

This book provides translations of the earliest Arabic autobiography and the earliest theoretical explanation of the psychic development and powers of an Islamic holy man (Saint, Friend of God). It is an important primary source for a complex of religious ideas which have continued to exercise great influence in the Muslim world up until the present.

**Bernd Radtke** is Professor at Utrecht University.

**John O'Kane** studied at Princeton University and has translated a number of works on Islamic mysticism.

The *Curzon Sufi Series* attempts to provide short introductions to a variety of facets of the subject, which are accessible both to the general reader and the student and scholar in the field. Each book will be either a synthesis of existing knowledge or a distinct contribution to, and extension of, knowledge of the particular topic. The two major underlying principles of the Series are sound scholarship and readability.



CURZON  
PRESS

ISBN 0-7007-0413-2



9 780700 704132 >

Sufi

THE CONCEPT OF SAINTHOOD IN EARLY  
ISLAMIC MYSTICISM

RADTKE AND O'KANE



CURZON  
PRESS

Sufi

# THE CONCEPT OF SAINTHOOD IN EARLY ISLAMIC MYSTICISM

BERND RADTKE  
AND JOHN O'KANE

CURZON

CURZON SUFI SERIES

Series Editor: Ian Richard Netton

*Professor of Arabic Studies,  
University of Leeds*

The *Curzon Sufi Series* attempts to provide short introductions to a variety of facets of the subject, which are accessible both to the general reader and the student and scholar in the field. Each book will be either a synthesis of existing knowledge or a distinct contribution to, and extension of, knowledge of the particular topic. The two major underlying principles of the Series are sound scholarship and readability.

BEYOND FAITH AND INFIDELITY

The Sufi Poetry and Teachings of Mahmud Shabistari

*Leonard Lewisohn*

AL-HALLAJ

*Herbert W. Mason*

RUZBIHAN BAQLI

Mysticism and the Rhetoric of Sainthood in Persian Sufism

*Carl W. Ernst*

ABDULLAH ANSARI OF HERAT

An Early Sufi Master

*A.G. Ravan Farhadi*

PERSIAN SUFI POETRY

An Introduction to the Mystical Use of Classical Persian Poetry

*J.T.P. de Bruijn*

THE CONCEPT OF  
SAINTHOOD IN EARLY  
ISLAMIC MYSTICISM

Two works by  
Al-Hakim Al-Tirmidhi

An annotated translation with introduction by

*Bernd Radtke and John O'Kane*



CURZON  
PRESS

First published in 1996  
by Curzon Press  
St John's Studios, Church Road, Richmond  
Surrey, TW9 2QA

© 1996 Bernd Radtke and John O'Kane

Printed in Great Britain by  
Biddles Limited, Guildford and King's Lynn

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

*British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data*  
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

*Library of Congress in Publication Data*  
A catalog record for this book has been requested

ISBN 0-7007-0452-3 (Hbk)  
ISBN 0-7007-0413-2 (Pbk)

## CONTENTS

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| PREFACE   | VII |
| ABBREVIATIONS   | IX  |
| INTRODUCTION  |     |
| 1. The Life of al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī                     | 1   |
| 2. Tirmidhī's Writings                                  | 2   |
| 3. Tirmidhī's Position in Islamic Intellectual History  | 5   |
| 4. Friendship with God                                  | 7   |
| 5. About Both Texts                                     | 9   |
| THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THE THEOSOPHIST OF<br>TIRMIDH      | 15  |
| AL-ḤAKĪM AL-TIRMIDHĪ: THE LIFE OF THE FRIENDS<br>OF GOD | 38  |
| Excursus: Theory of Knowledge                           | 98  |
| Excursus: The Spirit (rūḥ)                              | 137 |
| APPENDIX  | 213 |
| INDICES   |     |
| 1. Index of Proper Names                                | 241 |
| 2. Index of Arabic and Persian Words                    | 250 |
| 3. Index of Concepts                                    | 258 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY  | 276 |