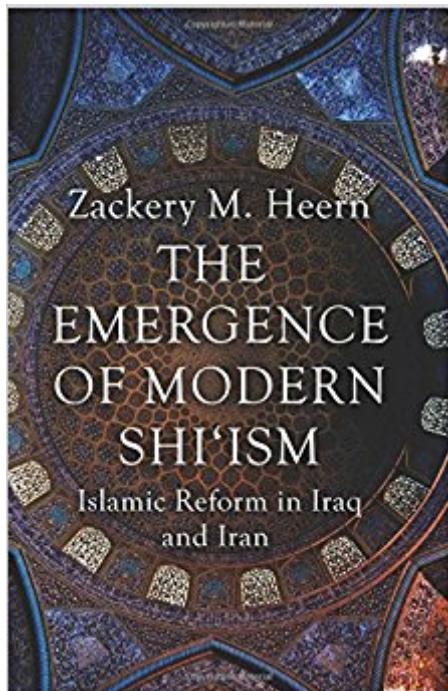


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The Emergence Of Modern Shi'ism: Islamic Reform In Iraq And Iran



Synopsis

Scholars often locate the origins of the modern Islamic world in European colonialism or Islamic reactions to European modernity. The Emergence of Modern Shi'ism focuses instead on the rise of Islamic movements indigenous to the Middle East, which developed in direct response to the collapse and decentralization of the so-called Islamic gunpowder empires. In other words, new Shi'i, Sunni, and Sufi movements emerged as the Safavid, Ottoman, and Mughal empires decentralized and disintegrated. Professor Heern specifically highlights the emergence of modern Usuli Shi'ism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Therefore, this book outlines the historical background and ideological roots of the most powerful movement in modern Shi'i history. The long-term impact of the Usuli revival was that Shi'i scholars gained unprecedented social, political, and economic power in Iran and southern Iraq. Usuli clerics claimed authority to issue binding legal judgments, which, they argued, must be observed by all Shi'is. By the early nineteenth century, Usulism became a popular, fiercely independent, transnational Islamic movement. Usuli clerics continue to operate at the heart of social and political developments in contemporary Iraq and Iran. Thought provoking and challenging, this book examines the foundations of modern Islam, and provides fascinating insight into the region's religious and political developments both past and present.

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