



NAWM-NĀMA

NAWM-NĀMA, the **dream** journal of Šehāb-al-Dīn Fażl-Allāh Astarābādi (b. Astarābād 740/1339-40; d. Nakhjavan, 1 Du'l-qa'da 796/28 August 1394), the founder of the Ḥorufi movement (see **ḤORUFISM**).

Although the title *Nawm-nāma* is broadly used in the contemporary scholarship on the Ḥorufis, it seems that the short descriptions of dreams noted in the last folios of some of the manuscript copies of the *Jāvdān-nāma*, the major work of Fażl-Allāh, did not exist in the form of an independent work and did not bear any special title. It seems that they came to be known under the title of *Nawm-nāma* through confusion with another work ascribed to Fażl-Allāh, the *Now-nāma*, or the *Noska-ye now* (“New book” or ‘New exemplar’), a work on the Ḥorufi doctrine which has no connection with the dream journal. Indeed, the written form of the two words is very close in the Arabic script: *now* (*nun* + *wāw*) and *nawm* (*nun* + *wāw* + *mim*). In addition, in the last folios of the manuscript of the *Jāvdān-nāma* of the Cambridge University Library (Ee. 1.27), the extracts from the *Now-nāma* (fols. 404b-406a, the title *Now-nāma* being mentioned at the margin of the fol. 404b) are immediately followed by the dream journal (fols. 406a-411b), giving the impression that the latter is included in the former.

While **Edward G. Browne** states clearly that the *Now-nāma* or *Noska-ye now* is a complement to the *Jāvdān-nāma* (Browne, 1898, p. 77, n. 1), **Šādeq Kiā** apparently thought that *Now-nāma* is a scribal error for *Nawm-nāma* and quotes the incipit of the *Now-nāma*, which appears on the folio 404b of the manuscript of the Cambridge University Library, as that of the *Nawm-nāma*



(Kiā, p. 43). He notes, however, that Browne in his catalogue of the Persian manuscripts of the library of Cambridge (Browne, 1896, p. 71) did not correct the title and left *Now-nāma* as it is written in the manuscript (Kiā, p. 43, note 1). It was probably this confusion in addition to the scribal errors on the cover pages of the manuscripts (the covers of some manuscripts of the *Now-nāma* bear erroneously *Nawm-nāma*, while the title *Now-nāma* is clearly written in the beginning of the manuscript) that led [Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı](#) to attribute erroneously the title *Nawm-nāma* to two manuscripts of the *Now-nāma* (Istanbul Millet Kütüphanesi, Ali Emiri Farsi no. 1011[2] and no.1030 [1]), which do not contain any mention of the dreams (Gölpınarlı, 1973, pp. 76, 82-83; see Usluer, pp. 211-35). Judging from the title mentioned in the incipit, this same error applies also to the two other catalogue mentions of the *Nawm-nāma*: Konya Mevlana Muzesi MS 307/1723(1) (Gölpınarlı, 1967, II, p. 43) and Staats und Universitätsbibliothek zu Göttingen Ms. Pers. 46(3) (Divshali and Luft, pp. 22-24), which are in reality copies of the *Now-nāma* and may not include the dream journal. Kāmel Moṣṭafā Šebi refers to Fażl-Allāh's dream journal as *Now-nāma* (Šebi, II, pp. 157, 160), but, based on what was just discussed, it appears that the dreams were probably not the part of the *Now-nāma*.

There are at least two extant copies of the dream journal of Fażl-Allāh inserted at the end of the manuscript of the *Jāvdān-nāma* of the Cambridge University Library, of which some extracts in original Astarābādi dialect are quoted by Browne (1896, pp. 83-86) and by Kiā (pp. 236-46; original text and translation in the literary Persian). Another copy is contained in the folios 334a-339a of the manuscript of the *Jāvdān-nāma* from the library of the late scholar Rudolf Tschudi. This manuscript was used by [Helmut Ritter](#) in his work on the Ḥorufis (Ritter p. 21) and is now preserved in the library of the University of Basel under the number M VI 72. The manuscripts of the *Jāvdān-nāma* of the British Library (Or 5957) and of Istanbul Millet Kütüphanesi (Ali Emiri Farsi 920) do not contain the dream journal, but it is possible that some more copies will be discovered in other extant manuscripts of the *Jāvdān-nāma* or the *Now-nāma*.

The contents of the *Nawm-nāma* are discussed by a number of scholars (e.g., Browne, 1896, pp. 71-72; Kiā, pp. 34-36; Ritter, p. 21; Guluzade, pp. 108-10; Bashir, pp. 29-32). The following account is based on the manuscript of the Cambridge University Library. The *Nawm-nāma* contains mostly the short notes, and sometimes more detailed descriptions, of the dreams that Fażl-Allāh



had in the course of his life. The exact time span of the diary is difficult to determine, because only few dreams are dated: the earliest mention is the beginning of the Şafar 786/March 1384 (fol. 408b), and the most recent, 24 Jomāda II 796/26 April 1394 (fol. 406b), which would be only few months before the presumed date of Fażl-Allāh's death in August of the same year.

The contents of the dreams contained in the journal are most miscellaneous. They include ecstatic visions, some of them with strong eschatological and messianic coloration, references to the specific positions of the Ḥorufi doctrine, encounters with prophets (Adam, Abraham, Moses, Salomon, Jesus, Moḥammad), mentions of the Apostles of Jesus, of the Greek sages (*ḥokamā-ye Yunān*), of [Alexander the Great](#), called the 'Two-Horned' (*Du'l-qarnayn*), and of the members of [family of the Prophet Muhammad](#) ('Ali b. Abi Ṭāleb, Ḥosayn b. 'Ali). Particularly interesting in the context of Fażl-Allāh's biography is the mention of the localities (Astarābād, [Baku](#), [Borujerd](#), [Dāmḡān](#), [Isfahan](#), [Kvārazm](#), Mashhad, Tabriz) and of the contemporaries of Fażl-Allāh, from well-known political personages—Shah Oways Jalāyeri (d. 776/1364-75; see [JALAYERIDS](#)), Ṭoqtameš Khan (d. 1406 or 1407), and Tamerlane (d. 807/1404)—to dervishes whose personalities are still to be identified. Notwithstanding its sketchy and allusive style, the journal is thus an important source of information on Fażl-Allāh's intellectual and political connections and aspirations, as well as the geographical pattern of his travels. Some personal names and places mentioned in the *Nawm-nāma*, such as Rudbār-e Astarābād (fols. 407a, 409b), Ḥeşār-e Gerdkuh (fol. 406b), and Shaikh Ḥasan (fol. 407b) nourished the hypothesis on the possible connection between the Ḥorufis and the Nezāri [Isma'īlis](#) (Browne, 1896, pp. 71-72) and led to some premature conclusions (cf. Ivanow, p. 188: "It displays many contacts with Ismailism, Alamut, even refers to Sayyidnā Ḥasan b. aṣ-Şabbāḥ") not supported so far by the data found in the early Ḥorufi works (Mir-Kasimov, 2007, p. 22).

Besides its historical importance, the dream journal acquires a particular significance, because the initiation in the dream interpretation (the date of this event, 765/1363-64, is mentioned in a marginal note in fol. 406a) was the first step in Fażl-Allāh's spiritual career, and the theory of dreams and of the world of imagination (*'ālam al-meṭāl*) is one of the central lines of his doctrine (see [ASTARĀBĀDĪ FAŻLALLĀH](#), [ḤORUFISM](#), and [JĀVDĀN-NĀMA](#)). Interestingly enough, the most important dreams and visions that marked the spiritual career of Fażl-Allāh are not mentioned in his own journal. We find the description of these dreams in the dream journals (*ketāb-e kvāb-nāma*) of his



followers, Naşr-Allāh Nāfaji (used by Ritter in his account on Fażl-Allāh's life) and Sayyed Eşhāq Astarābādi; the latter work was translated into Ottoman Turkish by 'Ezz-al-Din 'Abd-al-Majid Taravi (d. 1459-60). Both of these works, which continue the Ḥorufi tradition of the dream-related literature, are important sources of information on the biography of Fażl-Allāh and on the early Ḥorufi history.

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