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Thin Description: Ethnography and the African Hebrew Israelites of Jerusalem (Hardback)

By John L. Jackson

HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS, United States, 2013. Hardback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book. The African Hebrew Israelites of Jerusalem are often dismissed as a fringe cult for their beliefs that African Americans are descendants of the ancient Israelites and that veganism leads to immortality. But John L. Jackson questions what fringe means in a world where cultural practices of every stripe circulate freely on the Internet. In this poignant and sophisticated examination of the limits of ethnography, the reader is invited into the visionary, sometimes vexing world of the AHJ. Jackson challenges what Clifford Geertz called the thick description of anthropological research through a multidisciplinary investigation of how the AHJ use media and technology to define their public image in the twenty-first century. Moving far beyond the modest witness of nineteenth-century scientific discourse or the thick descriptions of twentieth-century anthropology, Jackson insists that Geertzian thickness is an impossibility, especially in a world where the anthropologist's subject is a self-aware subject--one who crafts his own autoethnography while critically consuming the ethnographer's offerings. Thin Description takes as its topic a group situated along the fault lines of several diasporas--African, American, Jewish--and provides an anthropological account of how race,...



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