Conversions and
Shifting Identities

RAMDEV PIR AND THE ISMAILIS IN RAJASTHAN

DOMINIQUE-SILA KHAN

MANOHAR

CENTRE DE SCIENCES HUMAINES

2003
Contents

Foreword 7
Acknowledgements 11
Note on Transliteration 14
Map 1 15
Map 2 16
Introduction 17

PART ONE: NIZARI ISMAILISM AND THE NIZAR PANTH

1. The Ismailis in the Indian Subcontinent: Exchanges and Confrontations 29
2. Ramdev and Other Rajput Pirs: The Nizari Dawa in Rajasthan 60
3. Hindu and Muslim Pirs: The Community Fragmented 97
5. Ismailism and the Harijans 153

PART TWO: OTHER FORGOTTEN BRANCHES OF ISMAILISM: SECESSION AND DISSIDENCE

6. Ai Mata and the Ai Panth of Bilara 175
7. Jambha Pir, the Prahladvanshis and the Bishnoi Panth 187
8. Jasnath, the Siddhs and the Jasnathi Sampraday 209
9. The Nizari Dawa and the Nath Sampraday 220
10. Ram and Rahim: Nizari Ismailism and the Sant Paramparā 235
Illustrations

1. Graves in the shrine complex of Ramdeora 169
2. Dudu: the grave of Khivan Balai 170
3. The sacred kadam rasūl at Junjala 171
4. Pāṭh upāsnā in the Nizarpanthi jamā 172
5. Jambha’s tomb at Mukam 260
6. The pāhal ritual of the Bishnois 262
7. A shrine or bađer of Ai Mata 264
8. Chhatrī-tombs of Jasnathi gurus 266