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Ismaili Literature: A Bibliography of Sources and Studies by Farhad Daftary. I. B. Tauris in Association with The Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2004, xviii + 469 pp.

This compilation of Ismaili literature is the result of over thirty years of research, put together by one of the world's leading experts on Ismaili thought and history. Previous attempts to take account of Ismaili literature have been carried out by such noteworthy scholars as W. Ivanow and I. Poonawala, but as the author notes, their compilations were essentially inventories of manuscripts, whereas the present bibliography is solely concerned with those materials, both primary sources and secondary studies, which have been published.

This bibliography comes with an important survey of the medieval and contemporary developments in Ismaili studies, with particular attention paid to the early polemical assaults (and many outright fabrications) to which the Ismaili image collectively fell victim, and which were the unfortunate causes for numerous misunderstandings concerning key Ismaili doctrines. Particularly noteworthy in this regard is the Ismaili 'black legend' which surreptitiously came to the fore by the tenth century C.E. (see p. 87). This image severely distorted Ismaili teachings with regard to both its faith and practice and resulted in increased Ismaili-polemics and hostilities. But the Ismaili image was also destined to suffer defamation from outside the house of Islam. Distortions at the hands of the Crusaders and other European travelers resulted in a slew of embellished tales known as the 'Assassin legends'. Needless to say, these products of the European popular imagination came part in parcel with the European encounter with the 'other'. If

Islam in general suffered its share of distortions, the Ismaili image, already obscured by centuries of anti-Ismaili polemical activity, felt the brunt of it. Alongside this, there was the problem of the Ismailis being studied by Orientalists on the basis of those Muslim sources hostile to them. In the nineteenth century, thanks to the discoveries of original manuscripts written by Ismailis, things started to change. But it was not until the 1930s in India that the most significant body of manuscripts came to light. Since then, many studies have been carried out on various aspects of Ismailism by such noteworthy scholars as W. Ivanow, B. Lewis, M. Hodgson, A. Fyzee, H. Corbin, L. Massignon, W. Madelung, P. Walker, I. Poonawala, A. Asani, A. Nanji and F. Daftary. These more recent findings have allowed for a clearer picture of the Ismailis' self-perception to emerge.

The bibliography compiled in this book (pp. 104-439) is conveniently divided into three sections: primary sources, studies and selected theses. The primary sources section- comprised of entries in Arabic and Persian along with their translations into modern languages if applicable- is further divided into five subcategories: works by Ismaili authors, collective Ismaili works, anonymous Ismaili and pseudo-Ismaili works, the *Epistles* of the Brethren of Purity and selected works by Muslim authors who were not Ismaili. The primary source materials are arranged alphabetically, with useful descriptive annotations upon each entry. The section dealing with studies in Ismailism covers a wide range of modern academic work devoted to many facets of Ismailism, from articles on Ismaili law and cosmogonic doctrines to monographs on Nasr-i Khusraw and Ismaili history. The third and final section of the bibliography is a selection of some of the more important published and non-published theses written in the field of Ismaili studies

(mostly in English but also in French, Italian, Persian and Arabic). Here one will notice a number of interesting studies devoted to Ismaili communities in the West, Ismaili history, Ismaili devotional literature, and a number of important dissertations on Ismaili theology and philosophy.

Not only does *Ismaili Literature: A Bibliography of Sources and Studies* contain a wealth of information pertaining to many significant aspects of Ismaili studies, but it also comes with a seventy three page comprehensive account of the origins and development of Ismailism with respect to both its history and doctrines. This introduction is in fact a condensed version of the author's well-received books on Ismailism: his long and thoroughly documented *The Isma'ilis: Their History and Doctrines* (Cambridge, 1990) and his more recent *A Short History of the Isma'ilis* (Edinburgh, 1998). This book, like Daftary's other two works, is appended with two genealogical tables which deal with the Early Imami and Ismaili Imams and the long succession of Fatimid Caliphs respectively. The appendix also includes a list of the Ismaili Imams and is certainly a useful tool to understanding their complicated genealogies which date from the early part of the tenth century and extend to the present day, covering a wide geographical expanse comprising the three continents of Africa, Asia and Europe.

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