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There are an estimated 3 million Iranians living abroad, most having left their country after the Iranian revolution of 1979. Spellman (sociology, Huron International Univ., London) makes an important contribution to our knowledge of this understudied population with her investigation of the effects of religious beliefs and rituals on the identity formation and everyday lives of Iranians in London. More specifically, she focuses on three sets of religious practices: sofreh, or religious gathering of women; Iranian Sufi (mystical) orders (of the Nimatullahi and the Maktab Tariqat Oveyssi Shahmaghsoudi); and the Christian Fellowship and Elam Ministries. The study is based on dissertation fieldwork conducted in both London and Iran during 1996-2000, and still maintains its original format of applying theories to examples. The nature and scope of the study also is more limited than its title implies. Given the lack of information about this population in the Western world, the focused materials presented in this book help build a better information base on the diverse practices and beliefs of Iranians outside their homeland. Summing Up: Recommended. All levels/libraries.

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