

Ismailism and Islam in Modern South Asia

This book explores the evolution of a Shia Ismaili identity and crucial aspects of the historical forces that conditioned the development of the Muslim modern in late colonial South Asia. It reassesses the tortuous legal process that, since the 1860s, recast a Shia Imami identity for the Ismailis culminating with the installation of a line of successive living Imams, the Aga Khan(s), at the apex. It illustrates how, under the Imamate of Aga Khan III, the community virtually reinvented itself in the transregional western Indian Ocean and gradually in the global arena. This process reflects the complexities of heightened internationalist organizational activities that animated several of world's major religions since the late nineteenth century—an age of 'religious internationals', as this book posits. Marshalling a rich corpus of neglected primary sources, the book elaborates on questions such as the Aga's understanding of colonial modernity, his ideas of India, restructured modalities of community governance and the evolution of Imamate-sponsored institutions. It illuminates key strands in scholarship that characterized the development of the Muslim and Shia Ismaili modern, and above all, Muslim universality vis-à-vis denominational particularities that often transcended the confines of the modular nation and state structure. These are questions of crucial contemporary relevance that both inform the functioning of the present Imamate and forge what this book calls an 'Ismaili international'. The book will interest historians, students and scholars in related disciplines working on Islam in modern South Asia and its wider networks.

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**Ismailism and Islam in
Modern South Asia**
Community and Identity in the Age of
Religious Internationals

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Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-15408-7 — Ismailism and Islam in Modern South Asia
Soumen Mukherjee
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, vic 3207, Australia
4843/24, 2nd Floor, Ansari Road, Daryaganj, Delhi – 110002, India
79 Anson Road, #06–04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107154087

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First published 2017

Printed in India

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978-1-107-15408-7 Hardback

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Acknowledgements

The better part of the research that has graduated into this book was carried out during my stint as Research Fellow at the Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin, and was funded by Germany's Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). However, some of the questions explored here are traceable in part to my earlier works, albeit in significantly different forms. A teaching secondment at the Freie Universität in Berlin, and my subsequent appointment at the Presidency University in Kolkata substantially helped widening my academic horizons and, in the process, conditioned this evolution to no small extent.

Over the years a number of remarkable individuals—teachers and mentors, colleagues and friends, relatives and above all staff of the several institutions that I had to explore in search of primary sources—have provided support, critical insights, and encouragement. I would hasten to add though that their support of my academic quest need not be necessarily taken to mean their endorsing, or even sharing, the arguments made in this book. Likewise, all limitations and inadvertent errors that may have crept in are my own. I am grateful in particular to Gwilym Beckerlegge, Michel Boivin, Katrin Bromber, Bhaskar Chakrabarty, Subhas Ranjan Chakraborty, Kingshuk Chatterjee, Faisal Devji, Amit Dey, Gita Dharampal-Frick, Harald Fischer-Tiné, Monika Freier, Ulrike Freitag, Margret Frenz, Kashshaf Ghani, Rajarshi Ghose, Bernhard Gißibl, Nile Green, Thomas Gugler, Hans Harder, Justin Jones, Kai Kresse, Prabhat Kumar, Heike Liebau, Shireen Maswood, Sajal Nag, Ali Usman Qasmi, Mridu Rai, Dhruv Raina, Dietrich Reetz, Sajjad Alam Rizvi, Francis Robinson, Dietmar Rothermund, Shukla Sanyal, Torsten Tschacher, Hari Shankar Vasudevan, Theodore P. Wright Jr., and Benjamin Zachariah. In addition to the archivists and librarians of institutions listed under the section of the primary sources in the bibliography of this book, authorities and staff of the libraries of especially the Aga Khan Foundation (Geneva), Institute of Ismaili Studies (London), Ismaili Tariqah and Religious Education Board, India (Mumbai), the South Asia Institute of the University of Heidelberg, the Zentrum Moderner Orient, and the Freie Universität provided significant support. My sincere thanks to all of them. At the Cambridge University Press, I wish to thank the entire editorial team, and especially Qudsiya Ahmed, Suvadip Bhattacharjee, Jayati Das, Sohini Ghosh, Anwesha Rana, Anurupa Sen, the anonymous reviewers who read the chapters, and above all the Syndics and the competent authorities.

My extended family—the Banerjees and Gangulys in India and the Chatterjees in Switzerland—have been extremely supportive. Suranjana, my companion for over a

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decade, have stood by me through thick and thin. I do not have sufficient words to express my gratitude to her. Even as this book now comes out, I pause for a moment to reflect on a couple of reminiscences from my early childhood: memories of those first steps in the journey of my learning to read and write, and especially of those two individuals who would read with me the occasional nursery rhymes or help me hold a pencil. Neither of them, however, have lived long enough to see this book come out. It is to the memory of these two individuals, my parents, that I dedicate this book.

List of Abbreviations

AKA	Aga Khan Academies
AKAM	Aga Khan Agency for Microfinance
AKDN	Aga Khan Development Network
AKES	Aga Khan Educational Services
AKF	Aga Khan Foundation
AKFED	Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development
AKHCP	Aga Khan Historic Cities Programme
AKHS	Aga Khan Health Services
AKPBS	Aga Khan Planning and Building Services
AKRSP	Aga Khan Rural Support Programme
AKTC	Aga Khan Trust for Culture
CSASUC	Centre of South Asian Studies, University of Cambridge
EAMWS	East African Muslim Welfare Society
FBO	Faith-Based Organization
FOCUS	Focus Humanitarian Assistance
IIS	Institute of Ismaili Studies
IOR	India Office Records
ISA	Ideological State Apparatus
ITREB	Ismaili Tariqah and Religious Education Board
LG	Lloyd George Papers
LON	League of Nations
MD	Malcolm Darling
MEC	Muhammadan Educational Conference
MSA	Maharashtra State Archives
NAI	National Archives of India
NNI	Norwegian Nobel Institute
OUP	Oxford University Press
REC	Religious Education Centres
RNGO	Religious Non-Governmental Organization
STEP	Secondary Teacher Education Programme
UNAG	United Nations Archives at Geneva

Glossary

<i>Ajam</i>	the Persian cultural sphere; a person not born Arabian
<i>Allama</i>	an honorary title for highly regarded scholar of Islamic thought
<i>Anjuman</i>	community assembly
<i>Asabiyya</i>	group solidarity
<i>Bandobasts</i>	rules of conduct instituted by communities such as the Parsis for governance
<i>Bekhudi</i>	selflessness instrumental in creating a community, as conceptualized by Muhammad Iqbal
<i>Bida</i>	deviant innovations
<i>dai al mutlaq</i> (abbreviated as <i>dai</i>)	religious leader of the Mustali Ismailis, or the Bohras; hidden Imam's vicegerent
<i>dawat</i>	religious establishment of communities such as the Bohras, religious missions
<i>farman</i>	edict
<i>ginan</i>	religious literature of Ismailis of the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent
<i>hadith</i>	sayings of the Prophet Muhammad
<i>Haqir Imam</i>	lit. Imam of the time, refers to the spiritual head of the Ismailis
<i>Hizmet</i>	in Turkish, Islamic principles and ideas of service of the Gülen Movement
<i>Ijma</i>	consensus of the Muslim community, or of the <i>ulama</i>
<i>Ijtihad</i>	independent reasoning in interpreting Islamic sources
<i>Iman</i>	belief
<i>Islah</i>	amendment, improvement
<i>Isnad</i>	means of assessing the <i>hadith</i> traditions on the basis of chain of transmitters
<i>Jamaat</i>	assembly; congregation
<i>Jamaatkhana</i>	assembly hall used for religious and social activities of community

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<i>Jihad</i>	lit. ‘to strive’, with significant moral connotations for both internal or spiritual sphere as well as external or physical ‘holy war’
<i>Kamaria</i>	<i>jamaat</i> accountant
<i>Khudi</i>	self; individual, a key component of Muhammad Iqbal’s politico-religious thought
<i>Malahida</i>	heretic
<i>Mehfel</i>	association; assembly; gathering
<i>Millat</i>	community; an Ottoman Turkish system of administration of different ethnic and religious groups
<i>Mujtahid</i>	one who is qualified to perform <i>ijtihad</i>
<i>Mukhi</i>	<i>jamaat</i> treasurer
<i>Mukti</i>	liberation
<i>Mumin</i>	believer
<i>Mutaa</i>	temporary marriage
<i>Nurcu (or Nur)</i>	light
<i>Panchayat</i>	a community organization governance constituted originally of five members
<i>Pirs</i>	saints
<i>Qaum</i>	community; nation
<i>Sharia</i>	Islamic law
<i>Sunna</i>	tradition orienting conduct of life, more specifically referring to Prophetic tradition
<i>Tanzimat</i>	a series of Ottoman administrative and constitutional reforms in the nineteenth century
<i>Tafsir</i>	exegesis, especially Quranic exegesis
<i>Talim</i>	authoritative teaching
<i>Taqlid</i>	acceptance of religious ruling coming from higher religious authorities; blind adherence
<i>Taqyia</i>	religious dissimulation; doctrine of mental reservation
<i>Tarjuman</i>	interpretation
<i>Tawil</i>	classical interpretive approach in Ismailism; science of elucidating particular meaning of the Quran
<i>Ulama</i>	theologians (sing. <i>alim</i>)
<i>Umma</i>	people; community, usually refers to the Muslim community

Note on Transliteration

I have not used any diacritical marks but have, naturally, retained those used in quotations while citing other works. Non-English words are usually italicized (e.g. *jamaat*), while well-known terms are not (e.g. Imam). Such words and expressions have been all glossed in their first usage. In addition, a separate glossary has been also provided for the readers' convenience. Names of places, institutions etc. have been spelt according to their contemporaneous spellings (e.g. Bombay; Simla Deputation; Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College).