



Sultan's Secret: A Historic Search for the Gospel of Barnabas

Malik A. Evangelatos

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Sultan's Secret is a thought provoking, fast-paced, culturally-rich novel with some autobiographical qualities that's akin to Dan Brown's fantastic The DaVinci Code, but perhaps is more realistic. This novel goes further, however, by encompassing Islam and uncovering ancient tension between Jesus' followers passed down to Muslims and Christians over the essential character of Jesus' theology. Was it Trinitarian as the apostle Paul and the Roman Empire assert, or was Jesus' theology strictly monotheistic as Barnabas and Muslims say? Could this have been the true root of the quarrel between Paul and Barnabas? Was Paul a unwitting agent of Rome, an infiltrator who redirected the Jesus movement to preserve the interests of the Empire? Readers will ponder these questions and more as they see Muslim and Christian forces race to recover and control the recently stolen Gospel of Barnabas, which portrays Jesus as a devout, culturally Jewish prophet of God who taught Islamic monotheism, not Trinitarianism! Nothing less than the world order itself is at stake. The Church needs to gain control of the Gospel and suppress it in order to save its historic legitimacy. And from the lips of the Roman Catholic Pope himself readers see the pontiff viciously dispatch deadly agents to get the Gospel only moments before stepping onto his balcony and gleefully waving to thousands of Catholic worshippers. Meanwhile, certain Muslim groups want to widely publicise the Gospel to expose the Church as a completely pagan, human institution and thereby lead people to Jesus' true prophetic message of Islamic monotheism. The main characters are a most unlikely pair who are brought together by fate after the Gospel is stolen from a museum in Turkey. Paul is a pious religious professor and Jack, a beer-chugging, woman-crazed journalist, both a part of the search for relatively trivial reasons, or so it seems. They unwittingly become the focal point of the search and are under close observation by all concerned camps. This is Evangelatos' second autobiographical novel, and he continues to weave aspects of his life into the story, speaking through his characters providing a very rich, detailed travelogue of Paul and Jack's hunt as they make their way through ancient Roman Catholic and Islamic cities and museums around the Mediterranean basin learning about the Gospel's history and possible fate. Shadowy figures lurk behind throughout their travel as we see Paul and Jack themselves move from being uncomfortable acquaintances to boyish buddies, to mortal enemies. Readers will easily find the relationship between these two one of the most entertaining features of the story. The novel will be especially enjoyable for readers drawn to suspenseful mystery stories, religious history and religious art. Readers will want to keep a few resources at their side as Evangelatos heavily refers to the geography of Eurasia, Ottoman history, and the Christian New Testament. The thrilling search for the Gospel ends on the island of Cyprus where Paul and Jack meet a mysterious "sultan" and discover a long-held secret as the reader discovers a few surprising twists. -Ali Coleman, Huda Tonight



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