



The Way of the Elders: West African Spirituality & Tradition

Adama Doumbia, Naomi Doumbia

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Contemporary West African culture harbors rich and meaningful spiritual traditions. Yet, there are few written records of West Africa's major beliefs, rituals, and ceremonies. *The Way of the Elders* co-authored by a West African native raised in the Mande tradition offers rare and authentic insight into the spirituality of West Africa, and particularly the Mande culture.

This spiritual guidebook explains fundamental beliefs, such as reverence for the One Spirit, that permeate tribal life. Offerings, charms, herbal healing, shamans and their functions, the importance of wildlife, and the four elements of nature are discussed in detail. The second half of the book is devoted to sacred living and focuses on village life, sacred music and dance, pregnancy, birth, childhood initiation, marriage, death, and funerals.

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