



'Attar and the Persian Sufi Tradition: The Art of Spiritual Flight

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Farid al-Din 'Attar (d. 1221) was the principal Muslim religious poet of the second half of the twelfth century. Best known for his masterpiece *Mantiq al-tayr*, or *The Conference of Birds*, his verse is still considered to be the finest example of Sufi love poetry in the Persian language after that of Rumi. This volume is the most comprehensive survey of 'Attar's literary works to date, and situates his poetry and prose within the wider context of the Persian Sufi tradition. Sixteen scholars from North America, Europe and Iran illustrate, from a variety of critical perspectives, the full range of 'Attar's monumental achievement. They show why and how 'Attar's poetical work, as well as his mystical doctrines, wielded such influence over the whole of Persian Sufism. They also shed light on why the epics and lyrics which declare his radical theology of love are still known by heart and sung by minstrels throughout Iran, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and wherever Persian is spoken or understood.

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