



FERDAWS AL-MORŠEDĪYA FĪ ASRĀR AL-ŞAMADĪYA

FERDAWS AL-MORŠEDĪYA FĪ ASRĀR AL-ŞAMADĪYA, a major hagiography of Abū Eshāq Kāzarūnī (b. 352/963, d.426/1033; q.v.), a famous Sufi and founder of a *selsela* variously referred to as Kāzarūniya, Eshāqīya, or Moršedīya. The original Arabic text, by Abū Bakr Moḥammad b. ‘Abd-al-Karīm b.‘Alī b. Sa‘d al-Ḳaṭīb (d. 502/1109), the third *kalīfa* of the order, is no longer extant, but evidence of direct textual borrowings from it can be found in the *Tadkerat al-awliā’* of ‘Aṭṭār (Meier, p. 3). Although *Ferdaws al-moršedīya* almost certainly follows the structure of the Arabic original, it was compiled at a much later date (728/1328) and contains additional material and interpolations. The name of the translator, Maḥmūd b. ‘Oṭmān, does not appear in the text itself but his authorship is attested in the two extant copies of an abridgment of the book entitled *Anwār al-moršedīya fī asrār al-şamadīya*, which he himself compiled.

Fritz Meier prepared an edition of the *Ferdaws al-moršedīya* based on the manuscripts Aya Sofya 3254 and Konya 1513 (see Gölpınarlı, pp. 193-94; Köprülüzāde). The first printing (Istanbul, 1943) was destroyed during World War II and reissued in 1948 with an informative introduction (pp. 1-86). A subsequent edition by İraj Afşār was based on Meier but also included an edition of the abridgment, *Anwār al-moršedīyafti asrār al-şamadīya*; Persian translations of Meier’s preface and an article by A. J. Arberry; and other essays (Afşār, 1980; ‘Aqīlī). A manuscript of *Ferdaws al-moršedīya* was reportedly



included as part of an important illustrated Sufi miscellany copied in 821/1418 for the famous Timurid prince Ebrāhīm Solţān b. Şāhroḳ (q.v.). At one time in the ‘Abd-al-Ḥosayn Bayāt collection, this manuscript may have been donated to the Madrasa-ye Şamşāmīya in Arāk (see Golčīn-e Ma‘ānī, pp. 63-64), but its present location is not known. The manuscript of another translation of the Arabic text, *Marşad al-aḥrār elā siyar al-morşed al-abrār*, was in the private library of A. Chester Beatty (Storey I/2, p. 1343; described by Arberry), but its current whereabouts are also unknown.

Ferdaws al-morşedīya belongs to an important category of hagiography which focuses on a single charismatic life (see [HAGIOGRAPHIC LITERATURE](#)). It shares many structural similarities with other important works in the same genre, including *Sīrat-e Ebn al-Ḳafīf* (see [EBN ḲAFĪF](#)) and *Asrār al-tawḥīd* (q.v.). The value of these works, not only for the history of the formation of the Sufi orders, but also for a better understanding of daily life and urban and rural structures, is gradually becoming apparent to social historians (Aigle, 1995). Furthermore, *Ferdaws al-morşedīya* contains several conversion stories and anecdotes about Muslim-Zoroastrian relations in 11th century Fārs, describing the local history of the Kāzarūn region in the context of the triangular relationship between the central Buyid administration in Shiraz, the still considerable and influential local Zoroastrian community in Kāzarūn, and the emerging power of the mostly rural Muslim population under the shaikh’s shrewd and patient leadership. The work is also an invaluable source of information on regional dialects and geography.

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