



Passion Before Me, My Fate Behind: Ibn al-Farid and the Poetry of Recollection

Th. Emil Homerin

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Passion Before Me, My Fate Behind: Ibn al-Farid and the Poetry of Recollection Th. Emil Homerin Explores the work of beloved Sufi poet Umar Ibn al-Farid and its context. Provides many translations of Ibn al-Farid's poetry.

Umar Ibn al-Farid (1181–1235), author of two classic works, the Wine Ode and the Poem of the Sufi Way, is considered the greatest Sufi poet to write in Arabic. In this study, these and other poems by Ibn al-Farid are considered within the context of Islamic mysticism, Arabic literature, and Sufi poetry. Th. Emil Homerin uncovers the literary and religious intent of these poems and their aesthetic and mystical content, showing them to be a type of meditative poetry. Indeed, Ibn al-Farid often alludes to the Sufi practice of "recollection," or meditation on God, to evoke a view of existence in which the seeker may be transformed by an epiphany of love revealing an intimate relationship to the divine beloved. Homerin provides elegant translations and close readings of Ibn al-Farid's poetry, highlighting the beauty of his verse, its moods, meanings, and significance within Islamic mysticism and Arabic poetry, where Ibn al-Farid is still known as the "Sultan of the Lovers."

"This is the major work on the mystical poetry of Umar Ibn al-Farid by the leading Western expert on Arabic Sufi poetry. Stylistically refined and polished, Homerin's translations of the extremely difficult medieval mystical poetry successfully convey the peculiarities of diction and the cultural and aesthetic richness of the original material. Together with the author's earlier studies, this will remain a definitive study of Ibn al-Farid's poetic oeuvre for years to come." — Alexander Knysh, author of Islamic Mysticism: A Short History

Th. Emil Homerin is Professor of Religion at the University of Rochester. His books include The Wine of Love and Life: Ibn al-Farid's al-Khamriyah and al-Qaysari's Quest for Meaning; From Arab Poet to Muslim Saint: Ibn al-Farid His Verse, and His Shrine; and Umar Ibn al-Farid: Sufi Verse, Saintly Life.



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