

The Other Spiritualities of the Middle East: The Minority Religious Traditions of the Ahl-E Haqq, the Mandaeans and the Yezidis

Muhammed Al Da'mi



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The Other Spiritualities of the Middle East... Intrigued by the superheated problem of religious minorities in the volatile Middle East, and against a universally embraced notion that identifies the region only with the so-called Judaeo-Christian-Muslim religious tradition, Professor Muhammed Al Da'mi sets out in this monograph to explore for the interested reader three of the most obscured and overlooked 'spiritualities' (namely, the Ahl-e Haqq, Mandaeism and Yezidism) which still 'live' vigorously among their faithful adherents today. Although occasionally described as agnostic, Gnostic, syncretistic and residual, Al Da'mi basically approaches the religions at the core of this volume as autonomous spiritual traditions, each with its own intrinsic life, worldview, and system of belief. Within this context, the word 'minority' recurrently used to indicate their communities, is by no means a derogatory description for it is only limited to indicate a demographic (numerical) concept, not to imply a value judgment at all. The author then leads us through the fatasmagoria of their spiritual notions, creeds and rituals which are held dear by the believers. And, with a specific reference to similarities and dissimilarities, the author attempts to mark significant elements of survival and durability which are shared by the three minorities, outlining a set of notable patterns of minority collective behavior. As a kaleidoscope of various religious shades of belief historically, where liquid religious boundaries overlap, Mesopotamia is particularly singled out for its hospitality to almost all kinds of cults and religious traditions.

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