



Religious Authority and Political Thought in Twelver Shi'ism: From Ali to Post-Khomeini

Hamid Mavani

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Ranging from the time of the infallible Imams, to the contemporary era, this book provides a comprehensive overview of Shi'i religious and political authority, focusing on Iran and Lebanon, without limiting the discourse to Khomeini's version of an Islamic State.

Utilising untapped Arabic and Persian sources, Hamid Mavani provides a detailed, nuanced, and diverse theoretical discussion on the doctrine of leadership (*Imamate*) in Shi'ism from traditional, theological, philosophical, and mystical perspectives. This theoretical discussion becomes the foundation for an analysis of the transmission of the Twelfth Imam's religious and political authority vis-à-vis the jurists during his Greater Occultation.

Bringing the often overlooked diversity within the Shi'i tradition into sharp focus, *Religious Authority and Political Thought in Twelver Shi'ism* discusses what constitutes an Islamic state, if there is such a notion as an *Islamic* state. Hamid Mavani further explores the possibility of creating a space for secularity, facilitating a separation between religion and state, and ensuring equal rights for all. This book argues that such a development is only possible if there is a rehabilitation of *ijtihad*. If this were to materialise modern religious, social, economic, political, and cultural challenges could be addressed more successfully. This book will be of use to scholars and students with interests ranging from Politics, to Religion, to Middle East Studies.

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