Table of Contents

Genealogical Tables and Lists  xiii
Preface xv
Note on Transliteration and Dates xvii
Abbreviations xix

1. Introduction: Progress in the Study of Shi’i Islam 1
   Diversity in early Islam 3
   Medieval Sunni perceptions 5
   Medieval European perceptions 7
   Orientalist perspectives 16
   Modern scholarship on Shi’i Islam 18

2. The Origins and Early History of Shi’i Islam 25
   Origins of Shi’ism 25
   The early Shi’a 29
   The Kaysaniyya 37
   The ghulat 40
   The early Imamiyya 43
   The Imami Shi’i doctrine of the imamate 53

3. The Ithna’asharis or Twelvers 57
   The later Twelver imams and the hidden Mahdi 58
   From the occultation of the twelfth imam to
   the Mongol invasions 67
   From Nasir al-Din al-Tusi to the advent of the Safawids 74
   From the Safawids to early modern times 81
   From around 1215/1800 to the present 89

4. The Ismailis 105
   The early Ismailis 106
   The Fatimid phase in Ismaili history 115
The Tayyibi Ismailis: The Yamani and Indian phases 125
The Nizari Ismailis: The Alamut phase 130
Later developments in Nizari Ismaili history 136
The Anjudan revival 138
The modern period 141

5. The Zaydis 145
   The early Zaydis 145
   The Zaydis of the Caspian region in Persia 151
   The Zaydis of Yaman 162

6. The Nusayris or ʿAlawis 175
   Nusayri studies 176
   History of the Nusayris 179
   The Nusayri-ʿAlawi doctrines 185

Glossary 191
Notes 211
Bibliography 249
Index 283
Genealogical Tables and Lists

2.1 The Hashimids and Early Shi‘i Imams 52
3.1 Imams of the Twelver Shi‘is 66
4.1 Fatimid Caliph-Imams (297–567/909–1171) 116
4.2 Nizari Ismaili Rulers at Alamut (483–654/1090–1256) 131
4.3 Nizari Ismaili Imams of Modern Times 142