



# ḤADIQAT AL-ḤAQIQA WA ŠARI'AT AL-ṬARIQA

**ḤADIQAT AL-ḤAQIQA WA ŠARI'AT AL-ṬARIQA** a Persian didactical *matnawi* by Ḥakim Majdud b. Ādam Sanā'i. The poem, written in the meter *kāfif-e mosaddas-e makbun-e maḥḍuf*, was dedicated to the Ghaznavid sultan Bahrāmšāh (q.v.) shortly before the death of the poet, which probably occurred in 525/1131. Apparently, Sanā'i did not complete a single final text. In a prose introduction, handed down in many copies of the *Ḥadiqa*, a certain Moḥammad b. 'Ali Raffā' reports that he had prepared, on the order of Sultan Bahrāmšāh, an edition of the text containing five thousand distichs from the materials left behind by the poet. He refers to earlier authorial editions, one of which, amounting to ten thousand distichs, was assembled by Sanā'i to be dispatched to Borhān-al-Din Beryāngar Ġaznavi, a religious scholar living at Baghdad, whose help against accusations of Shi'ite sympathies he invoked in an epilogue to the poem.

This confused state of the text at the very beginning of its transmission is reflected in the oldest manuscripts still extant. There are great discrepancies between them as concerns the number of the verses, their order, and the divisions made in the text. The poem is also given various titles: the earliest manuscript, copied at Konya in 552/1157 (now in the Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, under the shelf mark Bağdatlı Vehbi no. 1672), contains a short version called *Fakri-nāma*, which title perhaps refers to Faqr-al-Dawla, one of the honorifics of Bah-rāmšāh; another ancient copy (in a private collection),



dated 588/1192, has the title *Elāhi-nāma*, the same as Mawlānā Jalāl-al-Din Rumi used to refer to Sanā‘i’s poem. In the course of the centuries a more or less standardized form of the *Ḥadiqat al-ḥaqiqa* has come into existence through the amalgamation of different strains of textual tradition. In Mughal India, the philologist ‘Abd-al-Latif b. ‘Abd-Allāh ‘Abbāsi (d. 1048 or 1049/1638-39) prepared a new revised text in an attempt to harmonize the differences he found in the manuscripts. He also wrote a commentary to the poem, *Laṭā‘ef al-ḥadā‘eq men nafā‘es-al-daqa‘eq*. Apart from other commentaries, some abridgements of the poem have been made, for which in particular the narratives were selected (see further on the textual history of the *Ḥadiqa*, de Bruijn, 1983, pp. 119-39).

In the oldest surviving copy of the poem, the Bağdatlı Vehbi manuscript, the text appears as a continuing homily dealing with many different ethical and spiritual themes. There is no encompassing frame story, and there are far fewer narratives illustrating the poet’s discourse than in the more extensive versions (cf. de Bruijn, 1995). The poem deals first with the Divine Being, then with praise of the Prophet and the Rightly Guided Caliphs, Shi‘ite imams, Ḥasan and Ḥosayn, and two great imams of Sunni law, Abu Ḥanifa and Šāfe‘i. They are all held up as examples of spiritual perfection to the reader. Then Sanā‘i speaks about God’s creative command (*amr*) and, at length, about the Qur’ān and its role in religious practice. The following sections focus the ascetic life and the metaphysical and psychological concepts underlying Sanā‘i’s view of the world. After a transition, marked by the allegory of a nightly meeting with a shining figure, an old man acting as the poet’s spiritual guide, the homily further treats a great number of topics related to man’s life in this world and his social relations, his struggle with the forces of the lower soul and the preparation for death and the life to come. This second part of the homily ends in a dedication of the poem to Sultan Bahrāmšāh and his son, Prince Dawlatšāh, which includes matters concerning the conduct of the righteous ruler. Finally, the poet declines the sultan’s request to become attached to his court (for a detailed analysis of the contents, see de Bruijn, 1983, pp. 218-45).

In the more extensive versions, the same material has been rearranged into ten books under thematic headings. It was also extended with didactical lines and narratives, the authenticity of which is difficult to assess. In the 19th century, the *Ḥadiqat al-ḥaqiqa* was lithographed several times in India. The edition of the first book with an English translation by John Stephenson (1911)



is based on a selection of rather late manuscripts. A comprehensive text was published by Moḥammad-Taqi Modarres Rażawī (1329/1950); this edition fails, however, to provide a good picture of the intricate textual story.

The *Ḥadiqat al-ḥaqīqa* is not only one of the first of a long line of Persian didactical *matnawīs*, it is also one of the most popular works of its kind as the great number of copies made throughout the centuries attest. Its great impact on Persian literature is evidenced by the numerous citations from the poem occurring in mystical as well as profane works. It has been taken as a model by several other poets, including Neẓāmī, ‘Aṭṭār, Rumi, Awḥadi, and Jāmi.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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