

Jadid al-Islam: The Jewish "New Muslims" of Meshhed (Raphael Patai Series in Jewish Folklore and Anthropology)

Raphael Patai



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In 1839, Muslims attacked the Jews of Meshhed, murdering 36 of them, and forcing the conversion of the rest. While some managed to escape across the Afghan border, and some turned into true believing Muslims, the majority adopted Islam only outwardly, while secretly adhering to their Jewish faith.

Jadid al-Islam is the fascinating story of how this community managed to survive, at the risk of their lives, as crypto-Jews in an inimical Shi'i Muslim environment. Based on unpublished original Persian sources and interviews with members of the existing Meshhed community in Jerusalem and New York, this study documents the history, traditions, tales, customs, and institutions of the Jadid al-Islam—"New Muslims."

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