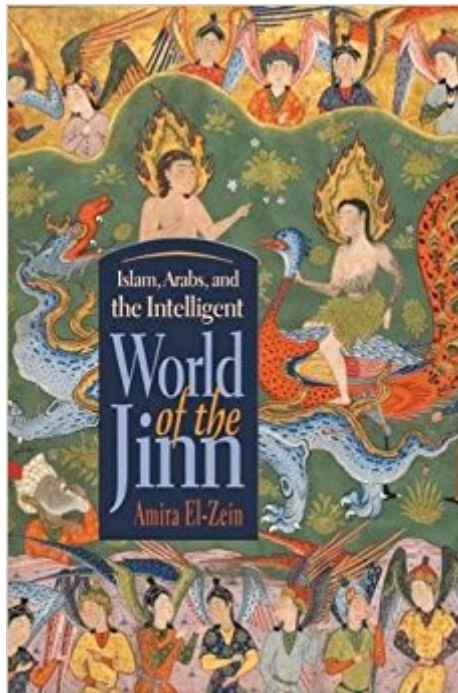


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Islam, Arabs, And Intelligent World Of The Jinn (Contemporary Issues In The Middle East)



Synopsis

According to the Qur'ân, God created two parallel species, man and the jinn, the former from clay and the latter from fire. Beliefs regarding the jinn are deeply integrated into Muslim culture and religion, and have a constant presence in legends, myths, poetry, and literature. In *Islam, Arabs, and the Intelligent World of the Jinn*, Amira El-Zein explores the integral role these mythological figures play, revealing that the concept of jinn is fundamental to understanding Muslim culture and tradition. Examining closely a wide range of sources, from the fields of law, theology, and folklore, El-Zein clearly places the status of the jinn in the metaphysical and cosmological economy of Islam. The author also illuminates the Islamic concept of the jinn by comparing it to other similar concepts in different religions and mythologies. She probes the complex relationships between the jinn and humans, as well as the jinn and animals, providing critical insights into the function of the jinn in the process of poetic and cultural creation. The author's access to Arabic sources and her ability to contextualize them make this a compelling and thorough account, enriching our knowledge of Islamic religion and tradition.

Book Information

Series: Contemporary Issues in the Middle East

Paperback: 248 pages

Publisher: Syracuse University Press; Reprint edition (January 20, 2017)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0815635141

ISBN-13: 978-0815635147

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.5 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 7 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #608,972 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #123 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Islam > Theology #13768 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Religious Studies > Theology #97635 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences

Customer Reviews

One of the only monographs available devoted to a discussion of the jinn. It provides a useful resource for anyone working in the field of popular religion and Islamic Studies, but it is primarily a research monograph on medieval Arabic literature. (*British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*) The jinn, in all their shape-shifting varieties, are an integral part of Islamic culture, literature, and poetry,

and because the author of this small volume is herself a poet as well as a scholar of comparative literature and mysticism, she has been able to provide some unique insights into their world. (Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft) This remarkable [book] is a much-needed complement to the wide literature devoted to Islam . . . and offers fresh and original insights that challenge the conventional view of the Islamic religion and civilization. (Patrick Laude, author of Divine Play, Sacred Laughter, and Spiritual Understanding)

Amira El-Zein is visiting associate professor at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service in Qatar. She is a published poet and translator in Arabic, French, and English. She is also the author of numerous articles on comparative mysticism, comparative folk literature, and comparative literature.

ANYONE who is interested in knowing more about the jinn/djinn, whether paranormal writers doing research, or the simply curious, or academic readers, would find this book to be of great value. The author is erudite and manages to assimilate a fount of Jinn lore not obtainable elsewhere in English. If a non-Muslim or non-Arab wanted a book explaining beliefs and folklore about the Jinn this would be the book to get (along with Robert Lebling's Legends of the Fire Spirits: Jinn and Genies from Arabia to Zanzibar) The book is well put together, nicely typeset, and printed on good quality paper. The binding is excellent. As to the contents it is a very good, well researched, and sensitive Academic look at the Jinn/djinn. It is culturally sympathetic, Professor El-Zein is an Arab, but her very erudite work manages a responsible academic distance from the subject matter, yet maintains cultural sympathies. The magic of the jinn come out in the folklore and stories referenced in this collection, and her prose retains a faint touch of the poetic. However this is, at heart, an academic work. It manages not to be dry at all, however, and is elegantly written. It would make a good textbook, and certainly is more valuable reading for anyone interested in the Paranormal than many other books on the market. Try it out.

Similar to the European fairies, Indian and Persian Devas and paries, are the Jinn. Legendary creatures made of wind and smokeless fire. They inhabit an invisible world between the realm of angels and the realm of man. They interact directly with our world but are banned from entering the realm of angels. Men who seek to find them usually travel to desolate out of the way places in the desert. The angels are made with bodies of light, ours of clay. The Jinn used to be able to enter the realm of angels and bring back the news from heaven to mankind's ears. With the advent of Islam

the Jinn were banned from entering heaven. Their leader Iblis who may have been a lower level angel or high ranking Jinn, depending on the source refused to bow down to Adam so he was expelled to the planet earth. Now Jinn are not necessarily evil, they have a choice. They can come in any religion or none at all. Both Jinn and man will be judged for their deeds in judgment day. Yes there are Muslim Jinn. Some are good to people and other are bad. What follows is a scholarly examination of the Jinn concept in Arabia. Sources are pulled from pre Islamic works, Orthodox Islam and popular Muslim folklore. The concept of Jinn is compared to similar phenomena in other cultures, covering a range from Arabic, Persian, Greek, Roman, Indian and European folklore. Covered first is the cosmology of the Islamic heaven, briefly touched upon previously. The Muslim cosmology believes in seven earths each one differing from the other and each Earth contains worlds and universes. The consonants JN mean hidden or invisible. Such a concept could apply to angels, demons and other unseen being. It was thought that prior to the revelation of the Koran that the Jinn roamed the Earth and Heaven and in certain instances were thought of as Gods. The female Deities had wings and were treated much like angels or consorts to male gods. Some believe that the old Gods were in fact Jinn. After all they were unseen. Jinn can take many forms and sometimes they just keep on changing. The Gods in the Ancient world could also shape shift and be tricky. The Egyptian gods were part animal part features of humans. Some animals like the deer were holy to the Jinn. They liked deer. Snakes were considered both good and evil and in some instances were reviled and in others worshipped. In strict Islam the Jinn were prohibited from marrying humans yet coupling did happen. Usually the mission was to create a hybrid offspring. In folklore it happened with the hybrid having special powers. The book posits several examples. The Jinn lore is very similar to faerie lore from Europe. The book goes on to discuss how Jinn inspire poets and the different types of Jinn. This is a good beginning primer for those interested in the lore of the Jinn.

An academic, well written, informative book, detailing jinn from middle eastern mythos, their relationship to the Quran, and the similarities they share with beings of other legends from around the world.

A must have in every occult library. Very interesting book.

very thorough, and insightful. For someone interested in the subject, the appendix and index are invaluable!

Perfectly described! Exactly what I expected. A good theological reference book.

I chose this book for its comparative religious view. Most of the books on this subject seemed to be written by fundamentalists and were focused on how to protect oneself from jinn. It seems to be well researched. It is also comprehensive with one exception. In her chapter on human and jinn marriages she totally neglects to mention the Nephilim.

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