

The Yezidis: Reflections on Group survival and the Limits of Tolerance

Speaker

Prof Garry Trompf

Date and Time

Tuesday, 28 October 2014
11.00 pm – 12.30 pm

Venue

Bankstown Campus
Building 1, Room 1.223

RSVP

By Friday, 24 October 2014
j.fishman@uws.edu.au

Abstract

The Yezidis are currently facing serious threats of persecution, even extinction, in the contemporary Middle East. This lecture will attempt to explain how the special 'syncretic' configuration of Yezidi beliefs came to have its unusual characteristics.

Yezidi choices to retain and develop their special beliefs will be analysed as recurrent reactions to impositions by dominant actors around them, the social environment of this ethno-religious minority clearly changing substantially over last stretches of time. The history of Yezidi ploys at group survival raises awkward questions about the right to reject normative religion and the limits of tolerance in modern (or modernizing) 'nation-states.'



Biography

Garry W Trompf is Honorary Professor in the History of Ideas in the Department of Studies in Religion at the University of Sydney, where he previously held a personal chair for ten years. He was educated at the universities of Melbourne, Monash, Oxford and the Australian National University and has written over fifteen books, which embody early Christianity (**Early Christian Historiography, 2000**), the religions of Melanesia (**Melanesian Religions, 1994** and **Payback: The Logic of Retribution in Melanesian Religions, 2004**) and the history of ideas (**The Idea of Historical Recurrence in Western Thought, 1979**), among a myriad other fields.

Garry is known as the chaser of grand ideas of European history. In Melanesia, he went from village to village, mapping traditions. Garry has a great fascination for diversity and an ability to see cultural phenomena in their infinite complexity.