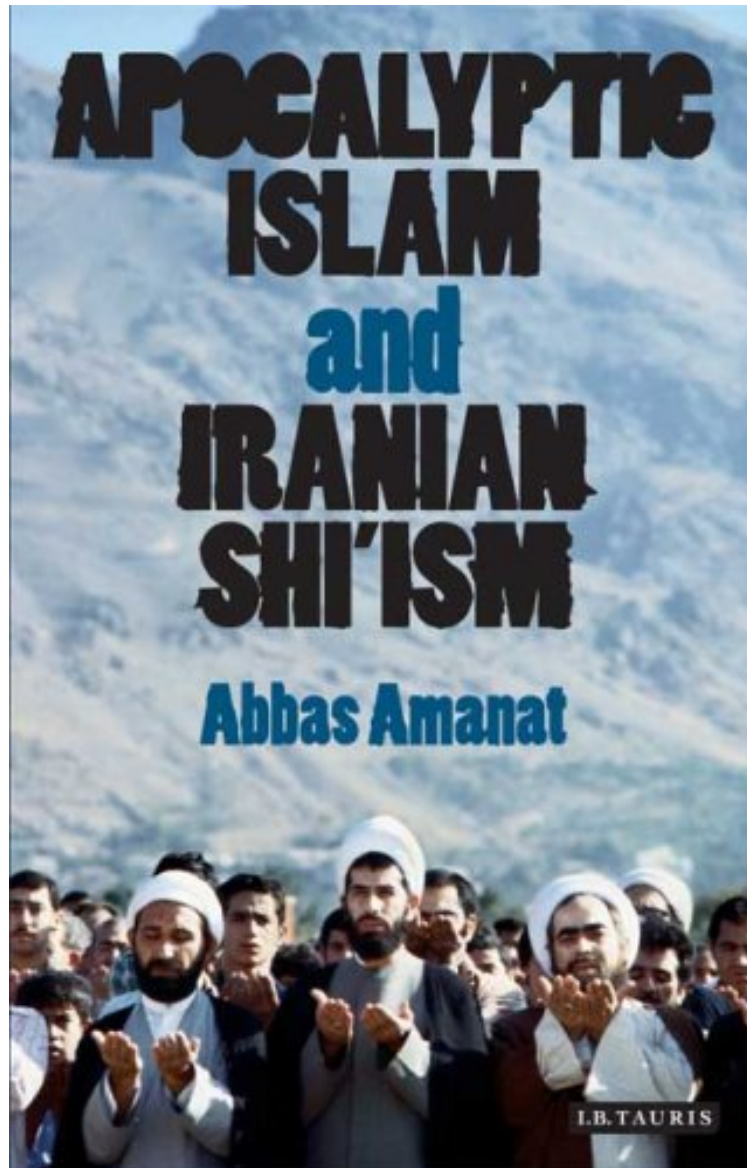


[FREE] Apocalyptic Islam and Iranian Shi'ism (Library of Modern Religion)

Apocalyptic Islam and Iranian Shi'ism (Library of Modern Religion)

Abbas Amanat

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#1223562 in Books I. B. Tauris 2009-03-15 2009-03-31 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.58 x .89 x 5.491, .85 #File Name: 1845119819304 pages | File size: 39.Mb

Abbas Amanat : Apocalyptic Islam and Iranian Shi'ism (Library of Modern Religion) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Apocalyptic Islam and Iranian Shi'ism (Library of Modern Religion):

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Worth considering By Kirk H Sowell Abbas Amanat's "Apocalyptic Islam and Iranian Shi'ism" is worth buying if you have a strong interest in Iranian apocalyptic or Islamic apocalyptic more broadly, as there aren't many books out there which provide significant background on the issue. I might also recommend it for those who simply have a strong interest in Iranian history, as this book covers some aspects of it otherwise brushed over. I would not recommend it for anyone looking for an interesting or coherent book to read on Iran or Shia Islam. I found the chapters to vary in quality; some are quite good, others I'm not so sure. As Amanat explains in his preface, the articles were written for various purposes over 20 years, so part of the lack of coherence is inherent. Several of the articles also reflect an unfortunate tendency among some academics to present a subject matter through their own ideological lenses. The chapters dealing with contemporary Iran focus too much on explaining Iranian apocalyptic politics as a secularist liberal from Yale would view the subject, which undermines the author's credibility. There are also several digressions to criticize U.S. foreign policy which bear no relevance to the subject matter. The best chapters, I thought, were these: chapter two on "The Resurgence of Apocalyptic in Modern Islam" (a broad survey), chapter three on the Nuqtavi movement, chapter four on "Meadow of the Martyrs" (dealing with a seminal piece of Shia literature from the Timurid period) and chapter five on the Babi movement. I also thought chapters seven and eight were useful for tracing the historical development of Shia clerical authority, although this material is not specific to apocalyptic issues and is well covered in other texts. I suggest Litvak's "Shi'i Scholars in 19th Century Iraq" and Nakash's "The Shi'is of Iraq" in this regard (you may want to see my reviews on those).

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great By zach Fascinating collection of articles

0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Not Easy Book to Read By M. H. Farzin The information content of the book is good, but reading was a real problem. Not an easy reading at all. I finally did finish reading it all, but it took many days, and reading each page several times to follow-up what Mr. Amanat is trying to say. I have heard Mr. Amanat on VOA TV, and he comes across very understandable and informed when he is speaking Farsi, but this book (in English) has not been written for an average, or even above average, person.

Interest in Shi'i Islam is running at unprecedented levels. International tensions over Iran, where the largest number of Shi'i Muslims live, as well as the political resurgence of the Shi'i in Iraq and Lebanon, have created an urgent need to understand the background, beliefs and motivations of this dynamic vision of Islam. Abbas Amanat is one of the leading scholars of Shi'ism. And in this powerful book, a showcase for some of his most influential writing in the field, he addresses the colorful and diverse history of Shi' Islam in both premodern and contemporary times. Focusing specifically on the importance of apocalypticism in the development of modern Shi'i theology, he shows how an immersion in messianic ideas has shaped the conservative character of much Shi'i thinking, and has prevented it from taking a more progressive course. Tracing the continuity of apocalyptic trends from the Middle Ages to the present, Amanat addresses such topics as the early influence on Shi'ism of Zoroastrianism; manifestations of apocalyptic ideology during the Iranian Revolution of 1979; and the rise of the Shi'i clerical establishment during the 19th and 20th centuries. His book will be an essential resource for students and scholars of both religious studies and Middle Eastern history.

"In a brief but masterful compression of insights Amanat reviews the dynamics of apocalyptic histories. On the positive side the anticipation of imminent divine judgment can be translated into a message of social justice, with individual choice replacing dogmas handed down by ancestors, tribes, or communities. Unlike many academics, Amanat is willing to venture into regions outside his specialty of Iranian studies, which makes his book particularly valuable, as it is informed by the knowledge all too rare among Islamicists that Islam is one variant in a cluster of religions rather than a subject to be treated on its own. Messianic expectations are fundamental to all the West Asian religions, articulating forces that are both dynamic and dangerous. Although these symbols, such as the Jamkaran shrine, are specific to Shiism, their appeal not to mention their mobilizing power is universal. As Amanat points out, apocalyptic movements have been motors of religious change throughout history." --Malise Rathuven, The New York of Books