

Shii Islam And Identity Religion Politics And Change In The Global Muslim Community Library Of Modern Religion

The book explores the complex world of Islam from the perspective of its adherents and activists in Azerbaijan. Baku, the most secular Muslim capital city, is a battlefield for the minds and souls of „ethnic Muslims.” Visiting pirs was till now the typical expression of religiosity among Azerbaijani Muslims. Sunni-Shia division was blurred. Nowadays, Shia and Sunni Muslim movements propose new distinctive identities. Foreign and local preachers took advantage of liberal religious policies of the 1990s to promote their ideas. Salafis stress the „pristine” Islam and the idea of universalism, while Shias underline rationality in their faith tradition. Turkish model of Islam is more inclusive towards local customs. Sufism, although not as powerful as before, also finds a committed audience. Finally, independent charismatic local leaders gain supporters. The book investigates how this pluralism affects both religious groups and believers. Competitive environment requires effective strategies and flexibility. In this process, the traditional dominance of Shiism is challenged by Sunni movements. Shiism, however, is not giving up and adapts its concepts and practices to contemporary contexts. This innovative book analyses the relationship between religion and politics in the Middle East through a comparative study of five countries: Egypt, Israel, Turkey, Iran, and Saudi Arabia. Robert D. Lee examines each country in terms of four domains in which state and religion necessarily interact: national identity, ideology, institutions, and political culture. In each domain he considers contradictory hypotheses, some of them asserting that religion is a positive force for political development and others identifying it as an obstacle. Among the questions the book confronts: Is secularization a necessary prerequisite for democratic development? How is it and why is it that religion and politics are so deeply entangled in these five countries? And, why is it that all five countries differ so markedly in the way they identify themselves and use religion for political purposes? The book argues that the nature of religious organization and practice in the Middle East must be understood in the context of individual nation states. The second edition is updated throughout and includes an entirely new chapter discussing the political and religious climate in Saudi Arabia. Earlier introductory analysis has been condensed to make room for new material, and chronologies at the end of each chapter have been added to help students understand the broader context. The second edition of Religion and Politics in the Middle East is a robust addition to courses on the Middle East.

Shia Islam is a central issue in contemporary politics. Often associated with Iran, Shiite communities actually exist in many Islamic countries. Focusing on the «other Shiites» outside Iran, this book offers a survey of their diversity and multiplicity in the last two centuries. The contributions cover three major topics. The first part deals with the relationship of Shia minorities to the Sunni regimes. Secondly the public affirmation of their identities through specific rituals and social attitudes is analysed. Finally, the third part of this volume examines the strengthening of these identities through traditional religious rituals and cultural performances, or through the re-interpretation and adaptation of these to present-day life. Coming from various academic backgrounds, the authors have used different methodologies and have been engaged in field-work.

This book sheds light on a particular facet of the link between politics and Islam through the analysis of the relationship between Islamism and the built environment. The relationship between Islam and politics has always been controversial, yet it has possibly never been as controversial as it is at the time of writing. This new edited volume sets out to explore the interactions between Islamisms and the built environment through issues such as: spatial negotiations between nation and Islam in the definition of national identity; everyday spaces and the making of Islamic milieus; the role of Islam in the making (and/or remaking) of state ideology via architecture and urban planning; the influence of globalization and transnational links on the spatial manifestations of Islam(ism); and transnational architectural exchanges through global Islam. It expands on these issues through case studies analysing the role of the built environment and the urban realm as major media in the making of Islamist politics. The case studies incorporate manifestations in Muslim-dominated countries, including those where Islam has been at the heart of state ideology (Pakistan and Brunei), those with influential grassroots Islamist networks (pre-revolutionary Iran and Indonesia), those that identify with Islam through global exchanges (United Arab Emirates, Kazakhstan and Turkey) and countries where Islam is an increasingly significant reference utilized by political actors (Algeria and Lebanon). This book will appeal to students and scholars of architecture, urban studies and cultural studies, as well as those interested in the social and political aspects of the built environment.

There are over two million Shi'is, who differ from Sunni Muslims in their understandings of the early line of succession after Muhammad, in the United States. With community roots going back sometimes close to one hundred years, the Shi'i community can be found in major cities like New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington, and Dearborn, Michigan. Early in the century, Shi'is and Sunnis sometimes arrived at the same time, worshipped together, shared similar experiences, and confronted the same challenges despite their sectarian differences. Both tracing the early history and illuminating the more recent past with surveys and interviews, Takim explores the experiences of this community. Filling an important scholarly gap, he also demonstrates how living in the West has impelled the Shi'i community to grapple with the ways in which Islamic law may respond to the challenges of modernity. Shi'ism in America provides the first general overview of this United States religious community, from religious, cultural, and political institutions to inter-group relations and the experience of African American Shi'is. Liyakat Nathani Takim is Sharjah Chair in Global Islam at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. A native of Zanzibar, Tanzania, he is the author of many works, including *The Heirs of the Prophet: Charisma and Religious Authority in Shi'ite Islam*

Lavishly illustrated with over 300 pictures, including more than 200 in full color, *The Oxford History of Islam* offers the

most wide-ranging and authoritative account available of the second largest--and fastest growing--religion in the world. John L. Esposito, Editor-in-Chief of the four-volume Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World, has gathered together sixteen leading scholars, both Muslim and non-Muslim, to examine the origins and historical development of Islam--its faith, community, institutions, sciences, and arts. Beginning in the pre-Islamic Arab world, the chapters range from the story of Muhammad and his Companions, to the development of Islamic religion and culture and the empires that grew from it, to the influence that Islam has on today's world. The book covers a wide array of subjects, casting light on topics such as the historical encounter of Islam and Christianity, the role of Islam in the Mughal and Ottoman empires, the growth of Islam in Southeast Asia, China, and Africa, the political, economic, and religious challenges of European imperialism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and Islamic communities in the modern Western world. In addition, the book offers excellent articles on Islamic religion, art and architecture, and sciences as well as bibliographies. Events in the contemporary world have led to an explosion of interest and scholarly work on Islam. Written for the general reader but also appealing to specialists, The Oxford History of Islam offers the best of that recent scholarship, presented in a readable style and complemented by a rich variety of illustrations.

Tourism is a vital tool for political and economic change. With international contributions from experienced individuals, this book cover general themes and issues, with three thematic sections with original chapters, and a concluding section. It covers a variety of international political changes at different scales and their resulting effects.

This book explores the evolution of a Shia Ismaili identity and crucial aspects of the historical forces that conditioned the development of the Muslim modern in late colonial South Asia. It traces the legal process that, since the 1860s, recast a Shia Imami identity for the Ismailis, and explicates the public career of Imam Aga Khan III amid heightened religious internationalism since the late nineteenth century, the age of 'religious internationals'. It sheds light and elaborates on the enduring legacies of questions such as the Aga's understanding of colonial modernity, his ideas of India, restructured modalities of community governance and the evolution of Imamate-sponsored institutions, key strands in scholarship that characterized the development of the Muslim and Shia Ismaili modern, and Muslim universality vis-...-vis denominational particularities that often transcended the remits of the modular nation and state structure.

Until recently the importance of religion in the modern world has often been underestimated in Western societies, whereas its significance is absolutely crucial in the Middle East. Religion is critical to a sense of belonging for communities and nations, and can be a force for unity or division. This is the case for the Alevis, an ethnic and religious community that constitutes approximately 20% of the Turkish population – its second largest religious group. In the current crisis in the Middle East, the heightened religious tensions between Sunnis, Shias and Alawites raise questions about who the Alevis are and where they stand in this conflict. With an ambiguous relationship to Islam, historically Alevis have been treated as a 'suspect community' in Turkey and recently, whilst distinct from Alawites, have sympathised with the Assad regime's secular orientation. The chapters in this book analyse different aspects of Alevi identity in relation to religion, politics, culture, education and national identity, drawing on specialist research in the field. The approach is interdisciplinary and contributes to wider debates concerning ethnicity, religion, migration and trans/national identity within and across ethno-religious boundaries. The chapters in this book were originally published as a special issue of the National Identities journal.

"This book is a historical and sociological reading of the relation between Sunnis and Shias from the inception of the dispute for Mohammed's succession until today. It is divided in two parts. The first part offers a comprehensive history of the divide. It shows how Shiism was, during much of the Middle Ages, the main contestation ideology of the caliphate, but also how Sunnism and Shiism converged as Shiism progressively ceased to be an esoteric and politically radical doctrine to espouse a number of tenets of mainstream Islam. It shows the political dynamics that runs beneath theological debates and, in particular, how the Sunni/Shia conflict was revived when the Safavids made Shiism an official state religion on the model of Sunnism. On the contrary, when faced with the colonial challenge, Sunni and Shia reformists closed ranks and collaborated. The second part of the book offers a socio-historical account of some national contexts in which the Sunni/Shia divide shapes the society and the politics: Iraq, Bahrain, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Yemen and Lebanon. It shows that in each of these countries the sectarian divide is shaped by very specific historical and social circumstances. Sunni and Shia identities are associated with ethnic, regional, statutory and economic identities. In most cases the relations between Sunnis and Shias are shaped by typical majority/minority dynamics. They can lead to conflict but dynamics of emulation often emerges from conflicts, which are particularly obvious when Sunni and Shia Islamic movements compete"--

Looks at the emergence of Shiism as a distinct communal identity within Islam.

Interest in Shi'a Islam has increased greatly in recent years, although Shi'ism in the Indian subcontinent has remained largely underexplored. Focusing on the influential Shi'a minority of Lucknow and the United Provinces, a region that was largely under Shi'a rule until 1856, this book traces the history of Indian Shi'ism through the colonial period toward independence in 1947.

Drawing on a range of new sources, including religious writing, polemical literature and clerical biography, it assesses seminal developments including the growth of Shi'a religious activism, madrasa education, missionary activity, ritual innovation and the politicization of the Shi'a community. As a consequence of these significant religious and social transformations, a Shi'a sectarian identity developed that existed in separation from rather than in interaction with its Sunni counterparts. In this way the painful birth of modern sectarianism was initiated, the consequences of which are very much alive in South Asia today.

The Sunn?-Shi'a schism is often framed as a dispute over the identity of the successor to Muhammad. In reality, however, this fracture only materialized a century later in the important southern Iraqi city of K?fa (present-day Najaf). This book explores the birth and development of Sh?'i identity. Through a critical analysis of legal texts, whose provenance has only recently been confirmed, the study shows how the early Shi'a carved out independent religious and social identities through specific ritual practices and within separate sacred spaces. In this way, the book addresses two seminal controversies in the study of early Islam, namely the dating of Kufan Shi'i identity, and the means by which the Shi'a differentiated themselves from mainstream Kufan society. This is an important, original, and path-breaking book that marks a significant development in the study of early Islamic society.

Uses a question and answer format to present information on topics including faith and practice, Islam and other religions,

customs and culture, and Muslims in the West.

Abdullah An-na'im offers a pioneering exploration of American Muslim citizenship and identity, arguing against the prevalent emphasis on majority-minority politics and instead promoting a shared citizenship that both accommodates and transcends religious identity. Many scholars and community leaders have called on American Muslims to engage with or integrate into mainstream American culture. Such calls tend to assume that there is a distinctive, monolithic, minority religious identity for American Muslims. Rejecting the closed categories that determine the minority status of a particular group and that, in turn, impede active, engaged citizenship, An-na'im draws attention to the relational nature of identity, emphasizing a common base of national membership and advancing a legal approach to a public recognition of a person's status as citizen. Rather than perceive themselves or accept being perceived by others as a monolithic minority, he argues, American Muslims should view themselves as American citizens who happen to be Muslims. As American citizens, they share a vast array of identities with other American citizens, whether ethnic, political, or socio-economic. But none of these identities qualify or limit their citizenship. An-na'im urges members of the American Muslim community to take a proactive, affirmative view of their citizenship in order to realize their rights fully and fulfill their obligations in social and cultural as well as political and legal terms. He shows that the freedom to associate with others in order to engage in civic action to advance rights and interests is integral to the underlying rationale of citizenship and not something that must be relinquished to become an American citizen. *What Is an American Muslim?* provides acute insight into the nature of citizenship and identity, the place of religious affiliation in American society, and what it means to share in a collective identity.

In the tenth century Shi'a scholars assembled accounts of twelve imams' lives, portraying them as miracle workers who were betrayed. These biographies invoked shared cultural memories, shaped communal responses and ritual practices of mourning, and inspired Shi'a identity and religious imagination for centuries to come, Matthew Pierce shows.

While most studies of Shi'i Islam have focused upon Iran or the Middle East, South Asia is another global region which is home to a large and influential Shi'i population. This edited volume establishes the importance of the Indian subcontinent, which has been profoundly shaped by Shi'i cultures, regimes and populations throughout its history, for the study of Shi'i Islam in the modern world. The essays within this volume, all written by leading scholars of the field, explore various Shi'i communities (both Isna 'Ashari and Isma'ili) in parts of the subcontinent as diverse as Karachi, Lucknow, Bombay and Hyderabad, as well as South Asian Shi'i diasporas in East Africa. Drawing from a range of disciplinary perspectives including history, religious studies, anthropology and political science, they examine a range of themes relating to Shi'i belief, practice, piety and belonging, as well as relations between Shi'i and non-Shi'i communities.

Printbegrænsninger: Der kan printes 10 sider ad gangen og max. 40 sider pr. session

""Explores various Shi'i communities across South Asia, revealing the many forms of Shi'i religion within this important region, and examining the responses of these communities to the many transformations of the modern world"--Provided by publisher"--

Annotation By providing a new framework for understanding Shi'ite national politics in Lebanon, Roschanack Shaery-Eisenlohr recasts the relationship between religion and nationalism in the Middle East.

During the formative period of Islam, in the first centuries after Muhammad's death, two particular intellectual traditions emerged, Sunnism and Shi'ism. Sunni Muslims endorsed the historical caliphate, while Shi'i Muslims, supporters of 'Ali, cousin of the Prophet and the fourth caliph, articulated their own distinctive doctrines. The Sunni-Shi'i schism is often framed as a dispute over the identity of the successor to Muhammad, whereas in reality, Sunni and Shi'i Muslims also differ on a number of seminal theological doctrines concerning the nature of God and legitimate political and religious authority. This book examines the development of Shi'i Islam through the lenses of belief, narrative, and memory. It also covers a wide range of Shi'i communities from the demographically predominant Twelvers to the transnational Isma'ilis to the scholar-activist Zaydis. The portrait of Shi'ism that emerges is that of a distinctive and vibrant community of Muslims with a remarkable capacity for reinvention and adaptation, grounded in a unique theological interpretation of Islam.

This concise reference covers the diverse roots of Arabs in America, tracing the changing face of this community from the 19th century until today. • Helps readers to understand the history, struggles, and contributions of Arab Americans • Explores the history of Arab Americans through easy-to-read, chronologically arranged narrative chapters • Provides readers with a religious overview—Orthodox Christianity, Shia, and Sunni Islam • Includes profiles of famous Arab Americans • Features primary source documents

During the formative period of Islam, in the first centuries after Muhammad's death, two particular intellectual traditions emerged, Sunnism and Shi'ism. Sunni Muslims endorsed the historical caliphate, while Shi'i Muslims, supporters of 'Ali, cousin of the Prophet and the fourth caliph, articulated their own distinctive doctrines. The Sunni-Shi'i schism is often framed as a dispute over the identity of the successor to Muhammad, whereas in reality, Sunni and Shi'i Muslims also differ on a number of seminal theological doctrines concerning the nature of God and legitimate political and religious authority. This book examines the development of Shi'i Islam through the lenses of belief, narrative, and memory. It also covers a wide range of Shi'i communities from the demographically predominant Twelvers to the transnational Isma'ilis to the scholar-activist Zaydis. The portrait of Shi'ism that emerges is that of a distinctive and vibrant community of Muslims with a remarkable capacity for reinvention and adaptation, grounded in a unique theological interpretation of Islam.

One of the most important current debates within and about Islam concerns its relation with power. Can Muslims be fundamentally content without power or as a minority? This book considers the voice of an important Muslim minority through its sermons. Indian Shi'i Muslims are a minority within a minority, constituting about ten to fifteen percent of the population as a whole, but comprising of about fifteen million people. Ten sermons are presented entirely and many more are quoted in order to analyze the preaching tradition in full. This book is the first survey to present the Indian mourning gathering and explain the history of this extraordinary phenomenon.

Abstract: This article analyzes the ways in which the Ummah or Islamic community is affected by division and internal conflicts, taking as

main example the case of Syria's conflicts. The research is based on the combination of two theoretical approaches: the Islamic religion's interpretations from ancient times to the contemporary world, and the analysis of civil wars taking place in the Middle East. The main research question concerns the role of domestic and external factors in shaping the violent civil conflicts in Syria and Yemen. Currently, the Islamic world is affected by civil wars, episodes of state collapse, insurgency and terrorist activity. With the constant involvement of foreign non-Islamic powers (USA, Russia, etc.) and regional Islamic powers (Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Iran) and the divisive line between Sunni and Shia Islam, the Ummah does not have any chance, on the short and medium term, to become a unified and coherent community. Civil wars create durable psychological and mat

Friedman offers new and updated research on the Nusayr - Alaw sect, today a leading group in Syria, covering a variety of aspects and focusing on the Middle Ages. A century after Dussaud's "Histoire et religion des Nusair s" (1900), he reviews the history and religion of the sect in the light of old documents used by orientalists in the nineteenth century, documents that became available in the twentieth century, and later sources of the Nu ayr - Alaw sect published most recently in Lebanon. Also studied in depth for the first time is the question of the identity of the sect through the Alaw -Sunn -Sh triangle.

This collection seeks to advance our understanding of intra-Islamic identity conflict during a period of upheaval in the Middle East. Instead of treating distinctions between and within Sunni and Shia Islam as primordial and immutable, it examines how political economy, geopolitics, domestic governance, social media, non- and sub-state groups, and clerical elites have affected the transformation and diffusion of sectarian identities. Particular attention is paid to how conflicts over distribution of political and economic power have taken on a sectarian quality, and how a variety of actors have instrumentalized sectarianism. The volume, covering Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf, Iran, and Egypt, includes contributors from a broad array of disciplines including political science, history, sociology, and Islamic studies. Beyond Sunni and Shia draws on extensive fieldwork and primary sources to offer insights that are empirically rich and theoretically grounded, but also accessible for policy audiences and the informed public.

The Kh?j? of Tanzania, Discontinuities of a Postcolonial Religious Identity is a multidisciplinary diachronic study of the historical development of Kh?j? religious identity in Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam over two centuries, from an Indic Hindu-Muslim caste (jñ?ti) to an Afro-Asian Muslim community (jam?t?) towards a Near Eastern imaged Islamic nation (ummat?).

Taking a theologically oriented method for engaging with historical and cultural phenomena, this book explores the challenge, offered by revolutionary Shi'i theology in Iran, to Western conventions on theology, revolution and religion's role in the creation of identity. Offering a stringent critique of current literature on political Islam and on Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution, the author suggests that current literature fails to perceive and engage with the revolution and its thought as religious phenomena. Grounded in the experience of unconditional faith in God, Shi'i thinkers recognize a distinction between the human and the divine. Concerned with the challenge of constructing a virtuous society, these thinkers pose a model of authority and morality based on mediation, interpretation and participation in the experience of faith. Ori Goldberg considers this interpretative model utilizing a broad array of theoretical tools, most notably critical theologies drawn from Jewish and Christian thought. He draws on a close reading of several texts written by prominent Iranian Shi'i thinkers between 1940 and 2000, most of which are translated into English for the first time, to reveal a vibrant, complex discourse. Presenting a new interfaith perspective on a subject usually considered beyond the scope of such research, this book will be an important reference for scholars of Iranian studies, political Islam, theology and cultural studies.

The Alevi constitute the second largest religious community in Turkey (following the Sunnis), and number some 25% (15 million) of the total population (Alevi claim 30%-40%!). Most Alevi are ethnic and linguistic Turks, mainly of Turkmen descent from Central and Eastern Anatolia. Some 20% of Alevi are Kurds (though most Kurds are Sunnis), and some 25% of Kurds in Turkey are Alevi (Kurmanji and Zaza speakers). Alevi consider themselves to be part of the wider Shi'a movement, who revere Ali (Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law) and the Twelve Imams of his house. Like all extreme Shia, their reverence for Ali verges on deification, for which reason classical Sunni ulama classified them as ghulat (exaggerators), outside the orthodox Islamic fold.

The return of Ayatollah Khomeyni to power and the installation of a Shi'i theocracy in Iran in 1979 brought the revolutionary aspects of Shi'ite Islam to the Western centre stage. Fuelled by pictures of bloodshed and atrocities, images of violence linked to Shia states have left their mark on Western perceptions. Shi'ism has today become synonymous with militancy and violence - Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad, hostage taking... Yet, the media has taken merely one aspect of this important phenomenon: namely a contemporary Shi'ism firmly anchored in militancy. Yann Richard's careful narrative counters naive explanation, offering both a portrait of the spiritual and mystical faith which explains the deep history and mythology of Shi'ism up to the present. Islam is no more an Arab religion than Christianity is a uniquely Western religion - not confined to the Arab world, the largest number of Muslims today are found in Asia, Indonesia, and the Indo-Pakistan peninsula, whilst the Iranian nation today represents the great centre of Shi'ite Islam. Not only does the narrative chart the spread of Shi'ite influence over the Imanite communities, it uncovers the fundamental beliefs of Shi'ite identity on which a polity has been built. Richard examines both the development of Shi'i as theology and as a cultural history. This book will stand the test of time to become a seminal text in Middle Eastern history and the study of world religions.

Analyzes the interaction of politics and religion in the Middle East as demonstrated by Egypt, Israel, Turkey, and Iran, focusing on how each addresses key identity, ideological, institutional, and political challenges while considering whether religion is an obstacle or aid to politics in each region. Original.

"The New Sectarianism considers the causes for growing Sunni-Shi'a animosity in countries such as Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Iran, and Saudi Arabia. It illustrates how the two groups perceive one another after the Arab uprisings, how these perceptions have affected Arab life, and how these contestations pose a serious threat to the stability of regional states and to stakeholders in the wider world"--

A narrative history of the origins of the Shia and Sunni conflict describes how a seventh-century struggle between the supporters of the late Muhammad's surviving family members erupted in a massacre at Karbala that would become a central component of Shia Islam.

From the Civil War in Lebanon to the Iranian Revolution of 1978-79, from the dismantling of the Ba'athist regime in Iraq to the virtual splintering of the country; and from the chaos in Afghanistan to the victimisation of the Hazaras by the Taliban. Shi'i communities around the world have suffered from wars, revolutions and hostility. These problems, in different ways, have all involved a configuration of complicated events, a heritage of historical factors and international power politics that defy simplistic explanations. Here, Lloyd Ridgeon brings together an investigation of the nature of contemporary Shi'ism. He and his collaborators here focus on the creation of identities- showing the diversity of thought within the Shi'i world. They demonstrate the transnational nature of Shi'i networks and the forces of tradition and modernity influencing current developments in Shi'i identity both in the Middle East and in the West. This volume looks at both the attempts of authorities to construct a cohesive Shi'i identity (by using, for example, Iranian school books as an indicator of sanctioned

facets of what it means to be Iranian) as well as the ways in which identity is created and developed by minority groups in the Diaspora. It also offers an analysis of the Hazaras of Afghanistan- so often overlooked when attempts to understand Afghanistan are made. It is this ethnic minority, which was so marginalised and victimised under the Taliban that offers an example of the trend of the rise of Islamism amongst the Shi'a. Moreover, by looking further afield to the Shi'a of Senegal, and asking the question of whether the Alevi of Turkey comprise part of the global Shi'i community, this book emphasizes the ways in which traditional patterns of social organisation are being transformed. Shi'i Islam and Identity highlights these global networks, and shows that it is inaccurate to speak of a 'Shi'i Crescent'; rather, Shi'i worlds range from Senegal, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Lebanon, Iran and Iraq, to Turkey, Albania and to European capitals such as London and Berlin. This book is thus of interest to those looking at modern religion and its contemporary forms, as well as those researching Shi'ism more specifically.

Shi'i Islam, with its rich and extensive history, has played a crucial role in the evolution of Islam as both a major world religion and civilization. The prolific achievements of Shi'i theologians, philosophers and others are testament to the spiritual and intellectual wealth of this community. Yet Shi'i studies has unjustly remained a long-neglected field, despite the important contribution that Shi'ism has made to Islamic traditions. Only in recent decades, partially spurred by global interest in political events of the Middle East, have scholars made some significant contributions in this area. The Study of Shi'i Islam presents papers originally delivered at the first international colloquium dedicated exclusively to Shi'i studies, held in 2010 at The Institute of Ismaili Studies, London. Within the book are eight sections, namely, history, the Qur'an and its Shi'i interpretations, hadith, law, authority, theology, rites and rituals, and intellectual traditions and philosophy. Each section begins with an introduction contextualizing the aspects of studying Shi'i Islam particular to its theme, before going on to address topics such as the state of the field, methodology and tools, and the primary issues with which contemporary scholars of Shi'i studies are dealing. The scope and depth here covered makes this book of especial interest to researchers and students alike within the field of Islamic studies. The volume benefits from the diverse expertise of nearly 30 world-class scholars, including Mohammad-Ali Amir-Moezzi, Meir M. Bar-Asher, Farhad Daftary, Daniel De Smet, Gerald R. Hawting, Nader El-Bizri, Etan Kohlberg, Wilferd Madelung, Andrew Newman, Ismail K. Poonawala, Sabine Schmidtke and Paul E. Walker.

In this enlightening study Mark Bradley looks at the growing underground church in Iran. Given the hostility of the regime, it is often assumed that Christianity is withering in Iran, but in fact more Iranian Muslims have become Christians in the last 25 years than since the seventh century, when Islam first came to Iran. Beginning with an in-depth look at the historical identity of Iran, religiously, culturally and politically, Bradley shows how this identity makes Iranians inclined towards Christianity. He goes on to look at the impact of the 1979 revolution, an event which has brought war, economic chaos and totalitarianism to Iran, and its implications for Iranian faith. The study concludes with an analysis of church growth since 1979 and an examination of the emerging underground church. This is a fascinating work, guaranteed to improve any reader's knowledge of not only Iranian faith and church growth, but of Iranian culture and history as a whole thanks to the thorough treatment given to the country's background.

This book argues that ever since Iran's Islamic Revolution in 1979, which established a Shia Islamic government in Iran, that country's religious and political leaders, have used Shia Islam as a crucial way of expanding Iran's objectives in the Middle East and beyond. Since 1979, Iran's religious and political leaders have been concerned about Iran's security in the face of the hostility and expansionism of the United States and other western countries, and the threats from powerful neighboring Sunni leaders and countries. While Iran's government has attempted to align itself with Shia Muslims in various countries, such as Iraq and Lebanon, against American and Sunni expansionism, the Iranian government has attempted to religiously nourish and politically mobilize those Shias as a matter of principle, not only because of the Iranian government's desires to protect Iran from external threats. The book analyzes Shia Islam and politics in Iraq, Iraq, and Lebanon which have among the largest proportional Shia populations in the Middle East and are vibrant centers of Shia intellectual life. The book's clear and jargon-free approach make it especially accessible for students and general readers who would like an introduction to the book's topics.

The history of Iran is a long, rich, multi-layered one. Iran was once known as Persia and was devoted to an ancient religion known as Zoroastrianism. The Persian people converted to Islam following the Arab conquest. Persia contributed as much to Islam as it received. Indeed, it eventually developed along a separate path from most Arab Muslims, as it adopted the Shia branch of the faith. Though the Shia would always be a minority within Islam, the Shia would nevertheless develop a complex and powerful faith, and Persia would experience several periods as a mighty and sophisticated empire. In the modern age, Iran came to be ruled by secular shahs, or kings, who tried to remove religion from the public sphere. Yet with the overthrow of the last Shah in 1979, Iran became a Shia state, ruled by conservative religious clerics. It has since come to occupy a central role in Middle Eastern and world affairs, and its Shia government exerts a tight grip on its citizens and their lives. This book introduces readers to the vast sweep of Iranian history and religion. Shi'ism and Iran cannot be separated—they are so tightly entwined. The role Iran comes to play in world affairs in the 21st century will have everything to do with religion and its government's use of it. The consequences for the Middle East and the world at large could be dramatic.

A New York Times Bestseller "Historically incisive, geographically broad-reaching, and brimming with illuminating anecdotes."—Max Rodenbeck, New York Review of Books Iranian-born scholar Vali Nasr has become one of America's leading commentators on current events in the Middle East, admired and welcomed by both media and government for his "concise and coherent" analysis (Wall Street Journal, front-page profile). In this "remarkable work" (Anderson Cooper), Nasr brilliantly dissects the political and theological antagonisms within Islam, providing a unique and objective understanding of the 1,400-year bitter struggle between Shias and Sunnis and shedding crucial light on its modern-day

consequences.

[Copyright: 0284dd90aa2b3635e32b8f49c4b57bc4](#)