The Nizārī Ismā'īlī Community in East Africa- An analysis of its development and processes of change

By

Azim Nanji

cs 721
Kudsi-Zadeh

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The aspirations and problems of contemporary Muslims have been variously formulated as, "the challenge of the Modern Age to Islam", a conflict between Ijtihād and Taqlīd, or in even broader terms as a tension that is by no means peculiar to Islam only. (1) Whereas the varied use of terminology to express properly the nature of the problem may be questioned, we can agree in principle that there has come about in the minds of concerned Muslims a certain motivation, since the onset of the so-called period of modernization.(2) This has led them to consider and evaluate Islam- as they had come to believe in it, and practise it- in terms of its adequacy to deal with an emerging existential situation.(3)

This paper then, is concerned largely with analysing this motivation as it has been reflected within the Nizārī Ismā'īlī community of East Africa.(4) and relating this to the wider issue of the processes by which a specific Muslim group has been able to affect change. In order to facilitate a discussion within the framework of a short paper the issues will be focussed in the context of two specific developments. One concerns the constitutional development of the community, that is, the creation of institutions and organizations that have led to a corporate and individual identity. This in turn necessitates an outline consideration of the structural changes that have taken place in the last 75 years or so and the factors that underlie this. The other area of consideration, revolves around the more contemporary issue of the community's attitude and response to political changes in East Africa with the onset of independence for her three states. This highlights particularly the problem of how a close-knit, highly centralised group like the Ismā'īlīs have attempted to align themselves within the complex of national policies and objectives. The issues have in a sense been arbitrarily chosen but I hope it will become clear as the discussion progresses, whey they are central to understanding the ways in which the Ismā'īlīs see their role as Muslims facing up to changing circumstances. Moreover the two issues also reflect the mechanism by which the community is able to redefine its objectives and self-image.

Sources.

Recently, there has been growing interest about the development of the Ismāīlīs within the wider field of the study of Islam in East Africa as well as in the consideration of sociological factors like pluralism and minority groups(5). The Ismā'īlīs, themselves have been willing to submit their own development to analysis by fellow-members and others and consequently there is enough material to permit an outline discussion, particularly on the two problems set out above. Sources, for this paper are therefore based on the main on field research carried out by others and also on the basis of publications by the community. This is further complemented by the availability of and speeches made by the last two Imāms, which lay down as it were the aims and guiding lines for the community(6).

Background.

In an article written by a British official Sir Bartle Frere in 1876, he spoke of there being more than 700 Ismā'īlī families in Zanzibar, being continually augmented by immigrants from India.(7) In the Aga Khan Case, ten

years previously, Justice Arnould mentioned the existence of 450 Ismā'īlī families then(8). Another official writing from Zanzibar in 1860 noted that every vessel arriving from India to the East African Coast, contained many Ismā'īlī immigrants from India(9). Though it is difficult to pin-point exactly when this wave of immigration began, we know of certain factors that encouraged this growing trend. Asian traders were known to have plied the East African Coastal trade for a long time but with the establishment of the Omani Sultanate on the East African Coast in 1840 which encouraged Asian settlement and trade, full-fledged immigration began(10). Secondly, adverse conditions in India coupled with the advice of the Imāms, encouraged the Ismā'īlīs to seek newer pastures and it seems that even at this very early stage one can discern some sort of a planned awareness on the part of the Imāms to encourage immigration and eventually the development of a large community in East Africa.(11) In terms of organization, during this early period of settlement on the coast, the main features were the jama'āt-khānahs, which acted as the religious and social focal point, each administered by two officials- a Mukhi and a Kamdia (12) But even from the earliest days emigration and settlement into the interior took place. The main lines of this move are not very clear but by the end of the century an Ismā'īlī trader, Allidina Visram had extended his influence and commercial services far into the interior aling with the penetration of the railway line from the coast far inland. Before long he had built a trading empire with more than 30 branches. These branches came to be steffed and run by fellows Ismā'īlī immigrants or relatives (13). Thus by this time there were developing on the coast and inland, pockets of Ismā'īlīs based on the jama'āt-khānah type organisation. In this respect, as a group they probably resembled other Asian communal groups who too after immigrating had tended to cluster into groups around temples or mosques. The Common denominator of all these groups it must be remembered was their basically entreprenerial orientation and whatever organisation they had could only have been the Caste or Communal bonds they had brought along with them, albeit in a very loose fashion.(14) In 1899 and 1905 however the Ismā'īlīs were visited twice by their Imām and received their first constitution. The programme of constructing a community with a highly individual and dynamic identity had begun.

Constitutional Development and the Present Institutions of the Community.

The impact of the Aga Khan Case Judgement on the future development of the community was immense. On the one hand it clarified the position of the Imām and his relations with his followers, giving him absolute réght to all communal property, without any responsibility of trusteeship. On the other hand, it served to establish the identity of the Ismā'īlīs as a community in its own right with an additional safeguard against dissenters or dissatisfied seceders who could be excommunicated. The Imāms themselves after their considerable problems in Persia, had more freedom to exercise their initiative under the relatively more benign rule of the British in India(15). Though the historical factors were thus favourable, the problem of dissenters still

remained. The constitution was therefore meant to provide a framework that would apply to the community and act as safety-valve against seceders who may lay claim to communal property. Such a case was fought in 1905, in order to resolve which the then Aga Khan III executed a power of attorney, by which three of his followers would act as his agents in matters of land and property in Africa.(16) These earliest days of the community's development thus focussed its attention on centralizing the reins of organization in the Imām's hands and creating safety-valves for future development in case the authority's legality was questioned. Once this was done, it becomes easier to understand how the Imam's could exert their initiative in creating charge and transforming their followers who gave them complete allegiance. However, the individual personalities of the Imām also played a key role and the policies started by Aga Khan I in India were carried through with even more vigour by Aga Khan III(17).

By 1924, the interplay of these factors became more evident as the community grew in number side by side with the economic growth in the interior of East Africa. Zanzibar had ceased to be the centre of greatest importance and as new centres of Ismā'īlī activity came into existence, they had to be provided with councils and administrative organization(18). In order to co-ordinate the various centres, provincial councils were set up in what had now become the three East African territories of Tangenyika, Uganda and Kenya. A new constitution was thus issued in 1926. The members were selected by the Imām who also supervised much of their work. These new organizations were also welcomed by the various colonial administrations since they facilitated their dealings with the community.(19)

The next thirty years saw a gradual filling out of these institutions as economic and educational bodies were attached to it. The most significant of these were the schools built in major towns, and on the economic side the establishment of an Insurance Company, and Investment Trust Company and various co-operative organisations to unify trading interests. Simultaneously medical institutions were built in major centres(20). If one were to simplify and pinpoint the areas within which the community saw its future at this stage, the emphasis would undoubtedly be on Education and Trade. Education was seen as the means to guarantee the future of the children in a highly competitive society and one of the instruments whereby the community could always maintain its leading role. Trade was seen as the pillar on which the economic stability of the community rested and the main field towards which their inherited talents as traders could be geared.

In 1952, the Imām called an important conference in Europe for all Ismā'īlī leaders in Africa with the aim of formulating new tasks and goals for the Ismā'īlīs in that part of the world. The outcome of this conference was far-reaching. The Institutions were restructured, a greater degree of inter-relation between the institutions was developed and in fact the new pattern went so far as to accomodate every aspect of the community's development to a changing situation. The late Aga Khan explaining one aspect of these changes in his memoirs, stated "They (the Ismā'īlīs) arrived there with Asiatic habits and

an Asiatic pattern of existence, but they encountered a society in process of development, which is, if anything European-African. To have retained an Asiatic outlook in matters of language, habits and clothing, would have been for them a complication and socially a dead weight of archaism in the Africa of the future".(21) The changes thus reflected a preparation for the community to pass into what was soon to be a new era, when the much ackneyed "wind of change" was to create drastic change. Since the accession of Karim Aga Khan to the Imāmat in 1957, the changes in the Constitution have been slightly redefined and the close-knit, highly organized system as it is reflected in the latest 1962 Constitution appears as follows:-(22)

1. Provincial Councils in each province, in charge of local affairs, Under them come the Economic Committees, Welfare Societies, Women's Associations, Youth Associations etc.

2. Territorial Councils, one in each of the 3 states, members of which are selected from various provinces.

3. A Supreme Council for Africa with a changing head-quarters, to supervise and co-ordinate the various Territorial Councils.

Each of the above Councils has a respective Tribunal with a Chairman and four members. Their main function is to deal with dispute arising in marriage and divorce applications, inheritance disputes etc. Cases of breach of the Constitution are also brought before the tribunals, who also act as courts of appeal(23).

4. An Executive Council for Africa whose main function is to act as a financial body channelling funds to the various organisations.

5. Educational Institutions fall within the jurisdiction of an Administrator in each state, under whom come the Provincial Education Boards that deal directly with the schools. The Chairmen of these boards have ex-officio status in the Provincial Councils, and the Administrators hold similar positions in the Territorial Councils.

6. Health Institutions are the concern of the Health Administrator in each country, with Provincial committees under him.

7. Jamati Affairs are under the jurisdiction of a Mukhi and Kamadia for every Jama'at Khānah, whose main function is to perform and officiate at all religious and social ceremonies, such as prayers, rites attendant upon birth, marriage and death. They also collect what are termed "Sarkar Mahebi dues" (24)

8. For purposes of religious education, propagation and dissemination and publication of religious literature there exist in each state an Ismailia Association with provincial bodies at local levels. Those involved in the work of the Association act primarily as exponents of the faith and are

concerned mainly with the explication and preaching of the Islamic tradition and values.(25)

Having delineated the present structural set up of the Ismā'īlīs, the next important step is to consider how its essential components are related to each other and how the whole system in fact operates. The Preliminaries prefacing the Constitution establish two points. One that the Rules of Conduct have been conceived within the "spirit of Islam" and secondly that "nothing therein contained shall affect the Absolute Power and Sole Authority of Mowlana Hazar Imam to alter, amend, modify, vary or annul at any time or to grant dispensation from the Constitution or any part thereof."(26) In terms of the way, therefore, that the community sees this Constitution and Rules of Conduct, we note that the ideological framework within which these have been conceived, has its root in the historical origins and development of Ismā'īlī ideas about polity, a point to be examined further, at the conclusion of this study, when we analyze the factors and assumptions that motivate the system.

The various Councils and Organisations, seen against the whole system, emerge as extensions of the Imām's authority and guidance, both of which, in a sense, mirror the community's vision of life. These extensions are co-ordinated to involve as many Ismā'īlīs as possible at varying levels of organization. Hence though the main thrust, as it were, comes from the Imām, it is in actuality, the community which is able to by its involvement in the day to day workings of the system, keep it functioning. It is worth noting that the promulgation of the Rules was not a sole act of the Imām, but the outcome of "Constitutional Committees" formed under the Imām's initiative, that toured areas of Africa, invited proposals, and worked to formulate a code that related the legal validity of the constitution within the juridical framework of the various African states where the Ismā'īlīs were living.(27) When we consider the types of persons who hold the various posts, we also notice some interesting developments. Whereas in the earlier days, it was the business-minded, more influential members who served in the councils, today there is considerable diversification. The tribunal-members are in most cases lawyers, the Educational and Health Administrators are professional men and so on. As the institutions have become more sophisticated, so the general educational level of the administrators has risen, this in itself being the outcome of the early start made in the Educational field by the Ismā'īlīs.(28) The institutional transformation is thus always accompanied by a simultaneously developing educational system, the products of which are then able to incorporate and deal with the practical problem of personnel who can adequately man these institutions. Nevertheless, the continuing influence at a communal as well as the national level of the wealthier businessmen, means that in most cases they still hold the highest posts which demand such influence and experience. The process is however on-going and self-renewing since the majority of office holders are changed every four years.

The fact, however that these people work as unpaid volunteers, needs some explanation in relation to incentive factors. Primarily, one can see this stemming from the sense of belonging to the group. The last two Imāms have

also succeeded in identifying and relating the needs of individual followers within the wider needs of the community- self-interest is tied up with the community's interests. Also their ability in inculcating a cooperative outlook into a business group motivated from the beginning by individual, entrepreneurial objectives, has contributed a great deal to providing the community with a sense of solidarity. The idea of service to the community is also emphasised as a value and the previous Imām had instituted a system of "titles" for the volunteers which had much prestige and honour attached to them in the community.(29)

In considering the actual working of the system, three levels can be discerned. The first level represents the original impetus for any particular change from the directive of the Imām himself. In a simile employed by the community one aspect of his role is seen as that of a Captain guiding and directing the ship to its destination(30). This initial drive becomes transposed at the second level where it takes the form of an institutional addition or change. Since as we have seen the council system itself is set up to provide at every subsidiary level an arrangement of "checks and balances", the ruling is made effective through the resultant close scrutiny. Since every Council also files reports directly to the Imām , there is also the question of his direct involvement in the daily affairs of his followers. This in turn to the rest of the community members, most of whom find themselves involved in its working, contributing to it and profiting from it.(31) These three levels, accordingly sum up briefly the ways in which the Ismā'īlīs are able to achieve efficiency and maintain their vigour and dynamism. But to explain such a system in purely structural and mechanistic terms as something that "just works", is to be oblivious of the other, more complicated human factors. For example, the vital question of what cements these three levels and accounts for the hegemony of the institutions, and why the community is able to achieve transformation without any disruption within its main components. The first element, can be loosely defined as allegiance and acceptance, on the part of those that comprise the system. Since this is a question more related to a examination of the psychology of belief, we can here only take the existence of such factors for granted and try and explain how they are perpetuated. One fundamental reason that strengthens this acceptance is the observation in practice that the system functions for and more than adequately serves the needs of its members. The Ismā'īlīs are able to see themselves in relation to other groups in the area, as a much more dynamic and progressive group which the other eventually come round to imitate(32). Another vital factor is in the personalities of the last two Imāms, who have injected into their hereditary role as Absolute Leaders, an immense vitality, not only at the communal level but also at an international one(33). The Imāms have not rested, as it were on their laurels of religious aura or the fact of an inherited charisma, but have invested their position with a functional role that has made them indispensible. In more precise terms, like other traditional institutions, the Imāmat has not become superfluous and obsolete and it can be maintained quite simply that had it not been for the Imāms' guidance, the fortunes of the community would be vastly different today from

what they are.

All of which leads us to our second major consideration in the paper the community in an era of political change in East Africa. Whereas in the discussion of the previous problem, the emphasis was on how the community has achieved its present status, the second point illuminates the far more complex issue of how it aims to continue the process in the future. The present Imām has enunciated the guiding lines to his followers in this way:

"As true Ismā'īlīs you must remember that you will always have two principal obligations. The first and paramount of these is your religious obligation to Islam and to your Imam. Your second obligation is a secular one. You must always be loyal to the country of your adoption and to whatever Government is responsible for your security and well-being. This is the advice which my beloved grandfather gave to you. I believe it is as wise and true today as it was when he was alive. It constitutes the surest guarantee by which you can maintain your faith and your civic identity".(34)

In order to examine the working of this principle, we need to examine Ismā'īlī attitudes towards the problem, in pre-independence days. As we noted earlier, they formed part of a wider Asian settlement in East Africa. Morris, in discussing the evolution of the Asian community as a whole in its earliest days states: "An outsider might have postulated that in these circumstances a single Indian community would emerge, stratified possibly in terms of social class, but not in terms of caste or sectarian differences."(35) Yet the Ismā'īlī community set about deliberately to develop a completely different and corporate group. All the same, there was a distinct attempt to align themselves with other Muslims in the area, in particular the indigenous Muslims. One way this was done was a deemphasing of the Asiatic and Hindu cultural traits, that carried over also into the religious sphere. The daily prayer (ṣalāt)was changed from Gujarati to Arabic, the Hindu inheritance laws that governed the community at the outset were altered to that of Shī'a law and Indian ceremonies attendant on marriage, birth etc, were curtailed.(36) Much more however than these shifts in personal and religious matters, was the policy of direct contribution to the promoting of educational and economic development of indigineous Muslims in East Africa, through the formation in 1945 of the East African Muslim Welfare Society. This Society has contributed greatly towards remoulding the Islamic outlook of indigineous Muslims in educational and economic sphere and still continue to be an active body.(37) This involvement of the Ismā'īlī with the affairs of the indigineous people was of mutual benefit, for it cultivated in the minds of both groups a sense of common purpose, that was to be reflected in the greater acceptance that the Ismā'īlīs received after independence as compared to other Asian groups.(38) Even prior to independence the Ismā'īlīs had widened their identification by integrating their schools and promoting the national economy. The preparation for the transition from the colonial to an independent era was also prepared in a large measure by the public speeches of the Imām, identifying Ismā'īlī aspirations with national ones, and most important of all openly opting for the respective national citizenship(39). The Asian in general, faced with independent national government found themselves caught in a dilemma as their previously segmented, exclusive and preferential position under the

British was felt to be threatened. As a group the Ismā'īlīs were the only ones who effectively declared a positive stand, other Asian groups lacked the cohesiveness and though many individuals cast their dye for national status, many more sat on the fence.(40) Since then, a large segment have left. The reasons appear two-fold. First, the "nationalisation" policies of the countries meant that those who still held on to British Protected Status, found their primary field of business- the retail trade- threatened. Secondly with the various governments gradually applying pressure these Asian felt squeezed out for the very reason that they had not committed themselves in any way and consequently had not envisaged the problems they would face. Eventually this resulted in the so-called Asian "exodus" from Kenya(41). The Ismā'īlī by their united declarations and by acting upon the implications of independence for them, had once again set themselves apart. As a close-knit group they had once more affected a constructive transition, which other groups as a whole lacking in similar organization and leadership could not do, except on the basis of individual initiative. The other important safety-valve for the transition period was that the Ismā'īlīs had shifted from concentrating on retail trade to industry, both as individuals and as a corporate group. This shift was crowned by the establishment in East Africa of an Industrial Promotion Service, which began to work in close conjunction with the three Governments(42). Thus, by virtue of a far-sighted policy in Economic and Educational fields, the Ismā'īlīs were able to escape most of the problems that they would otherwise have had to face.

If above the emphasis has been on the positive aspects of Ismā'īlī response to problems of modernization, it is because I have felt that this paper should be concerned with understanding the success that a specific Muslim group has achieved in meeting this challenge and in its retention of traditional institutions without a drastic disruption of its equilibrium and homogeneity. This is however not to disclaim the basic tension that underlie the attempt. In fact such a tension is bound to take on wider implications in the future. On the one hand we have their religious loyalty to the idea of an Imām who has absolute control over their affairs, and on the other a secular obedience to their respective countries- more so when the demands of committment made by national ideologies are greater today than before in developing countries.

Concluding remarks.

In any final analysis of the successful emergence of a community like the Ismā'īlīs into the Modern World, one must ask two basic questions. The first concerns not only the way changes have been affected but more fundamentally so, what type of society these changes have brought about and especially for a Muslim community what effect this has had on their self-image as Muslims. The second question is related to the peculiar historical situation in which the group has developed, and highlights the problems of how the group's particular features are affected by thehistorical period in which it moves.

To answer the first question, one needs to delve a little into Ismā'īlī history and thought. In contrast to the Sunnis in general, the sources of

law and development for the Ismā'īlīs did not stem exclusively on the basis of the Four Usūls and their interplay(43). Modern Muslim thinkers like Afghānī or 'Abdūh, to name two, in attempting to revive Islam felt it necessary to redefine current attitudes towards these sources. One resultant feature was the need that was felt to return to the pristine Islam of the Salaf.(44) In the Ismā'īlī ideological framework, the Imāmah existed as an additional invariable, the impetus from the Imām coming by way of the special position inherited by them after the death of the Prophet. The work of the Prophet thus in Ismā'īlī history came to be complemented by the role of the Imām and one of the remarkable features of Ismā'īlī history is the way this institution has survived the mixed fortunes of the Ismā'īlīs. The ancestors of the present community in East Africa, were converted in India and their form of Ismā'īlīsm differed vastly from that of the early Fatimids or the Nizārī Ismā'īlīs of Persia(45). Flexibility, therefore was a historically conditioned, built-in trait. This and the ideal of the Imamah made it easier for the Ismā'īlīs to accept change initiated by the Imām. For then a possibly dichotomy, between secularization and an already developed system of Shari'ah did not exist, because the Imām himself channeled new institutions into the community, thus giving them their specific acceptability. Another important distinction lay in the way they defined the "spirit of Islam"- "Islam means not only faith but it means work; it means creating the world in which you can practise your faith to the best of your ability and to practise your faith you must be able to do this; to create the world in which you can practise."(46) This concept broadened the basis on which the Ismā'īlīs built their system, by giving Islām a wider implication and relating it to historical factors. The "worldly" or secular aspect was thus given emphasis for it was necessary to create a viable environment in which the values could be practised. If we look at the community's development with this concept of Islam in mind, it becomes easier to understand why they felt it necessary to adjust and adapt to the historical milieu in which they lived. This fluidity however is controlled so to speak by the Imām and the problem has been raised in sociological terms of whether this single variable can maintain its self-renewing capacity while the other structures are constantly being reshaped.(47) So far this threat has not materialised, because as we have noted, in every generation the followers have been able to identify with the leadership and conversely their faith in the Imāmat, has been fortified by the actual dynamism of the Imāms, and this interaction of two factors can be regarded as the single most contributory factor in providing its sources of vitality.

The particular, historical factors against which the Ismāīlī development can be seen, have also played a determining role. This is amply illustrated when we compare the East African Ismā'īlīs to those in other parts of the world. When similar circumstances have not obtained. The communities in Syria, China, Iran and Russia for example reflect complete contrasts in many ways. The only factor that is common to all is their continuing allegiance to

the Imām, while their social and economic conditions differ greatly. The vast changes in the community from its original secretive, closed and almost caste-like status to its emergence under the relatively freer and benign British administration in India as well as East Africa, were strongly affected by the alteration of the political climate. The British Rule in a sense provided the indifferent umbrella under which the Ismā'īlīs had much greater freedom of movement and action.(49) The favourable political conditions have continued in East Africa, and the Ismā'īlīs as we have seen are participating in the new national objectives with perhaps a greater sense of belonging to the young, plural society of East Africa. At this stage, then, discounting any drastic political change, the future bodes no reversal of fortunes for the Ismā'īlīs. If they can continue to participate fully and at every level in the process of nation-building and become part of the new multi-racial African image that East African nations are trying to promote and formulate, then there is no reason why their particular quality of vigour cannot be integrated into the national effort that may aid the task of all those concerned in building stable, and equal plural societies.(50)

Finally, to round off the discussion, a word of caution on the methodological problem that arise when one is dealing with a group such as the Ismā'īlīs. A recent attempt at studying Indian immigrant communities over the world, essayed a classification of degrees of change in terms of factors that favour or retard change. This classification sets forth four sets of variable by which one can gauge change, namely:

a) Immigration as groups in the case of East Africa is considered a factor retarding change.

b) The same applies to groups that maintain ties with the homeland.

c) Immigration as traders to East Africa is considered as a factor retarding change.

d) Separation from the host society is also a factor retarding change.(51)

It can be argued that in most cases these factors would apply and be true of the present status of most Indians in East Africa yet in the case of the Ismā'īlīs as our study more than demonstrates, the conclusions in each case would be exactly the opposite. The Ismā'īlīs immigrated as traders and in groups, maintained religious links with other Isma'ili communities particularly India and Pakistan, and finally developed as a corporate group well apart from the mainstream of the indigineous society. None of these factors have in any way acted as what might be called barriers of change. Whereas this may prove that the community can be regarded as an exception, it does say much more about the limitations of such a method which attempts to put a group within any "strait-jacketed" classification. One would do well to remember Bernard Lewis's sage advise concerning the Ismā'īlīs: "No single, simple explanation can suffice to clarify the complex phenomenon of Ismāīlism, in the complex society of

Medieval Islam. The Isma'ili religion evolved over a long period and a wide area and meant different things in different places----"(52) Though the comment refers to a specific period of Isma'ili history, its implications have far greater validity in our times where the flux, complexity and human variety are so much more evident.

FOOTNOTES

1. For these three views see, Manfred Halpern, The Politics of Social Change in the Middle East and North Africa, (Princeton: 1963)pp.25-37;

Osman Amin, "Some Aspects of Religious Reform in the Middle East" in The Conflict of Traditionalism and Modernism in the Muslim Middle East, ed., Carl Leiden (Austin: 1966) pp. 88-89;

H.A.R. Gibb, Modern Trends in Islam (Chicago: 1947) pp. 17-38. Some extremely relevant remarks are also to be found in L. Binder, The Ideological Revolution in the Middle East (New York: 1968) pp.

2. The term modernization has perhaps been best defined in relation to tradition in C.Black The Dynamics of Modernization (New York: 1966), as a process with a "continuous series of changes accompanying the growth of knowledge and its effects on man s ways of getting things done." Traditional societies on the other hand are seen as "a pattern of inherited institutions or structure that is relatively static at the time modern knowledge makes its initial impace on it," p. 55.

3. The Modern Age, and its impact on the Islamic world is generally thought to begin in the 19th century, see Halpern, Politics of Change, p. 30.

4. This is to be distinguished from the Ithna Imāmī group, the Ithnā 'Asharis; and the Bohrās who are also Ismā'īlis as well. All groups are to be found in East Africa, See Spencer Trimingham, Islam in East Africa (Oxford: 1964)pp.103-109. The Nizārī Ismā'īlis from India are also known as Khōjāhs.

5. Among important studies are H. Morris, The Indians in Uganda (London: 1968) and Charan Ghai, ed. Portrait of a Minority (Oxford Univ. Press: Narobi, 1965)

6. The historical work in Gujarati, Noorum Mobin (Bombay 1951) incorporate the modern developments. A recent M.A. thesis, Ismailis of Mainland Tanzania by Shirin Walji (presented to the Univ. of Wisconsin 1969) also provides interesting material. Also available are Speeches of His Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan (in 2 parts by the Ismailia Association for Africa 1963-1964) and some copies of firmans made in English and Gujarati by the last two Imams.

7. Sir Bartle Frere, "The Khodjas" Macmillans Magazine (1876) p. 342.

8. A.Fayzee, Cases in Muhammadan Law in India and Pakistan (Oxford 1965), has a full account of the case.

9. Hatim Amiji, "The Asian Communities" in Islam in Tropical Africa ed. by J. Kritzeck and W. Lewis (New York: 1969) p. 143,

10. For the background to this see History of East Africa eds. R. Oliver and G. Mathew pp. 159-161, and J.S. Mangat A History of the Asian in East Africa (Oxford: 1969) chap: I.

11. See Shirin Walji, Ismaili, p.

12. The terms refer to their capacity as officials , the first jama'āt-Khānahs were established most probably at the same time as the immigrants stated setting in.

13. For Alidina Visram, See Mangat, History of Asians, pp. 51-53, 77-82.

14. See Morris, Indians in Uganda, Ch. III.

15. These events are succintly described in Aga Khan, Memoirs, pp.20-22. Also, Noorun-Mubin, pp. 430-442.

16. Morris, Indians in Uganda, p.251. Sporadic dissent continued but was never more than mild and limited.

17. The educational and economic development started by Aga Khan I is given brief mention in some early writings, for example J. Rahimtullah, Khōjā Kōmnō Itihās (Bombay: 1905)

18. For the development of the interior, see K. Ingham History of East Africa (London: 1966) Ch. 2 & 3.

19. Morris, Indians in Uganda, p. 79.

20. There is no adequate study of this development but references are found in Noorum-Mubin, pp. 511,547 passim, Shirin Walji, Ismailis . Two major events during this period were the Golden and Diamond Jubilees celebrated on the occasion of the 50th and 60th years of the Imām's office.

21. Aga Khan Memoirs p. 30.

22. This is based on "The Constitution of the Shia Imami Ismailis in Africa" (Ismailia Supreme Council for Africa: 1962) Some comments on the new constitution particularly the changes in Personal Law will be found in J.N. Anderson "The Isma'ili Khojas of East Africa" in Middle Eastern Studies. Vol. I

23. A final appeal can always be made to the Imām whose decision is final, Constitution, Article 557.

24. These include the payment of Zakāh (or Dasond as it is called in Gujarati) any other voluntary contributions made by the followers.

25. This is in a sense a continuation of the institution of the Da'wah except that there is no attempt to seek converts at this time. For Da'wa see. E. Tyan "Da'wa" EI2 II (1965)

26. See Constitution, Part I and Article 5.

27. Anderson, Isma'ili Khojahs, p. 23.

28. This at present is the continuing trend, with a lot of "new blood" taking over the organization.

29. See Morris, Indians in Uganda, p. 83. The titles ranged from Vizier to Count, Alijāh etc. each signifying the amount of service performed and seniority. Recently, however in his Firman the Aga Khan has been deemphasing the importance of these titles and disconnecting them from any religious content (from a copy of firman made in Kampala, 1962).

30. This simile is quite standard, but for detailed expositions have also been made, See. M.J. Kassim Ali Ever Shining Gable (Karachi: 1955).

31. The multiplicity of organizations in the community permit anyone interested in participating in some way or the other.

32. Morris, Indians in Uganda, p. 30, Ghai, Portrait, p. 19.

33. The late Aga Khan's international role in the League of Nations, in the founding of Pakistan etc, is too well known to be repeated. Besides the Memoirs, see Q. Malik, H.H. Aga Khan: Guide and Philosopher (Karachi: 1954), H. Greenwall H.H. Aga Khan (London: 1952) S. Jackson, The Aga Khan (London, 1952). The new Aga Khan has also received much attention recently, and a biographer is at present involved in writing an account of his life and work so far.

34. Speeches Part I, p. 35.

35. Morris, Indians in Uganda, p. 27.

36. This is based on a piece of research promoted by Aziz Esmail at Makerere University College. See also Anderson, Isma'ili Khojahs pp. 33-34.

37. Trimingham, Islam in East Africa pp. 171-172.

38. This was evident in the speeches of African politicians who after independence urged Asians to follow the example of the Ismā'īlīs.

39. See the "Takht Nishini" speeches made during ceremonies in East Africa, Speeches I, pp. 7-11 and other related talks in both parts I and II.

40. No proper account of these events so far exists and material may be called from journal and newspaper accounts.

41. See the article in, "East Africa Journal", vol.5 April 1968, pp.5-8.

42. The I.P.S. also has branches in the Congo and the Ivory Coast in Africa, as well as in Pakistan.

43. See.J. Schacht, Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence, (Oxford: 1959) for how this development came about.

44. For a discussion of the attempts of Afghānī and 'Abdūh, see G. Hourani, Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, (Oxford: 1962) pp. 103-160 and Gibb, Modern Trends, pp.

45. A short account of Ismā'īlī development will be found in W. Ivanow, A Brief Survey of the Evolution of Ismailism (Leiden: 1952). An analysis of their ideas, of polity will be found in F. Vatikiotis, The Fatimid Theory of State (Lahore: 1957) ch. 3 and 4 and M.G. Hodgson "The Isma'ilīState" in The Cambridge History of Iran (Cambridge : 1968) vo. 5, pp. 422-483.

46. From a speech made to the Ismailia Association of Pakistan, (Pub: Ismailia Association of Pakistan 1960).

47. Morris, Indians in Uganda, pp.172-173.

48. Aga Khan, Memoirs pp.23-24 and Speeches , p. 53.

49. This is considerably reflected in the very personal relationship and influence the Imāms had developed with the British Government, Memoirs ch. 5,

50. These are the stated aims of all three governments, see Ghai, Portrait, pp. 130-50.

51. Chandra Jayawardena "Migration and Social Change" in Geographical Review vol. 58, July 1968. pp. 426-449. The table will be found on p. 447.

52. Bernard Lewis, The Assassins (London, 1967) pp. 138-139.