of *A Hundred Persian Proverbs and Aphorisms*, I consider it necessary to peruse Levin Warner's biography, so as not to fail to notice any detail when estimating the value of his collection.

#### *Levin Warner*<sup>4</sup>

German by birth, Levin Warner was born in Lippe in 1619.<sup>5</sup> In 1638 he was registered as a student at Leiden University. He graduated in 1642. By the end of 1644, he left for Constantinople where he spent the rest of his life and died there on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June, 1665.<sup>6</sup> Before going to Turkey he had already published four works: 1. *Dissertatio, Qva De Vitæ Termino, utrùmfixus sit, an mobilis, disquiritur ex Arabum & Perfarum scriptis* (Amsterdam, 1642); 2. *Compendium Historicum Muhammedani de Cristo Ex pracipuis aliquot religionis Cristiana capitibus tradiderunt* (Leiden, 1643); 3. *Proverbiorum Et Sententiarum Persicarvm Centuria* (Leiden, 1644); and 4. *Epistole Valedictoria In qua inter Alia De Stylo Hisstoria Timuri* (Leiden, 1644).

From these publications alone, we can already conclude that the beginning of Warner's academic career was impressive and that he must have achieved much success at the University of Leiden. In 1648, the Board of Governors of the University invited him to return to Holland and offered him the position of professor of Hebrew but Warner requested permission to leave for Syria and obtained it, together with 300 florins for his travel expenses. Finally Warner stayed in Istanbul and chose a diplomatic career.

There have been many speculations regarding the reasons for Warner's decision. G. W. J. Drewes strongly objects to the suggestion made by Du Rieu in the course of editing Levin Warner's letters ("the desire for wealth and possessions had induced him to go over to the side of the merchants") and concludes: "It seems more probable that Warner, who had preferred an uncertain future in Turkey to the security of a Leiden professorship, desired this function so as to gain greater security" (Drewes 1970: 8-9).

With regard to the problem, it is hard to fully agree with any kind of suggestion but certain views can be given on the subject.

The rejection of the position of Leiden professor, or even the temporary delay of his consent, already indicates that professorship and a university career did not seem to be without an alternative for Warner. In this context I would like to recall that, before starting university activities, the distinguished orientalist Jacobus Golius (1596-1667) and Thomas Erpenius (1584-1624), for whom Warner had a profound respect, travelled to the East where they succeeded in finding valuable manuscripts and acquired great knowledge and experience. It is not improbable that the experience and achievements of these two respected orientalist should have become a subject for emulation by Warner.<sup>7</sup>

Taking into account the situation in Turkey, it is unlikely that he would have had a dream to be there or to have a diplomatic career; neither could he have had a financial incentive. Observing the everlasting political and economic problems in Turkey, when even having the status of an official representative of the Netherlands he would be paid irregularly or with delay, not to mention other problems and expenses, he could not have decided on a diplomatic career as a desirable objective. However he deliberately chose this path. The latter supposition is supported by the following facts:

In 1647, on the death of Hendric Cops, acting Resident of the Netherlands, Warner appealed in writing to the Prince of Orange and the States General offering them, on his own initiative, to provide information on current events in Istanbul. In 1648 Warner sent a report on the unfavourable activities of the Grand Vizir while still waiting for a response from Holland. Warner had to wait and to suffer difficult times over a long period before he was finally appointed as Resident of the Netherlands in Istanbul in 1654.

The rich legacy of Levin Warner: unique manuscripts and books, correspondence, records, remarks, translations etc. implies that Warner remained devoted to scholarly research to the end of his life. Warner's own explanation was that religious interest encouraged him to begin the study of oriental languages, as in his opinion proficiency in oriental languages was one of the means of popularizing Christianity in the Muslim world. He was confident of the necessity for the translation of the Bible and Christian dogma into oriental languages. His role in the translation of the Bible into Turkish is generally recognized.

It is also evident from L. Warner's collection *A Hundred Persian Proverbs and Aphorisms* that he was proficient not only in classic, but in western and Oriental languages as he knew Latin, Greek, German, Italian, Arabic, Hebrew, Turkish and Persian. Warner's autographs are available not only in these languages but in Armenian too. His legacy includes the documents indicating that Warner had a certain relationship and some religious and academic interest in the Armenian Diaspora in Turkey; there are also available Armenian texts in his fund. In scholarly literature, particular emphases has been placed on Karaite manuscripts and on Warner's special interest in Karaite Judaism.

Warner had to stay in Turkey during the hard times and difficult political situation. There are several direct or indirect pieces of evidence of occurrences of malevolent intentions towards him.

In the archives of John Thurloe (1616-1668), secretary to the council of state in Protectorate England and spymaster for Oliver Cromwell, I found two letters sent by Levin Warner to the States General. This fact shows that the English government kept a close watch on Warner's activities.<sup>8</sup>

Here, a passage from a letter of the consul in Smyrna, Michel du Mortier, to the States General dated June 27, 1661 may be of interest: "He [Warner] has already spent many thousands on Turkish, Arabic and Persian books and other curiosities, to which he seems to devote most of his energies and which will apparently be of little use to anyone but himself and Professor Golius of Leiden..." (Drewes 1970: 15).

True enough, Du Mortier failed in his attempt to harm L. Warner, partly thanks to the written appeal of the Dutch Diaspora in Istanbul to the States General in support of Warner but one thing is obvious - many people envied Warner and were prejudiced against him. The same document is evidence for his scholarly interest and devotion to Oriental Studies.

Levin Warner was a scholar by vocation and obviously remained so to the end of his life. Warner's name has gone down in history as a collector of an extremely rich collection, still of great interest to this day rather than as a Resident of the Netherlands in Turkey.

In some sense Levin Warner was a tragic personality: scholar and researcher by vocation, he made an attempt to be a diplomat

which at that time primarily meant defending the commercial interests of the Netherlands, but he could not abandon his intellectual ambitions; he did not succeed in developing into a true diplomat and did not become a distinguished missionary, though he tried his best in both of these fields.<sup>9</sup> The comments made by Warner on the margins of his numerous records and documents show that he was a very gifted researcher and talented scholar. One of the services Warner rendered to Oriental Studies is that “he probably was the first European who ventured to translate *ghazals* by Hafez into Latin, with the help of the Turkish commentary of Sudi” (de Bruijn 1987: 170). To him belongs as well the translation from Arabic of Mu’allaqat, old Arabic odes, by Imru’ al-Qais. It should be mentioned that “...he [Warner] left a detailed description of Asia of over 1,200 pages in manuscript form and collected a great deal of material for this from Arabic and Persian sources.” (Drewes 1970: 22). It is a pity that a man of such wide scholarly interests should have wasted his time on his diplomatic career; he died rather young and therefore could not achieve more.

#### ***A Hundred Persian Proverbs and Aphorisms***

The full title of the book under consideration is *Proverbiorum Et Sententiarum Persicarvm Centuria, Collecta & versione notisque adornata A Levino Warnero, Lugduni Batavorum, Ex Officina Ioannis Maire, 1644.*

The collection represents a slim, 44 page book, furnished with Warner’s 3 page letter to Christophoros Thysius,<sup>10</sup> counselor to His Excellency Brederodius, and a 3 page address to the readers. There is also a short address of Claudius Salmasius<sup>11</sup> to Levin Warner dated August, 1644.

The first letter, full of Warner’s compliments and verbal courtesies, may be of interest for those investigating the oratory and epistolary ethics of the epoch; it does not give any information on the collection itself.

In the letter addressed to the reader, the author complains and explains the poor organisation of his book by the lack of time: “*If I had had more time I would have offered you a more well organized book notable for the abundance and elegance of proverbs and aphorisms; it would have been written more diligently furnished with many extensive comments.*” (Warner 1644).

What was the reason for Warner's haste or why did he decide to publish his work hastily? Nothing can be said for sure; but taking into account the 1644 date of the publication of the collection, it may be suggested that by that time the prospects of Warner's travel to Turkey had materialised; he tried to publish the work that he had already begun before leaving. This suggestion can be supported by one more argument: C. Salmasius in his short address to Warner notes: "*You are preparing for us, now, models of Persian speech which exceed similar Arabic sayings by their elegance and refinement. Proceed with elucidating Persian literary activities unknown to our world and by introducing of Persidis to Batavia. Together with Persian you will bring Arabic goods to Europe too and loaded up with oriental trophy you will return to us. I hope you will come back as soon as possible.*" (Warner 1644).

Coming back "*loaded up with oriental trophy*" may be a hint about Warner's forthcoming travel. Thus by the time the collection was published, everybody knew that Warner was leaving the Netherlands. The fact can also serve as an indirect corroboration of the suggestion that Warner hurried to publish the works he began before going on his lengthy travels.<sup>12</sup>

Why did Warner decide in favour of proverbs and specifically of Persian ones?

I think he had several reasons. One of the reasons was the example of the older generation of orientologists. Erpenius had already published his Arabic proverbs. By that time the Turkish proverbs had already been recorded<sup>13</sup>, and L. Warner may have known that fact. Publishing of Persian proverbs in the form of a collection undoubtedly would be considered a novelty and to be a continuation of T. Erpenius's undertaking.

If we look at the legacy left by Levin Warner, we will see that in the Legatum Warnerianum list of manuscripts, 18 entries are given for proverbs and idioms, out of which 16 are Arabic, 1 Persian and 1 Turkish and this implies that Warner was interested in the issue. The following information supports the case: "*About the year 1650 the Dutch scholar Levinus Warner who served as a diplomat in Constantinople, gathered, through his association with the educated Greeks living there, more than 750 modern Greek proverbs. These were edited by D.C. Hesseling and appeared in the monumental four-volume work on the proverbs of the Greek*



people, published by Politis in Athens in 1899-1902" (Karagiorgos 1999).

It should also be taken into consideration that Warner particularly notes his fascination with Persian idioms and proverbs in comparison with other oriental paremias and the latter may have provoked his wish to compile a collection. He declares: "*Different kinds of conversations had I with those speaking Hebrew, Arabic, Persian or Turkish but not one of them had flown into your soul and no words have such elegance and beauty as do the Persian.*" (Warner 1644).

Such evaluation given by a man who, apart from Persian knows Arabic, Turkish and Hebrew as foreign languages of course is worthy of attention. As is seen, many other scholars shared Warner's opinion on the subject: the previously cited passage from C.Salmasius's notes on the Warner collection substantiates the suggestion<sup>14</sup>.

In Warner's letter addressed to the readers, one statement attracts attention; "*Nothing has been translated into Latin from the Persian original writings up to the present day*" (Warner 1644).

Obviously, Warner does not lie. In this regard one fact is worthy of mention, viz five years before the appearance of Levin Warner's collection, in 1639 in Leiden, there had been published "*The History of Christ Written in Persian And Awfully Misrepresented by Father Hieronymus Xavier*" (*Istoria Christi Persice, Conscripto, simulque multis modis contaminata P. Hieronymo Xavier, Soc. Jesu.; Latine Reddita & Amimadversionibus notata A Ludovico de Dieu*). It was translated into Latin and commented upon by Ludovico De Dieu.<sup>15</sup>

Ludovico De Dieu was also a student of Thomas Erpenius and Jacob Golius. In the explanation to the work, it is said that by the order of the Moghul Emperor Jalal Al-Din Akbar, "the King of Kings, Sovereign of the Epoch, the Ruler of the country, Sovereign of Paradise, the King and the Sultan, I, Padre Hieronymus Xavier from Europe, one of the followers of Holy Jesus, prepared this valuable book and blessed preface to it from the Holy Gospel and other books of the Apostles here in the Caliphate of Agra, and Moulana Abd-ol-Sanarayn Qasem Lahuri, together with your most humble servant, translated and completed it in the same Caliphate of Agra in the year 1602 A.D., on the 47<sup>th</sup> year after the enthronement of the Kings of Kings. Written on Wednesday, the eighth

day of the Blessed Month of Ramadan, in the year 1027” (Xavier 1639: 136).

It follows from the information that here we are not dealing with the original Persian work and that it was translated from Persian. As the researcher into this work, Noorollah Moradi,<sup>16</sup> elucidates the work is written in poor Persian and the non-Iranian origin of the author is obvious. Information about “*The History of Christ*” is very contradictory. According to some sources it was written in Portuguese and then translated into Persian. Some authors however are of the opinion that the original was made in Latin. From the information given in the passage I have cited by Xavier himself, it is not clear in which language he had written the work before it was translated into Persian. But this is not of decisive importance for the subject under consideration. An important point is that the Latin translation was not made from the original Persian writing; thus, Levin Warner’s assertion is true, that before his own collection appeared, nothing had been translated from the original Persian into Latin and there is no doubt that he was the first to do so.

Warner would surely have been aware of the existence of Xavier’s work published only five years earlier than his. This suggestion can be supported by Warner’s comments on the 27<sup>th</sup> proverb of his collection where he mentions *The History of Christ* and criticizes Xavier for irrelevant usage and misinterpretation of idioms. He writes: “...I wish Father Hieronimus had taken into consideration this [rule] in his Persian translation of “The History of Christ”. In this translation he does not display due attention to the peculiarities of the language; in some places, he evaluates the soul and nature of Persian language on the basis of the Latin language. It happens thus when, for example, he writes that Christ can be identified by his deeds, and adds: ‘exactly in the same way as an elephant can be identified by his trunk and a lion by his claws’. It was known that the Greeks and the Latins had a saying: ‘The lion can be identified by his claws’ but for the Persians this saying is unknown”<sup>17</sup> (Warner 1644: 15).

One more fact is worthy of note with regard to both the work of Warner and of Xavier. The 1639 edition of *The History of Christ* is the most ancient book in which the Persian printed text is given.<sup>18</sup> In the same year “*The History of Saint Peter*” was published, translated and commented by the same De Dieu. In the

book published in 1639, three works are united into one volume: the two already mentioned and *Grammar of the Persian language*, the Persian title being: *Elements of the Persian Language* produced by L. De Dieu himself.

Levin Warner's collection is a subsequent work to the edition of these three works combined into a single volume where the Persian printed text is presented. Therefore *A Hundred Persian Proverbs and Aphorisms* is one of the most ancient editions and this fact is significant in the history of the printing of Persian books. It should also be mentioned that because of the usage of at least 4 scripts - Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Arabic - the publishing of the book must have been technically complicated.

There are 100 texts of Persian proverbs and aphorisms in Levin Warner's collection and they are randomly arranged, i.e. neither in alphabetical nor in thematical order nor in any other classification applied in paremiographical collections.

At first the proverb is given in the original language in Arabic script. Then it is followed by a Latin translation and notes. Texts without notes are of infrequent occurrence.

Proofreading mistakes in the Persian text given in the Arabic script are not uncommon. What is more, the letters specific to Persian پ، چ، ژ، گ which differ from the Arabic alphabet are not always reproduced but are replaced by Arabic letters having similar shapes. I should note here that this was almost a normal situation in the early years of printing of Persian texts.

The vast majority of the proverbs and aphorisms represented in the collection are of literary origin. Besides, for the most part these proverbs and maxims comprise 13<sup>th</sup> century Sa'adi's expressions mainly from his *Golestan*. Proverbs of folklore origin are less common. Some proverbs or aphorisms given in this collection are not recorded in Persian paremiographical collections of the later period; neither can their literary sources be precisely defined.

In the notes on the proverbs Warner often adduced other proverbs and sayings which are sometimes named as synonyms and sometimes are used to illustrate the reasoning given in the notes. It is worthy of note that as "supplementary material" they appear again in *Golestan*; in some cases Warner cites Arabic and Turkish expressions as well [See table. Numbers in the table correspond to entry proverb].

Entry Proverbs from <i>Golestan</i>	Proverbs, sayings and stories from <i>Golestan</i> used in the notes		Arabic examples given in the notes		Turkish examples given in the notes	Entry proverbs that are not from <i>Golestan</i>
	Saying (N)	Story (N)	Saying (N)	Fable (N)		
2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 44, 46, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 55, 60, 61, 64, 67, 70, 72, 74, 76, 78, 83, 86, 87, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 95, 96, 98	4, 12, 17, 20, 21X2, 22, 23, 51, 60,	2, 11, 36, 52, 61, 75, 91	4X2, 10X2, 24, 31, 54, 62, 65, 84 (Koran)	3*, 19, 23, 61X3,	6, 41, 47, 50, 57	1, 24, 29, 30, 33, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 45, 47, 48, 54, 56, 57, 58, 59, 62, 63, 65, 66, 68, 69, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 84, 85, 88, 94, 97, 99, 100
59						41

Greek proverbs and maxims are also often cited in the notes. There are examples from the Torah, the Gospels and the Koran. Warner also adduces Aristotle, Cicerone, Homeros; references to Erpenius's collection of Arabic proverbs, to Dutch scholar G. Ioanne Vossio (1577-1649). It should be mentioned that in the note to the 80<sup>th</sup> proverb of the collection, Warner points out one beyt (two hemistiches) of Hafez though, in fact, this saying does not come from the poet.<sup>19</sup> From the note to proverb #59, we can see that Warner is acquainted with the Persian poem *Yusef and*

*Zoleikha*; he quotes Nezami's *Khosrow and Shirin* (#79) in the note. One of Nezami's well-known proverbs, included in the collection under number 30, is incorrectly recorded. And what is more, Warner changes the order of the misras or hemistiches in the beyt. The proverb should be:

**kabutar ba kabutar, bāz – bā bāz / konad hamjens bā hamjens parvāz**

Pigeon with pigeon, falcon with – falcon / identical species fly together

(Eng.: Birds of a feather flock together)

Whereas in Warner's collection it is as follows:

**konad har jens ba hame jens parvāz / kabutar bā kabutar, bāz – bā bāz.**

Each species flies with any species – pigeon with pigeon, falcon with falcon.<sup>20</sup>

Differences can be found in some other cases, e.g.: *bihemat/bimoravvat* (in the note to #17); *goftan/khandan, nakhad had kard/nagardanad* (#21); *mitarsad/betarsad, negah nemidarad/negah nadarad* (#45); thus, from this point of view, the collection may be of some interest for those textual critics dealing with texts of classic Persian poetry. The collection assumes importance when issuing a critical text of Sa'adi's *Golestan*, as the greater part of Warner's proverbs and aphorisms was taken from this monumental work.

*Golestan* was one of the first masterpieces of Persian literature with which Europeans became acquainted and which they translated. This work became popular in Europe. It is known, that J. Golius made his students read this great work during his lectures. *Golestan* still remains one of the main readers in the departments of Iranian Studies in universities worldwide. It is not improbable that Warner might have been one of such students. It is known also that in his four works published before travelling to Turkey Warner used two sources: *kitāb al-kashshāf* and the Persian *Golestan*. (van Koningsveld 1970: 47). At the time, the original of this work of Sa'adi did not exist in printed form; consequently Warner used a manuscript. If we remember that the Latin translation made by G. Gentius was published in 1651, once again we can conclude

that the first steps towards the translation of this work into Latin was taken by L. Warner.

As already mentioned, *A Hundred Persian Proverbs and Aphorisms* contains inaccuracies. In some cases, it is difficult to elucidate whether the fault lies with a proofreader or with Warner. As a case in point we refer to the instances where “ی” given at the end of a word in a proverb is superfluous. For example, this suffix is used in the function of indefinite article in pattern #22 - *khasi /khas* where it is not needed; or used as a second person singular, which is unnecessary for the imperative form of a Persian verb, as happens in proverb #64 etc.; it is usually added to a word at the end and sometimes it is difficult to distinguish visually from a root letter, though it is possible grammatically.

No doubt, Levin Warner's notes on proverbs and aphorisms are worthy of attention. However, it should also be mentioned that these notes are not always directly related to paremias; for Warner a proverb or saying is rather an occasion to present his own linguistic observations. In the notes once again Warner reveals himself as a scholar who tries to make linguistic analyses, to present scholarly observations on one or another grammatical problem. If we glance over the notes and comments made in *A Hundred Persian Proverbs and Aphorisms* we can single out several groups:

1. Explanation of the content of a proverb or aphorism that may be followed by synonymous paremia from other languages or a fable as illustrative material;
2. Notes on the following Persian grammar categories: superlative degree formation; derivation and composition, suffix formation, imperative forms of a verb, enclitic, contracted forms of verbs and conjunctions;
3. Lexicological and etymological analyses in search of common European roots, attempts at comparative studies that was one of the trends unique to the European Oriental Studies of the times and to Dutch orientalist studies in particular.

When inspecting his notes, an impression is gained that Levin Warner made attempts not to set aside any problem confronting the humanities. However, these suggestions and attempts lack systematization; Warner in his notes to the various entry proverbs reverts to the same problem several times. An example of this re-

gards the formation of composites, fused forms of pronouns and conjunctives. Obviously a paremiographical collection is not a form where a full or even a partial reasoning of the author on grammatical categories is required; however, this remark naturally arises due to the fact that sometimes Warner's linguistic findings are not connected directly with a responding proverb or aphorism and the word given in the paremia is used to illustrate the author's suggestions. And the latter can be partly explained by Warner's haste while working on the collection and, furthermore, that he was eager to share his findings with others. Here it should also be mentioned that some proverbs and aphorisms given in Levin Warner's collection are unknown to the Persian paremiological fund or are somewhat unclear:

#54: **dorooghgooi rooy-e siāh, rāstgooi rooy-e sefid**  
A liar [has] a black face, a true teller a white face.

No collection of Persian proverbs records this saying. It may be associated with the Arabic proverb given in Warner's note: *A liar always has a black face*. The source used by Warner in this case is obscure.

#71: **emrooz donyā ast fardā qyāmat**  
Today this world exists, tomorrow the Day of Judgment [will arrive].

This saying is not familiar to the Persian paremiographic collections. However Shokurzādeh cites one of similar meaning:

**emrooz injā fardā bāzār-e qyāmat** (Shokurzādeh 1993: 113)

Today here, tomorrow at the Judgment Day market.

#82: **to dar khāney-e khod, man dar khāney-e khod**  
You at your own place, I at my own.

The saying is not familiar to any Persian paremiographic collection either. It is not clear where Warner took it from.

In some cases it is uncertain whether we are dealing with a proverb or a simple saying. For example:

#59: **choon āghāi mast nashavad boz nakoshad**  
The goat will not be slaughtered until the master is drunk.

**#69: to mardi va sabr nadari**

You are a man and have no patience.

To provide a reader with a more vivid and better idea of the structure, content and character of the notes of the *A Hundred Persian Proverbs and Aphorisms* I shall include some other texts:

1. In the collection a well-known Persian proverb was cited as the first text:

**jāi ke namak khori namakdān mash(e)kan.**

Where you eat salt don't break the salt cellar.

In the note to the proverb Levin Warner focuses attention on the derivational suffix *dān* in the word *namakdān* (salt cellar) used for the formation of the names of dishes; he shows another example akin to the previously mentioned suffix *dān*: *sham'dān* (candlestick) developed from *sham'* (candle). At the end of the note Warner indicates that Arabs introduce a similar idea in the proverb *Don't throw a stone into a well from which you drink water.*

2. In Warner's collection there are some more proverbs and aphorisms that are in use nowadays and are recorded in modern collections of Persian proverbs. For example:

**#38: bā yek gol bahār nemishavad**

One flower doesn't make a spring.

**#56: tā nadehi, nasetāni**

You won't receive until you have given.

**# 85: har che kāri bederovi**

You reap what you sow.

Various versions of the last aphorism are recorded in Persian paremiographic collections. Warner almost faithfully, though in shorthand form, reproduces the version of the aphorism occurring in the poetry of the 11-12<sup>th</sup> Persian poet *Sana'i*. In *Sana'i* it reads as follows:

**har che kāri bedorovi va har che gooi beshenovi** ('Afi-fi 1992: 798)

You reap what you sow, you hear what you say.



#58: **āb dar yek jāi istād migandad**

[If] water stays in one spot it will stink. This proverb is rendered differently by Iranian paremiographers (Dehkhodā 2537:13; Shokurzādeh 1993: 5):

**āb ke yekjā māndeh mi gandad.**

When water remains in one place it will stink.

In versions of this proverb familiar to me I have never met the verb *istādan* (to stand) used by Warner.

#29: **khari zād, khari zid, khari mord**

An ass was born, an ass lived, an ass died.

Iranian paremiographers give this proverb exactly in this form in their collections (Dehkhodā 2537: 738; Shokurzādeh 1993: 333; Bahmaniār 1982: 231). In the note Warner indicates that in Persian exists the expression *khari ba tashdid* 'an ass with *tashdid*' that is 'doubly stupid'. From this remark it is obvious that Warner was familiar with spoken Persian and its idioms too. He points to the fact that *tashdid* is an Arabic sign meaning the doubling of a consonant.

#65: **choo nām-e sag bari choobi be dast gir ke choon hoo-hoo konad dey bar dahānash**

When you say "a dog", take a stick in your hand, in case it growls, to drive it into its mouth.

In Persian paremiographic collections a definite version of this proverb is recorded:

**choo nām-e sag bari choobi be kaf gir (/choobi be dast ār)** (Dehkhodā 2537: 656; / Shokurzādeh 1993: 280)

When you say "a dog", take a stick in your hand.

This proverb is widely used by Iranians nowadays. The source of the version which possibly is literary, and was recorded by Warner, is unclear<sup>21</sup>.

#57: **faryād-e sag be sāel noqsān nadārad**

A dog's bark causes no harm to a beggar.

I have not met this proverb in this form either in Persian proverb collections nor in the spoken language. Iranian paremiographers give other wordings to the same idea:

**faryād-e sagān kam nakonad razaq-e geda rā**  
(Dehkhodā 2537: 70)

**āvāz sagān kam nakonad razaq-e geda rā** (Shokur-  
zādeh 1993:533)

A dog's bark (<cry /voice) doesn't reduce a beggar's daily meal.

By observing the structure of the sentence, both versions seem to be derived from a literary source. As to the proverb recorded by Warner, it is more likely to be a translation or it may be a wrongly remembered proverb. Moreover, I think Warner uses the compound verb *noqsān nadārad* loosely, especially when the prefix *be* is present. Here the copula *dāshtan* was selected incorrectly. Iranians use other copulas: *kardan*, *āmadan*, *paziroftan*, *yāftan*, *gereftan* or *keshidan* with *noqsān* (*harm*). The latter allows us to surmise that Warner employed oral sources too. It is also interesting that in the note to the proverb, Warner claims that Turks say it more elegantly: *A dog is barking, the caravan is going on its way*. He recorded this proverb in the original language and in the Arabic script. It is accompanied by a Latin translation. It seems that Warner did not know that this proverb also exists in the Persian paremiological fund: *sag lāyad va kar(a)vān migozarad*. In this proverb the archaic Persian verb with an Indo-European root *lāyidan* (*barking*) is retained. The Arabs have a similar proverb.

3. #81: **shamshir ke seiqal nazanand zang barārad**

A sword which is not polished becomes rusty.

This proverb is among those rare occurrences when Warner presents a pattern without any note. It is only accompanied by a Latin translation. Warner makes a mistake typical for a foreigner: he leaves the direct object *shamshir* (*sword*) without the *rā* postposition which is essential here. In Persian paremiographic collections this proverb reads as follows:

**shamshir rā ke seiqal nazanand zang girad** (Dehkhodā  
2537: 1031 / Shokurzādeh 1993:484).

4. As has been mentioned a great portion of *A Hundred Persian Proverbs and Aphorisms* Levin Warner took from Sa'adi's *Golestan*. Warner himself nowhere drew attention to that fact.

However, while citing a story or a proverb from *Golestan*, he sometimes, but not invariably, points to the source.

Under #52 Warner quotes Sa'adi's statement used as the ending of the Story 37 from Chapter I of the *Golestan*:

**agar bemord 'adu jāy-e shādmāni nist  
ke zendegāni-e mā niz jāvdāni nist**

There is no occasion for our rejoicing at a foe's death,  
Because our own life will also not last for ever. (trans. by  
*Richard Francis Burton*)

The story related to this aphorism is very short and Warner presents it in the note fully (Warner 1644: 26), but he does not indicate that it was taken from the *Golestan*.

#91: **dah darvish dar gelimi bekhasband va do pāde-  
shāh dar eqlimi naganjand**

Ten dervishes may sleep under the same blanket but  
that one country cannot hold padshahs. (trans. by  
*Richard Francis Burton*)

This aphorism is from the *Golestan* (Chapter I, Story 3). To explain the sense of the expression in the note, Warner takes an extract from the *Golestan*, which directly follows this aphorism and indicates the source.<sup>22</sup>

### **Conclusion**

Such in brief is the collection *A Hundred Persian Proverbs and Aphorisms* compiled by Levin Warner. True enough, as a collection of Persian proverbs it is more of historical than of paremiological value. It is my belief that the collection has been wrongly forgotten; even though at least 59% of the texts given in the collection were taken from Sa'adi's *Golestan*. This particular work of Levin Warner should be considered as the beginning of the history of collections of translated Persian proverbs rather than Thomas Roebuck's collection published in Calcutta in 1824. Also important is the fact that *A Hundred Persian Proverbs and Aphorisms* is the oldest printed collection of Persian proverbs.<sup>23</sup>

*Notes:*

<sup>1</sup> A simple but interesting coincidence is that in the same year of 1644 (1054 AH) in India there were compiled ancient collections where Persian proverbs were recorded: Mohammad Ali Hablerudi's *Jāme' At-tamthil* and Mirzā Sādeq Sādeqī Esfahānī's *Shāhed-e Sādeq*. The only earlier collection than these two is *Majma' Al-amthāl*.

<sup>2</sup> Prof. Wolfgang Mieder kindly informed me that three scholars mentioned L. Warner's collection printed in 1648 in their bibliographies: Gratet-Duplessis, Pierre-Alexandre. *Bibliographie paremiologique*, Paris: Potuer, 1847; rpt. Nieuwkoop: B. de Graaf, 1969, p. 51 (no. 64); Bonser, Wilfrid. *Proverb Literature. A Bibliography of Works Relating to Proverbs*. London: William Glaisher, 1930; rpt. Nendeln, Liechtenstein: Kraus Reprint, 1967, p.365, (no. 3180); Moll, Otto. *Sprichwoerterbibliographie*, Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1958, p. 41 (no. 6924). As there is no other evidence to prove the fact we do not know whether they really saw the 1648 edition, maybe we deal with a misreading of the date on the volume. In any case, it seems, no world famous library has a copy of the 1648 edition.

<sup>3</sup> Regarding other copies of the edition, apart from the one in the Leiden University Library, there exists a copy in Cambridge University Library, which I was able to examine for the first time, another at the Bodleian Library in Oxford and several copies in libraries in Germany, viz: Südwestdeutscher Bibliotheksverbund (1); Bibliotheksverbund Bayern (2); Gemeinsamer Bibliotheksverbund (1); Thüringer Universitäts und Landesbibliothek (ThULB) Jena (1). As Prof. W. Mieder kindly informed me, no copy exists in the USA. According to him, 5 copies are in the Netherlands: Amsterdam, Institute of Social History, Groningen, Leiden and Utrecht. There may exist more copies in other world libraries and private collections.

<sup>4</sup> Levin Warner's name also occurs in different forms in different sources: Levinus Warnerus, Levinus Warner or Levino Warner.

<sup>5</sup> For me the main sources of information concerning Levin Warner are as follows: *Levinus Warner and His legacy*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1970 and also information obtained from internet sources, especially *Researches Carried Out Into Oriental Studies In the Early Period (17<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> cc.) in the Netherlands*, carried out by Ismail Hakki Kadi of Leiden University, (in Turkish).

<sup>6</sup> Two days before his death Levin Warner made his will bequeathing his great library, approximately of a thousand items to Leiden University. Amongst the latter are several unique manuscripts. This collection, known as *Legatum Warnerianum*, aroused enormous interest among orientalist from his time to the present day and contributes to the reputation of Leiden University Library as being one of the richest centres of oriental manuscripts. The reasons and circumstances of Warner's death are unknown. Information provided in a letter of Ali Bey (Albert Bobovius), a translator of the Bible into Turkish, is worthy of attention though seems suspicious: "he was killed... by unknown criminals using poison" (Neudecker 2005:183). There exists another version of Warner's death but it has been rejected by researchers. In line with L. Warner's will he was buried "in the Protestant cemetery in the Feriköy quarter of Istanbul". Within the place there was found the grave of his brother Frederik, the former Dutch consul in Athens; the

inscription on the gravestone indicates that Frederik was buried next to his brother but no trace of Levinus has been found there (Neudecker 2005:183-184).

<sup>7</sup> The kind of attitude Warner bore towards the older generation of orientalisks can well be seen in his collection of Persian proverbs. Commenting on proverb #23 (p. 13) Warner points out T. Erpenius's book of proverbs, meaning his collection of Arabic proverbs; With great respect he mentions Josephus Justus Scaliger (1540-1609) whose works are familiar to him (see pp. 13 and 24). Although L. Warner's teacher Jacobus Golius is not mentioned in the collection, it is almost safe to say that the biography of the latter, which included travelling to the East in order to collect manuscripts, activities in Turkey and returning to a university career must surely have been the object of emulation for his student.

<sup>8</sup> It is well-known that the ambassador of Great Britain in Constantinople was one of Warner's assistants and patrons. In the letter dated 6<sup>th</sup> of May, 1647, Warner wrote: "when presently the British ambassador will have died, I shall have no one to turn to for help" (Drewes 1970:7). A comparison of these two facts is open to interpretation. Someone can ask: "how disinterested would be any assistance given by the ambassador of Great Britain to Warner?"

<sup>9</sup> Of interest in this regard is de Bruijn's suggestion: "...the scholars who, at the close of the sixteenth century, began to study Persian were otherwise motivated than the entrepreneurs of the [Dutch East India] Company. Even at the height of commercial activity, the two spheres remained separate from each other although their interests did go together occasionally. Jacob Golius, especially, was eager to profit from any facility which the Company could offer him, either by enabling him to travel to the Middle East or by helping him to acquire the materials needed for his studies. Some of his students found employment in the service of the Company, but the careers of men like Warner and De Jager show that this was not beneficial to their futures as scholars" (de Bruijn 1987: 173-174).

<sup>10</sup> As it follows from the letter, L. Warner was also in close relations with the well-known representative of this family, Joannes Thysius (1622-1653). Thanks to the legacy of the latter, the Bibliotheca Thysianna had been built. L. Warnerus was also familiar with Antonius Thysius, a lawyer, who died before 1644.

<sup>11</sup> On page 18 of his collection, in his note to proverb #31, Warner mentions him as one of his great patrons: "magnus patronus meus Claudius Salmasius".

<sup>12</sup> Here attention must be drawn to C. Salmasius's wish for Warner to return as soon as possible. By that time Warner had not yet made a decision to stay in Turkey, or at least he did not reveal his plans.

<sup>13</sup> According to Najat Muallimoglu, "Turkish proverbs are among the earliest in the world to appear in a book. Mahmoud Kashgari, an 11<sup>th</sup> century Turkish scholar who is thought by some to have been the author of the world's first dictionary published the first and most important Turkish dictionary, *Diwan-i Lugat-i Turk*, in Baghdad in 1074. Mahmoud Kashgari, who wrote this monumental work to teach Arabs Turkish, included in it 290 proverbs which are very much alive in today's Turkish language." (Muallimoglu 1988).

<sup>14</sup> It is likely that this kind of attitude of Warner towards Persian phraseology was considered by Nayyer Nuri to be the service rendered by Levinus Warner to the Persian

language and literature, as precisely this suggestion he cites in his work without comment.

<sup>15</sup> A theologian of the Reformed Church, De Dieu, met with criticism: his “intention in publishing... was to discredit Catholicism. It is a skilful falsification of the life of Jesus in which the omissions, and the additions taken from the Apocrypha, are inspired by the sole purpose of presenting to the open-minded ruler a glorious Jesus, in whom there should be nothing to offend him.” ([http://en.wikisource.org/w/index.php?title=Page\\_Quest\\_of\\_the\\_Historical\\_Jesus\\_\(1911\).djvu/24](http://en.wikisource.org/w/index.php?title=Page_Quest_of_the_Historical_Jesus_(1911).djvu/24))

<sup>16</sup> The Iranian National Library acquired *The History of Christ* at the end of 2009. A special lecture on the fact was delivered (11.03.2010) by an expert of the Library, Noorollah Moradi, whom I personally met. I am grateful to Mr Moradi for the interesting information concerning the research carried out by him into the problem and for showing me the original of the book. However, Iranians must have been aware of the existence of this edition as in 1958 the Iranian scholar Iraj Afshar had already indicated that *The History of Christ* was the first book printed in Persian (Afshar 1958: 13-14). Later I. Afshar in another article on the problem wrote: “the most ancient books printed in Persian are two: *The History of Christ* and *The History of St. Peter*; Both of them, in Latin translation, were published in Leiden in 1639 by the enlightened man Ludovico De Dieu” (Afshar 1966:26). In addition, a photo of the cover of *The History of Christ* is included.

<sup>17</sup> I would like to take this opportunity to thank the young researcher, Nika Shaugia, for his translation from Latin into Georgian of the introductory passages from Warner’s collection quoted in this paper.

After this point the question arises: on what ground does Warner reason that these kinds of sayings are unknown to the Persians? What source did he have to verify the fact? Maybe he considered that he knew Persian better than Xavier and Qāsem Lahuri? The fact is that by that time there did not exist any collection of Persian proverbs and idioms and Warner had not before the year 1644 been to the East. Only one reliable probability is left. Warner had the possibility to verify them via language carriers with whom he came into contact. The latter can be supported by a passage from his introduction to the collection, where his fascination with Persian is discussed.

<sup>18</sup> According to *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, the first Persian language book printed in the Near East was a Torah in Hebrew characters published in Istanbul in 943/1546. The first books in Persian characters were *Dāstān-e Masīh ammā ālūda* (*Historia Christio Persica*), a Persian translation from a Latin original by Hieronymo Xavier with the collaboration of Abd-al-Sonārayn Qāsem Lāhūrī and *Dāstān-e San Pidrū*, (*Historia S. Petri Persica*), published in Leiden in 1639 (Floor 1990).

<sup>19</sup> Over the centuries lines and even whole poems were gradually added to the poetic collection of 14<sup>th</sup> century Hafez and it is not improbable that Warner quoted from one of such profane manuscripts.

<sup>20</sup> Interestingly, if we consider the fact based on Warner’s Latin translation, he comprehends the content of this saying of Nezami rightly, and the mistake made in the collection can be easily explained from the graphical standpoint and it may be the result of an incorrect reading of the manuscript. This mistake can be attributed to the typesetter but the rearrangement of misras in the beyt cannot be initiated by the latter.

<sup>21</sup> In Georgian there also exists a similar proverb: Mention a dog and have a stick in your hand.

<sup>22</sup> It should also be mentioned that Warner distributes the aphorisms taken from the large stories of Golestan into several entries. In this way the volume of the collection was enlarged. Favourable critics will explain this fact as being due to Warner's haste and pressure of work; the more severe will blame him for a lack of conscientiousness.

<sup>23</sup> I would like to thank Mr Ahmad Abrishami for his kind assistance in identifying the aphorisms from Golestan.

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