



Ritual of Holy Healing in Northern Iran: Rebellion Rituals of Spiritual Power

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ABSTRACT This paper highlights the historical evolution and transformation of Iranian pilgrimage rituals with a focus on the function, meaning, and form of the ritual of holy healing (rituals of the Hanifiyeh and the Shah-e Shahidan shrines) in northern Iran in Gilan province. In order to achieve this goal, this paper describes a fieldwork study and analysis of the ritual in accordance with other similar rituals in Iran. The researchers take holy healing into account as the key sign of spiritual power that acted against the hierarchy produced by Iranian *Khans* (literally lords). Key components of this ritual, such as the holy elements, are the topics under discussion in this analysis. As such, this paper argues that the ritual of pilgrimage should be taken as a critical response to Iranian Feudalism until about 1952, and then to this time as the space of equality and spiritual liminality.