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This superb article gives a vivid picture of the legal experts in modern Iran by analyzing academic careers and routine works of eminent ulama in 19th century Teheran. Their daily life included various social activities such as sermon, legal practice, education, and research as well as their association with the populace, officials, and men of estate. These activities assured the ulama of an enormous social influence. Also, their economic bases consisted of waqf endowments and ḥums as well as their private properties, and this secured them a relative independence from the state. Such socialities and economic autonomy, Kondo stresses, underpinned their powerful leadership in political movements such as the Tobacco Protest and the Constitutional Revolution. Moreover, the author presents a fresh interpretation of two key concepts concerning the ulama's academic career and legal practice: *ijtihād* and *riwāya*. According to Kondo, *ijtihād* at that time meant primarily a technical faculty to deduce rules from legal sources. To practice legal service, ulama at that time had to be socially considered as *mujtahed* and for this purpose they asked their masters, most of whom lived in Atabat, to write a certificate to prove their faculty to make *ijtihād*. As for *riwāya*, it served not only as authorizing the claimant to transmit *ḥadīṯ*, but also as showing the relationship with his masters. In other words, by receiving this license, he could situate
himself in the ulama community and eventually in the sequence of Islamic intellectual tradition.

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Thèmes : 4.2.1. Safavides et Qâjârs

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