



The Sultan's Sex Potions: Arab Aphrodisiacs in the Middle Ages (English and Arabic Edition)

Nasir al-Din al-Tusi

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Arabic erotic literature has a long and rich history, which goes back as far as the ninth century. Far from being the pursuit of prurient pornographers, eroticism and sexuality received considerable attention from scholars. Written by Nasir al-Din al-Tusi (1201–1274), one of the leading scientists of the age, *The Sultan's Sex Potions* is part of a group of works devoted to aphrodisiacs as well as sexual stimulants, sexual practices, and positions.

Sober and measured in tone, the work was intended to be a manual that would allow the patient to dispense with the services of a physician. Written at the request of the ruler, its potions, electuaries, syrups, and enemas enjoyed a "royal warrant of appointment" to arouse the lust for coitus and enhance sexual potency.

This volume includes a critical edition of three manuscripts (Berlin, Cairo, and Glasgow) and is accompanied by a translation, as well as an introduction to Arabic erotic literature, a biography of the author, and extensive indexes.

A Persian polymath and prolific writer, **Nasir al-Din al-Tusi** (1201–1274) built up a large body of work ranging across a number of disciplines including mathematics, geometry, mineralogy, astronomy, medicine, philosophy, and theology. The Muslim scholar Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406) considered al-Tusi to be the greatest of the later Persian scholars.

Daniel L. Newman is head of the Arabic Studies department, professor of Arabic, and course director of the MA in Arabic–English Translation and Interpreting at the University of Durham, England.

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