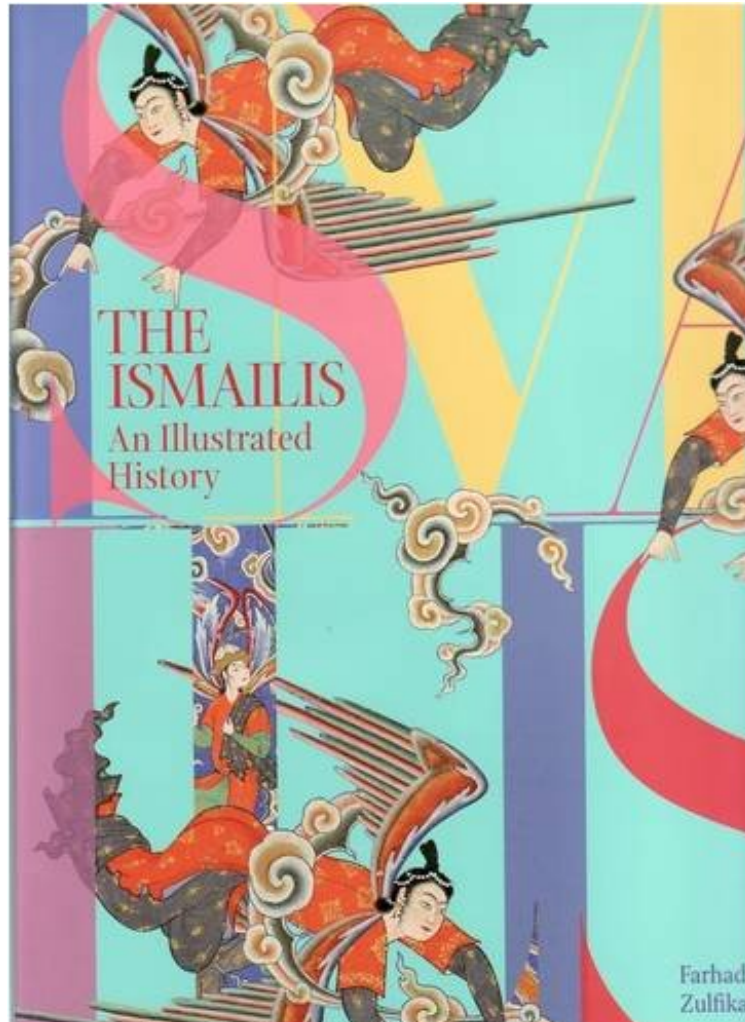


## The Ismailis: An Illustrated History

*Farhad Daftary*

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**Farhad Daftary : The Ismailis: An Illustrated History** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Ismailis: An Illustrated History:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Beautiful book with a lot of picturesBy AE9799Beautiful book with a lot of pictures. This is the book they should have for night school very comprehensive and informative.5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. An elegant sectarian showpieceBy Larry N. StoutA hefty, oversized, stylishly designed, lavishly illustrated tome, produced by a religious foundation. Does a very nice job of explicating Nizari Ismaili Fatimid Shi'a Islam doctrine and history (involving the Aga Khan succession), tracing the familial and doctrinal tree in congenial, carefully worded (minimally controversial) text and beautiful illustrations, with some contextual trappings of secular events in the ambient world. Maps, photos, pictures of art and artifacts excite the eye.

Pricey, but interesting and abstractly enlightening for someone disinterested, as I am. Though quite palatable in a general way for the likes of me, it's an overtly parochial, sectarian, self-congratulatory book, with some terms that will arouse the ire of zealots of other persuasions. (Don't get caught looking at this book if the Black Death [i.e., IS] hits town!) Three stars for general interest, one for exceptional eye appeal. Some takeaway lessons: The history of this sect well illustrates the universality of doctrinal and ritual schismatics in all religions. The splitting off through time never ceases. Let's call it what it is -- evolution. The true character of famous ancient people can never be known: was al-Hakim (whose adherents spawned the Druze, still going in the mountains of Lebanon) a hero or a monster? As with George W. Bush, depends entirely on whom you read and believe. 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Essential read

By Sadiq Shamji This is an incredible book, which gives a comprehensive and referenced historical account on not only what distinguishes Ismailism from other interpretations but the origins of Islam in general. It does all this while managing to keep it interesting and incorporating art history of Islamic artifacts and documents. I would recommend this book to anyone interested in learning about Islam in general including all strands of Shi'a interpretation, as well as people interested in Islamic art and architecture.

The Ismailis are a geographically, linguistically and ethnically diverse Shi'a Muslim community - the second largest in the world. Scattered in more than twenty countries of Asia, Africa, Europe and North America, they are currently led by their 49th Imam, His Highness the Aga Khan. In four chapters this book traces their history, within the wider context of Islamic history and the world in general, over the better part of fourteen hundred years. Each chapter is fully illustrated and accompanied by relevant maps and diagrams such as genealogical charts. The book has more than 300 illustrations, most in colour, consisting of images from illustrated manuscripts, artefacts, architecture, community documents, as well as important historical and contemporary photographs of members of the Ismaili community (many from private collections and archives) and the varied geographical contexts in which they live. A chronology of key events, a glossary of important terms, and a bibliography are also provided. Farhad Daftary is head of the Department of Academic Research and Publications and Associate Director at The Institute of Ismaili Studies, London. An authority in Ismaili studies, his publications include *A Short History of the Ismailis* (1998), *The Assassin Legends: Myths of the Ismailis* (1994), and *Ismaili Literature* (2004). Dr Daftary's books have been translated into Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Urdu and numerous European languages. Zulfikar Hirji is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at York University, Toronto. He is the editor of *Muslim Plurality and Pluralism* (2008), the author of *Moving Subjects, Shifting Paradigms: Multi-sited Ethnography and Indian Ocean Communities* (forthcoming), and has articles in journals including 'Anthropology of the Middle East', 'Sociologus', and books including *Textiles in Indian Ocean Societies* (2005), *Modern Ismaili Communities* (2008).

About the Author Farhad Daftary is head of the Department of Academic Research and Publications and Associate Director at The Institute of Ismaili Studies, London. An authority in Ismaili studies, his publications include *A Short History of the Ismailis* (1998), *The Assassin Legends: Myths of the Ismailis* (1994), and *Ismaili Literature* (2004). Dr Daftary's books have been translated into Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Urdu and numerous European languages. Zulfikar Hirji is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at York University, Toronto. He is the editor of *Muslim Plurality and Pluralism* (2008), the author of *Moving Subjects, Shifting Paradigms: Multi-sited Ethnography and Indian Ocean Communities* (forthcoming), and has articles in journals including 'Anthropology of the Middle East', 'Sociologus', and books including *Textiles in Indian Ocean Societies* (2005), *Modern Ismaili Communities* (2008).