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BOOK REVIEWS

The Shadow of God and the Hidden Imam: Religion, Political Order and Societal Change in Shi'ite Iran From the Beginning to 1890. By SAID A. ARJOMAND. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984. Pp. xii + 356. Notes, references, index. \$28.00.

The question of the historical nature of the political attitudes and activities of the Shi'i clergy (*'ulema*) has commanded the attention of Western-language scholars in Iranian and Shi'i studies for more than twenty years. Arjomand is the first, however, to offer a broad, monograph-length discussion of the issue.

Arjomand argues Shi'i *'ulema* historically have devalued secular political activity, ceded the realm of the mundane to secular, usually absolutist rulers, and thus never seriously challenged the political status quo. Real fulfillment remained an "otherworldly" affair. Acceptance of temporal political authority blended nicely with pre-Islamic Iranian notions of absolutist kingship when Shi'ism was established by the Safavid dynasty as Iran's state religion in the sixteenth-century. Khumayni's activist role represents a deviation from this tendency.

Arjomand attempts to prove this thesis through a combination of historical references and Weberian sociology. In a work on religion, however, a greater number of religious works might usefully have been systematically examined. This is especially true for Arjomand's discussion of Safavid Iran. His characterization of religious developments in this important period too often depends on accounts produced by contemporary European travelers (pp. 150-51, 194-95, 200-01), Persian-language court chronicles and religious tracts, and later primary and secondary sources. Arabic remained the primary language of clerical expression in this period, and Shi'i clerics now produced a vast body of Arabic-language material. Much of this work has been published or is accessible in manuscript form; nearly all of it has yet to be examined, let alone noticed, by Arjomand and others.

A key element of Arjomand's explanation for the religious developments in the Safavid period is the conflict which supposedly developed between Arab immigrants—though less than a hundred immigrated over two hundred years—and native Iranian notables. However, in the sixteenth century two Arab clerics allied with native Iranians against another

Arab's legal rulings and close association with the court. Rather than research the points of dispute or examine the biographical literature for a better explanation, Arjomand maintains that one of the two was "insincere" and the other "inconsistent." (pp. 134-36) Native Iranians also supposedly responded to the immigrants by developing an anti-rationalist polemic. Yet, al-Amili, a Syrian immigrant, was a leading anti-rationalist of the period (pp. 145, 302n30); the main proponent of the polemic was an Iranian who felt constrained to spend most of his life in Arab territories (p. 145). One prominent Syrian, Zayn al-Din, in fact never immigrated to Iran as Arjomand states (p. 302n30).

Adherence to an elaborate Weberian argument seems to have precluded research in relevant primary sources. With such a vast amount of the primary literature as yet unstudied by scholars of Shi'i doctrine and history, it seems premature for Arjomand to conclude, for example, that Shi'i doctrine was "fully systematized" by the Safavid period (pp. 5, 21), or that no "systematic public law" has been espoused by Shi'i clerics. (p. 10)

Arjomand's argument is novel and interesting. Moreover, his work both neatly delineates important issues involved in discussing the nature of the political attitudes of the clergy in Shi'i and Iranian history, and outlines the positions of previous scholars on the question. Clearly, however, only much more research in the primary sources will determine the validity of Arjomand's own response to a question which has preoccupied scholars for many years.

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Our Mark Twain: The Making of His Public Personality. By LOUIS J. BUDD. Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983. PP. xv + 266. Introduction, bibliography, index.

For every centennial an amplitude of books descends upon the American public about the famous personality involved. The centennial of Huck Finn and his creator is no different, and already countless books have been published about the famous American writer and personality. The obvious question would be, why do we need yet another book on Mark Twain?

The answer is because no one has written a more ambitious or erudite work on Mark Twain than Louis J. Budd, the author of *Our Mark Twain: The Making of His Public Personality*. Budd, who is professor of English