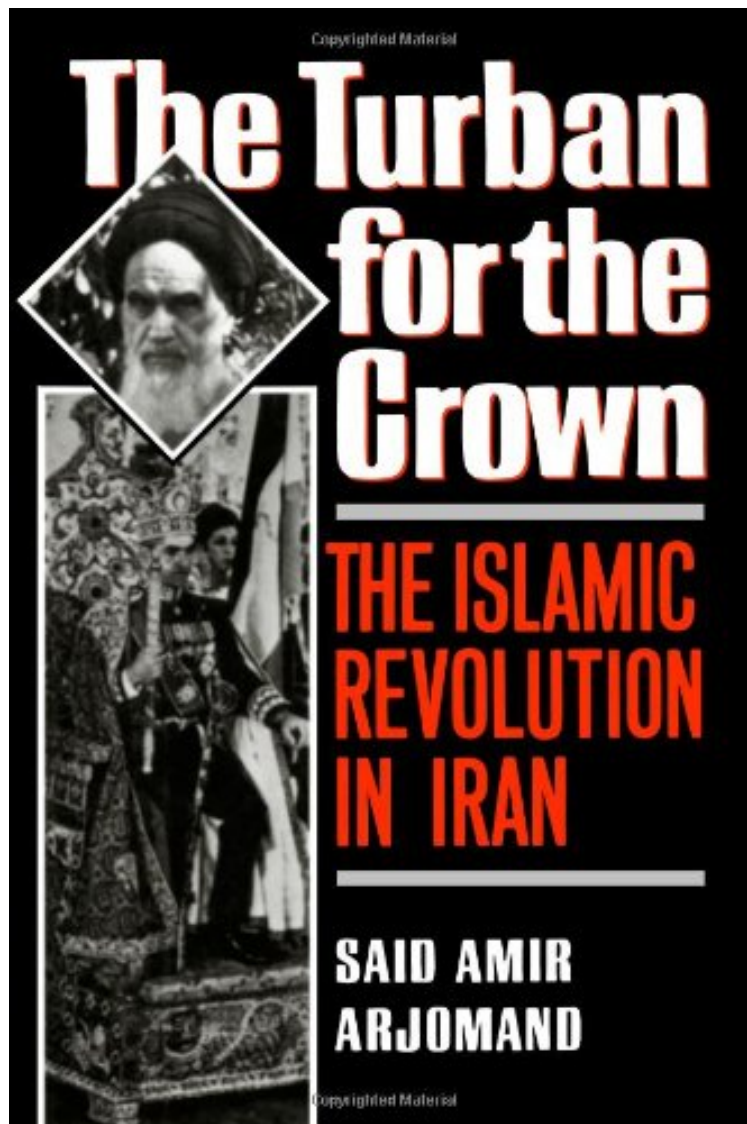


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## The Turban for the Crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran (Studies in Middle Eastern History)

*Said Amir Arjomand*

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49.Mb

**Said Amir Arjomand : The Turban for the Crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran (Studies in Middle Eastern History)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Turban for the Crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran (Studies in Middle Eastern History):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. UnremarkableBy HHSaid Arjomand may overestimate the historic significance of the Iranian Revolution. He ranks it with 1789 and 1917, both in its impact on the world and in its durability. However, he has written, with knowledge and wisdom on how the "hierocracy" of clerics built and consolidated its power through a revolutionary transformation of traditional Shi'ism as well as of the structure of the state. "The Turban for the Crown" is a somewhat insightful book.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Robert D. Saczkowski great book0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. InformativeBy lialexgma Very helpful in understanding Islam, differences, history of the region.

The Iranian revolution still baffles most Western observers. Few considered the rise of theocracy in a modernized state possible, and fewer thought it might result from a popular revolution. Said Amir Arjomand's *The Turban for the Crown* provides a thoughtful, painstakingly researched, and intelligible account of the turmoil in Iran which reveals the importance of this singular event for our understanding of revolutions. Providing crucial historical background, Arjomand examines both the structure of authority in Shi'ism (one of the two main branches of Islam) and the impact of the modern state on Iranian society, two factors essential to the comprehension of the revolution of 1979. He then describes the emergence of Khomeini; the infusion of petrodollars into the economy; the blatant political corruption; and Khomeini's disposal of Bakhtiar, Bani-Sadr, and Bazargan, consolidation of religious rule, and establishment of a constitution based on a new interpretation of Islamic principles.

From *Library Journal* Sociologist Arjomand (SUNY, Stony Brook) explains the social and political eruption in Iran in 1979 and its far-ranging implications. He argues that Iran's tradition is closely tied to Shi'ite Islam, which emphasizes legitimacy of political authority and succession. As secular control of Iran increased during the 20th century, competition emerged between the Shi'ite hierocracy and the Shah. As the Shah accumulated power in an attempt to counter the control of religious forces, authority became personified. Hence, with the departure of the Shah from Iran, the internal state structure disintegrated and was replaced by revolutionary religious elements. (Key to the author's argument were the close ties between the Shah and the United States.) Munson, an anthropologist (University of Maine) studies the relationship of Islam to revolution in the context of comparative religion, examining the term "fundamentalist" as it applies to Islam and Christianity. He provides an excellent comparison and analysis of the two major branches of Islam. Munson's primary objective is to determine why an Islamic-based revolution has occurred only in Iran, not elsewhere in the Arab world. He thus looks at the role of Islam in the political structure of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Syria. He points out that the Iranian revolution was the result of a strong sense of nationalism, anxiety over religious tradition, and belief in the evil nature of foreign control, bound to the symbol of the Shah's dependence on the United States. The thread of Islam and its role in creating a revolutionary environment in the Middle East is carried forth in the work by Taylor (American University), a specialist in Middle Eastern politics and international relations. Taylor looks at the modern phenomenon of secular nationalism as a Western invention superimposed or injected into the Middle East and met by the apolitical tradition of Islam with its own brand of religiously based order and authority. Nationalism took hold in Turkey and Iran and was a prominent force in the Arab world, as the demise of the Ottoman Empire occurred simultaneously with the growth of anticolonial sentiment. Taylor also describes Islam, its development as a religious movement, and its ideology. He focuses on the cultural conflict between Western secularism and Islamic humanism, profiling the revolution in Iran as a result of that conflict. All three books integrate well the themes of Islam and revolutionary politics and present an authoritative menu for understanding the contemporary Arab world and Islam. They are highly recommended for a wide audience including specialists and students. Sanford R. Silverburg, Catawba Coll., Salisbury, N.C. Copyright 1988 Reed Business Information, Inc. "Sheds light not only on the events themselves but also on the idea of revolution itself and its meaning within the modern context....An informative book, one which will repay careful study on the part of anyone who is not satisfied with simplistic answers to the emergence and development of the Islamic Republic of Iran."--*Journal of the American Academy of Religion* "An intelligent and important book, and I find his chapter on the Iranian revolution in comparative perspective breathtaking."--*American Historical* "Excellent. Surely one of the best accounts, in terms of its comprehensiveness and lucidity, of the Iranian rebellion."--Randall Ponwells, University of Central Arkansas "Provides a wealth of background on Islam and the history of Iran that helps put the past decade in perspective....A thought-provoking work and a major contribution to serious scholarship on Iran, modern revolutions, and the role of religion in contemporary politics."--Robin Wright, *The New York Times Book* "Integrate[s] well the themes of Islam and revolutionary politics and present[s] an authoritative menu for understanding the contemporary Arab world and Islam."--*Library Journal* "Presents the Iranian revolution in a context. The players in that drama may be no more lovable after you read this book, but they will be much more comprehensible."--*The Chicago Tribune* "Not only exciting history but a splendid explanation of a complex and intricate story."--*The Newark Star Ledger* "An authoritative and insightful analysis of the Iranian scene, which will be helpful in the years ahead to Iran-watchers who will be asking whether a workable relationship is possible between technical modernization and traditional Shi'ite values."--Cyril E. Black "An authoritative and insightful analysis of the Iranian scene."--Cyril E. Black "Interesting and

insightful...thought-provoking....Arjomand's research is impressive, his style elegant...and his hypothesis on the significance of religion in revolutions suggests an important line of inquiry and future research, especially in comparative studies of revolution."--Val Moghadam, Center for Iranian Research and Analysis Newsletter

From the Back Cover

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