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Lütfi Paşa

Lütfi (Lütfî) **Paşa** (c. 893–970/c. 1488–1562–3) was an Ottoman statesman and grand vizier, probably of Albanian origin, who was recruited through the *devşirme* (periodic levy of male Christian children to serve in the Janissary corps or palace administration) and entered the palace during the reign of Bayezid (Bāyezîd) II (r. 886–918/1481–1512). He held several positions in the palace, and after graduating from palace service he rose gradually to higher positions, unlike the unusual promotion of İbrahim (İbrāhîm, d. 942/1536), Süleyman (Süleymān) I's (r. 926–74/1520–66) friend, who became grand vizier in 929/1523.

Lütfi Paşa fought in a number of campaigns under Selim (Selîm) I (r. 918–26/1512–20) and Süleyman I, including Belgrade (927/1521), Rhodes (928/1522), Mohács (932/1526), Buda and Vienna (935–6/1529), and Guns (939/1532). He became third vizier in 1534/5, after which he participated in a campaign against the Şafavids (940–2/1533–6) and took command of the fleet when Süleyman launched a land expedition against Avlona (Albania) and Corfu (island off Greece's northwest coast, in the Ionian Sea) (943/1537). Together with the admiral Hayreddin (Khayr al-Dîn) Paşa

(Ottoman corsair, governor of Algiers, then grand admiral (941/1534) until his death in 953/1546), Lütfi attacked Corfu but failed to capture its fortress. In spite of the protests of both Hayreddin and Lütfi, Süleyman lifted the siege, and the island remained under Venetian control.

Lütfi Paşa became second vizier in 945/1538, and, when Ayas (Ayās) Paşa died in 946/1539, he replaced him as grand vizier. He negotiated with Venice to end the war and gained Monemvasia and Naupolion (Venetian naval bases on the south coast of Greece). In 948/1541, despite a new war with the Habsburgs in Hungary, Lütfi was dismissed as grand vizier after he quarrelled with his wife, Şah Sultan (Shāh Sultān, d. 980/1572), Süleyman's sister.

Lütfi retired to Dimetoka (on the eastern border between Greece and Turkey), where he resided until his death in 970/1562–3. During his retirement, he wrote thirteen works in Arabic and seven in Turkish. The most influential were a history of the Ottoman Empire that recounted his experiences during the reigns of Bayezid II, Selim I, and Süleyman I, *Tevārih-i Al-i Osman (Tevārih-i Al-i Othmān)*, and a work of advice literature for viziers, *Asafname (Asafnāme)*. He described his administrative achievements in his works, especially those accomplishments that curtailed oppression of the common people.

As a statesman, Lütfi Paşa stressed the importance of Ottoman sea power and established naval squadrons outside the capital. However, although he supported the growth of the Ottoman navy, he distrusted Hayreddin Paşa, whose power base in North Africa made him less vulnerable to loss of the sultan's favour. Undoubtedly, Lütfi's palace training and experience, as