

Muslim
Attitudes towards
British Rule and
Western Culture
in India

Mujeeb Ashraf

MUSLIM ATTITUDES TOWARDS BRITISH CULTURE
AND
WESTERN CULTURE IN INDIA



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In the First Half of the Nineteenth Century

MUJEEB ASHRAF



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Dedicated to My Revered Teacher
PROFESSOR MOHIBBUL HASAN

PREFACE

The focus of this work is on the relation and interaction of the various sections of the Muslims of India with the British rulers during the first half of the nineteenth century. It covers a study of the important leaders, political centres, institutions, and movements that emerged among the Muslims either in reaction to, or in favour of, British rule and Western culture. Logically it should cover just the events which occurred between 1800 and 1857, and yet some related facts and events in the periods preceding and following do find mention owing to the need to ensure continuity of narration and fullness of analysis.

Several useful studies are available on Muslim activity in India. They cover a number of specific aspects like the Wahhabi movement, the Faraidi movement, the later Mughals, Anglo-Hyderabad relations, the rulers of Oudh, the Uprising of 1857, Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan, etc. There are also studies which deal with the Muslims and with developments in India in a general manner. The present work, however, while making appropriate use of the findings and conclusions of these studies, focusses on the Muslim attitudes to British rule in India during the first half of the nineteenth century from certain new angles. Specifically it attempts to study the Muslim attitudes in their totality, comprehending almost all sections of society in almost all important centres of Muslim life. It also discovers new dimensions of the subject by assessing and incorporating the attitudes of Muslim scholars, teachers, poets, and writers; for this has not so far received rigorous historical scrutiny and analysis. The work is aimed at clearing up all ambiguities and removing all misgivings and suspicions regarding Muslim reactions to British rule.

Historians have generally tended to overlook the puzzling and ambivalent character of the Muslim attitudes; so much so that they have arrived at conclusions so utterly different as to defy all attempts at reconciliation. Some, for instance, describe the attitudes of the Muslims to British rule as totally hostile; others declare that even the orthodox *ulamā* were friendly to the British.

Now in the present work it is fairly established that the Muslims reacted variously to British rule and Western culture. The different classes and sections pursued their own separate interests and were unable to unite against the new rulers. Besides, as the situation and circumstances changed, the attitude within each class and section too underwent change in varying degrees. These different reactions are no mystery or puzzle when they are examined in the context of the mean designs of the British, their selfish outlook, their political deceitfulness, and, lastly, their hostility to Islam.

The study is a revised version of the thesis I submitted in 1980 for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University of Delhi. It is primarily based on the personal feelings, sentiments, attitudes, responses, and reactions of the Muslims as reflected in their writings such as autobiographies, letters, diaries, *fatvās*, *malfūzāt*, and pamphlets. Besides, it draws freely on contemporary writings, including biographies, monographic studies, newspapers, and books. For the official British attitude towards the Muslims, it depends on official records such as Government documents, parliamentary reports, dispatches, and other archival material. The secondary sources used are the biographies, monographic research works, journals, articles, and books published since 1900. Most of the Urdu and English sources it has used can be consulted in the various libraries and archives in Delhi, Aligarh, Rampur, Calcutta, and Bombay. The sources in the Arabic and Persian languages are available mostly in the Zakir Husain Library, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi; and in the Raza Library and the Saulat Public Library, Rampur.

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I am very fortunate in having a friend and sometime class fellow, Mr Mohammad Ahmad, for my publisher. Mr Ahmad has taken up the publication of works of historical value with great dedication. He relieved me of all the headaches that go with the job of getting one's work published.

I shall be failing in my duty if I do not record here what I owe to those who helped me in great measure from behind the scenes. The libraries and the librarians are the mainstay of the research scholar; for without their help no research work is possible. I had the opportunity to use the sources available in the various archives and libraries of India. I owe a great debt to Professor S.A.I. Tirmizi, formerly Director of the National Archives of India, and to the various librarians and other employees of the National Library, Calcutta; the Library of the Asiatic Society, Bombay; the Raza Library, Rampur; the Saulat Public Library, Rampur; the Maulana Azad Library, Aligarh; the Library of the University of Delhi; the Library of the Delhi College; the Library of the Institute of Islamic Studies, New Delhi; the Sapru House Library, New Delhi; and the Dr Zakir Husain Library, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The Psychological Basis

It is generally assumed that the initial reaction of the Muslim community to British rule in India was hostile. A number of reasons are advanced to explain the hostility. However, this assumption about the reaction of a whole community to a significant phenomenon like the emergence of the British as the supreme political Power in India does not seem to have received serious scrutiny in any of the in-depth studies carried out so far; for even where the reaction of the Muslims can be said to have been hostile to British rule during the first half of the nineteenth century, it was not uniformly or universally hostile. There were differences both in kind and in degree. The purpose of the present study is to throw light on the nature of the Muslim attitudes towards British rule and to show that side by side with the varying kinds and degrees of hostility there was also a measure of appreciation, however subdued in its articulation, for the values and institutions to which the advent of the British exposed the country.

The nobles and a section of the *élite* within the Muslim community showed themselves to be susceptible to the changing values and situations from the very inception of British rule. Although they held that British rule was a temporary phenomenon, they recognized that the contact between the different value systems and institutions was significant and all embracing and was bound to leave an enduring imprint on Indian (and Muslim) society. Two factors may have contributed to their susceptibility to the changing values. First, they had an open mind as to the new developments in the world through the various sources of secular knowledge without being constrained by religious conservatism. And, secondly, mundane considerations, such as the lure of lucrative careers, overwhelmed them and softened their attitude towards the new rulers and their culture and persuaded them of the need to change with the times without of course compromising their

loyalty and adherence to Islam. Indeed there was genuine appreciation of the British and their values in the different sections of Muslim society. And those who manifested this appreciation in their writings may well be regarded as the pioneers of the renaissance in Muslim society. They argued that the values and culture of the West, though apparently new, had their roots in the ancient civilizations of the Arabs, the Greeks, the Romans, and others and that the Muslims need not be ashamed of looking upon Western culture as a means to gain access to a commonwealth of culture.

The hostility of the Muslims, which was conspicuous during the first half of the nineteenth century, especially in political and religious circles, needs to be explained afresh in the light of the political and religious motives and objectives of the British rulers and the policies they pursued to achieve them. A detailed analysis of their mutual relations and interactions at the national level alone, however, would be meaningless; for the historical and religious antagonism of the Christian rulers of Europe to the Muslim nations had a great bearing upon Anglo-Muslim relations in India. This was why no one suffered so much from British rule in India as the Muslims. The historical and religious interactions between the two communities in Europe during the preceding centuries had undoubtedly generated psychological inhibitions in both the communities. This time, however, the Muslims came under the Western civilization of the Christians. Not that the Christians were free from bias against Islam. In fact their actions, policies, and attitudes reflected it in abundant measure.

It would, therefore, be worth while to understand, at first, the psychological bases of the relations between the Muslims of India and the British rulers. The following pages represent a modest attempt to understand the psychology of the Europeans, the Muslims, the Muslim ruling class, the nobility, the *ulamā*, and the *élite*, as also the British policy towards the Muslims of India. Then follows a detailed analysis of the attitudes of the various sections of the Muslim community, which was far from being monolithic.

Christian Psychology and Islam

The Christian mentality and the European attitude towards

Muslims in general is rooted in certain wrong assumptions about Islam and its followers. According to the Christians, Islam is responsible for erecting fanatical barriers in the way of the progress of humanity. They also hold that the followers of Islam are averse to change and progress. They have, therefore, taken upon themselves the role of leaders of humanity by denouncing Islam, pledging to remove fanaticism from the earth, and urging all the people of the world to accept Westernization as a way of life for the progress of humanity. The Christian countries, by virtue of their rapid economic progress in modern times, feel themselves morally bound to lead the people of the world along the path of material welfare and modern progress. They regard Islam, which provides a compromise between materialism and spirituality, as the main obstacle in the progress of Western civilization and human progress. For instance, according to André Servier, Islam is the "secretion of the Arab brain". And he has no hesitation to declare that "it is this religion that is the chief obstacle between them [i.e. the Muslims] and ourselves". He adds: "It is certainly our duty to respect the religious opinion of the natives, but it is mistaken policy for us to appear more Musalman [sic] than they themselves, and to bow down in a mystical spirit before a form of civilization that is very much lower than our own and manifestly backward and retrograde."¹

The jealousy and rivalry of the Christians is much older than the weapon they have recently discovered, viz civilization, for reasserting their supposed superiority over their old religious rivals. Till the dawn of modern civilization, i.e. till the seventeenth or eighteenth century, there was hardly any ground for them to take pride in whatever was progressive in their civilization, for it was by no means a product of their original contributions.² And yet Christian writers seem to be unwilling to give any credit either to the Arabs or to Islam for the contributions made to human civilization. To cite a passage from the works of one such writer, viz Servier:

¹André Servier, *Islam and the Psychology of the Musalmans*, A.S. Moss Blundel, trans. (London, 1924), pp. viii-ix. See, also, A. Vambéry, "An Approach between the Muslims and Buddhists", *Nineteenth Century and After* (London), vol. 71, January-June 1912, pp. 658 and 783-4.

²Sir Mohammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Delhi, reprinted 1974), pp. 155-6.

The Arab has borrowed everything from other nations: literature, art, science, and even his religious ideas. He has passed it all through the sieve of his own narrow mind; and, being incapable of rising to high philosophic conceptions, he has distorted, mutilated, and desiccated everything. This destructive influence explains the decadence of Musalman [*sic*] nations and their powerlessness to break away from barbarism; it equally explains the difficulties that confront the European nations in Muslim countries.³

Servier tells the Muslims to "rise out of its [i.e. Islam's] immobility". He, however, feels that the Muslims would not attempt it themselves in view of their being well surrounded by the strong defences of Islam. He adds: "No Musalman [*sic*] in any part of the world has ever thought of such a thing without horror. Hence Islam. . . stands in this modern world as a mournful statue of the past."⁴

The Christian nations undertook "the slow work of breaking the Musalman [*sic*] bloc as a basis of their *foreign Musalman* [*sic*] policy". Servier says: "Islam is the enemy, not because it is a religious doctrine differing from our own philosophical conceptions, but because it is an obstacle to all progress, to all evolution."⁵ This lays bare the mentality and attitude of the Christians towards the Muslims, a mentality and attitude deriving from an inherent religious antagonism.

No wonder, then, that the Christians have made it a principle scrupulously to avoid any policy capable of adding to the power and prestige of those nations which are strict adherents of the doctrine of Islam. Indeed they seem to have supported only those who have received but a light impression of the doctrine and whose faith is free from bigotry.

The Christians believe that Islamized nations which have not succeeded in freeing themselves from Muslim tutelage are stricken with intellectual paralysis and decadence; that they can only escape from this condition of inferiority in proportion as they succeed in

³Servier, n. 1, p. 12.

⁴Ibid., p. 76.

⁵Ibid., p. 262. Emphasis added. See, also, *Friends of India* (Serampore), 31 July 1856.

withdrawing themselves from the control of Muslim law; and that this objective could be achieved by encouraging regional nationalism, creating a feeling of frustration and antagonism in the subjects against their Muslim rulers and leading them to revolt, and exploiting the dissensions within Muslim society by patronizing the less Islamized sections of the Muslim countries and using them as their instruments for their purposes. They further believe that the Muslim nations have become corrupt in course of time owing to the mixing of the Muslim rulers with the subject nations and that inter-racial marriages have resulted in the deterioration of their war-like qualities. They hold the view that despotism, conversion, and discrimination against the people of other religions and cultures have created hatred among the people on the one hand and shattered the economy of the Muslims on the other and that domination of the cultures of the various subject nations over the original culture has broken the unity of the Islamic nations and added to the weakness of the Muslim power. They argue that the power of the Muslims depends merely on force; that the various linguistic and cultural groups appeared united so long as the Muslim conquerors maintained unity by force; and that, with the removal of that force, they fell apart. Tremendous powers concentrated in one man, temporal as well as spiritual, yielded remarkable results so long as they were exercised by a man of genius; they became instruments of ruin when wielded by an incapable man. Men of genius are unfortunately rare.⁶

The Christian nations, therefore, sought to dominate and overawe the less Islamized sections of the Muslim countries so as to use Muslim against Muslim. Servier thus observes:

It is our interest, therefore, to make the best of the Turks (or less Islamized sections) to consolidate our power. There is no other people that could replace them in this role, for it is necessary to be a Musalman [*sic*] to act upon Musalman [*sic*] and necessary to be a superficial or lax Musalman [*sic*] to be able to moderate their fanatical aspirations. It is true that the strict Musalmans [*sic*] bear their rule with impatience, but they would never admit the rule of a non-Musalman [*sic*] people.⁷

⁶Servier, n. 1, pp. 192 and 262-71.

⁷Ibid., p. 267.

This also explains British policy in India, which was to maintain and support the weak Muslim States, keep them under their influence, and finally encourage Westernization. The British had a genuine fear that if they destroyed the whole Muslim empire militarily, the defeated Muslims would declare a holy war against them. They, therefore, adopted the above-mentioned policy and put it into practice with great caution in India. W.W. Hunter showed his appreciation of this policy when he commended the Government of the English East India Company for letting the Muslim political power die a natural death.⁸

The British thought that in course of time the less Islamized sections of Muslim society would themselves counter Muslim fanaticism and embrace Western civilization. Sawas Pasha, an Ottoman Christian and a free thinker, saw the possibility of the Muslims accepting the path of progress if it was made part of their conscience. According to Servier, however, such attempts too resulted in failure.⁹

Thus the Christians seek to prove that Islam is basically irrational and inflexible and that its followers are fanatics opposed to all progress and civilization. They belittle all the achievements of Islamic civilization. According to them, whatever progress Islamic civilization has achieved has come about as a result of the impact made on it by other nations and other civilizations.

In his book *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, the great poet Mohammad Iqbal demonstrates how the stagnation discernible in Islamic civilization is a temporary phase and then proceeds to expose the malicious thinking of the Christians. He asserts the superiority of Islam as a way of life. He emphasizes certain basic principles of Islam like *ijtihad* and *ijma*, which the Muslims have used from time to time to adjust to new conditions and make progress. He also throws light on the contribution of Islamic civilization to human progress, and shows how even Christian writers have acknowledged this contribution. He observes: "The *Qurān* is a book which emphasizes deed rather than idea." He quotes a verse from the *Qurān* which says: "Verily God will not change the condition of men till they change that in them-

⁸W.W. Hunter, *The Indian Mussalmans* (London, 1871), p. 102. A reprint of this book was issued in Lahore in 1964.

⁹Quoted in Servier, n. 1, p. 250.

selves.”¹⁰ He then observes: “The search for rational foundations in Islam may be regarded to have [sic] begun with the Prophet himself.” His constant prayer was: “God! Grant me knowledge of the ultimate values of things.” He admits that Greek philosophy was a “a great cultural force in the history of Islam”. He, however, adds: “While Greek philosophy very much broadened the outlook of Muslim thinkers, it on the whole obscured their vision of the *Qurān*. Socrates concentrated his attitude on the human world alone. To him the proper study of man was man and not the world of plants, insects, and stars.”¹¹

In his book *The Spirit of Islam*, Ameer Ali asserts the claim of the Arabs and Islamic civilization to have played a fundamental role in Western progress. He observes:

The first manifestation of Rationalism in the West occurred in the province most amenable to the power of Muslim civilization. Ecclesiasticism crushed this fair flower with fire and sword, and threw back the progress of the world for centuries. But the principle of free thought, so strongly impressed on Islam, had communicated their [i.e. the Muslims'] vitality to Christian Europe. Abelard had felt the power of Averroes' genius, which was shedding light over the whole Western world. Abelard struck a blow for free thought which led to the eventual emancipation of Christendom from the bondage of ecclesiasticism. Avenpace and Averroes were the precursors of Descartes, Hobbes, and Locke.¹²

There is, however, another band of Christian scholars who view Islam differently. The observations made by these scholars in appreciation of some of the basic principles of Islam prove the absurdity of the zealous Christian writers deliberately denouncing Islam. Ninian Smart observes as follows: “But for all its reve-

¹⁰Iqbal, n. 2, “Preface”; and p. 12.

See also Sura 58: “God's help comes to those who strive with firmness, as it did at Badar.”

Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Meaning of the Glorious Qurān* (Cairo, 1938), edn 3, p. 151.

¹¹Iqbal, n. 2, pp. v and 3.

¹²Syed Ameer Ali, *The Spirit of Islam* (London, 1965), p. 397. A reprint of this book was issued in Delhi in 1978.

rence for the *Qurān* and for all the clarity with which it attempts to conserve the prophetic message, Islam has shown a considerable degree of internal tolerance."¹³ He further notes :

Despite the bitterness engendered by the crusades, the culture of Islam had a lasting effect on Christian Europe. How Ibn Arbi contributed to the thought of Dante? More spectacular were the influences on the philosophical and scientific level. Until the fall of Constantinople, which released refugees and Greek manuscripts to the West, the Latin-speaking world of mediaeval Christendom had an imperfect knowledge of the riches of Greek culture. These now began to flow in via the Arabic translations.

He, further, mentions Averroes (Ibn Rushd), whose commentaries on Aristotle were used in the University of Paris.¹⁴

Modern Muslim philosophers like Mohammad Abduh of Egypt, Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan, Ameer Ali, and Sir Mohammad Iqbal were not averse to Western knowledge. Abduh felt that "the modern knowledge which Western influence was introducing must be appropriated by Islam".¹⁵

Similarly Iqbal feels that

... in view of the rapid developments in the scientific arena and the growth of intellect in Europe, it is necessary to examine in an independent spirit what Europe has thought and how far the conclusions reached by her can help us in the revision and if necessary reconstruction of theological thought in Islam. Besides this, it is not possible to ignore the generally anti-religious and especially anti-Islam propaganda in Central Asia which has already crossed the Indian frontier.¹⁶

With the political decay of the Muslims all over the world and the acceptance of the intellectual supremacy of the West, it was assumed that Islam as a religion and culture would also

¹³Ninian Smart, *The Religious Experience of Mankind* (New York, 1969), pp. 413 and 423.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Iqbal, n. 2, p. 8.

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gradually vanish. Vambery rightly observes that a war had in reality been going on from the very start between the two worlds, which were culturally opposed to each other. He says that the ostensible purpose of the standard-bearers of Western culture and of modern civilization and humanization was a matter of quite secondary importance, an empty shibboleth: "The chief object is and remains the acquisition of colonies . . . to exalt and increase the power and importance of the mother country."¹⁷ He then asks :

Can we wonder that the growing hold of Christianity upon the lands of Islam is creating a very marked unrest among the followers of Mohammad ? Is it wise and expedient by useless provocations and unnecessary attacks to increase the feeling of animosity to hurry on the struggle between the two worlds, and to nip in the bud the work of modern culture which is now going on in Asia ?¹⁸

Psychology of the Muslims

The Muslims are proud of the popularity of Islam all over the world. No religion has ever maintained so strong a hold over the people of the world as Islam. And, in fact, if understood in the true spirit, it definitely provides a happy compromise between the spiritual and temporal aspects of man's life. Of course, at one time, a number of evils crept into the body of Islamic beliefs. The Muslims began to consider themselves a class of superior human beings. This vain pride tended to arouse jealousy and enmity among the followers of other religions, especially the Christians.

It is now a part of the psychology of the Muslims that whenever they fail in other fields of life, they tend to withdraw to their religious defences and justify their failures and stagnation on religious grounds, thereby adding to the unpopularity of Islamic beliefs. Islam spread rapidly within less than half a century after the death of Prophet Muhammad, and there arose under the Caliph an immense empire stretching from Spain to India. This

¹⁷Vambery, n. 1, pp. 657-66.

¹⁸Ibid.

makes the Muslims suppose that the Arabs had attained a high degree of civilization. André Servier observes :

Since the second century of the Hijra the Caliphs have decided, so as to avoid any variation of religious dogma, to lay down exactly the spirit and the letter in the works of four orthodox doctors. It is forbidden to make any interpretation of the sacred texts not sanctioned by these works, which have fixed the dogma beyond all possibility of change, and by the same stroke have killed the spirit of initiative and of intelligent criticism among all Musalman [*sic*] people, who have thus become, as it were, mummified to such extent that they have stayed fixed like rocks in the rushing torrent that is bearing the rest of humanity onwards towards progress.¹⁹

In fact, owing to the existence of these four orthodox interpretations of Islam, the Muslims rarely if ever use the golden principle of *ijtihād*—the principle by which Islam authorizes people to adjust to new conditions and changing circumstances. It was Shah Waliullah who reminded the Muslims in India of the need to use the principle of *ijtihād*. In a dissertation Al-Haj Mohammedullah showed how, thanks to the principle of *ijtihād*, Muslim law could never be rigid. Imam Ali Yusuf points out how the use of this principle is allowed only to a *mujtahid*, a Muslim wise, adult, intelligent by nature, well acquainted with the meaning of Arabic words and mandatory passages in the *Qurān*, and learned in the traditions of the Prophet.²⁰ Accordingly Shah Waliullah's successors allowed the Muslims to acquire English education though with some caution. However, their narrow approach nullified the utility of the principle.

Thus it is that the Muslims do not accept any truth, of what-

¹⁹Servier, n. 1, p. 12.

²⁰Al-Haj Mohammedullah ibn S. Jung, *A Dissertation on the Development of Muslim Law in India* (Al'ahabad, 1932), p. iii; and Iqbal, n. 2, p. 147.

"*Ijtihād* means to exert with a view to form [*sic*] an independent judgement on legal questions." See, also, Ishtiaq Husain Qureshy, *The Muslim Community of the Indo-Pak Subcontinent* (The Hague, 1962), p. 205. Shah Waliullah tried to break the barriers of the four orthodox schools; his followers, especially Shah Ismail, did just the reverse and created another sect more intolerant.

ever nature, unless it is Islamized, i.e. unless it is proved to them that it is supported by one of the sacred foundations laid by God and the Prophet as interpreted by the four orthodox schools. It is, therefore, impossible to introduce into the law, and consequently into society, any modifications made necessary by the evolution of ideas or the progress of science. Even the less Islamized sections of Muslim society always make it a point to respect the law of religious solidarity. Secular interests may divide them only for a brief time, but they can never be a permanent barrier to their union. A Muslim, whoever he may be, submits to the strict discipline of Islam. He acts always in conformity with the higher interests of Islam. He would never willingly sacrifice even a fraction of the Muslim world to a non-Muslim Power.²¹

Northrop, however, denies that there is any trait of fanaticism or conservatism that is peculiar only to Islam. Fanaticism and conservatism are, according to him, common to all the theistic religions. He observes:

Since the . . . commandments and behaviour and the traits of . . . God vary from one theistic religion to another and are in many instances definitely contradictory as in the case of Mohammadanism [*sic*], Judaism, Christianity, and Shintoism, it is not a mystery that in history these religions have had difficulty not merely in getting on with each other but also in responding graciously and with mutual enrichment to the open-mindedness of the Far Eastern . . . non-theistic religions.²²

However, to the zealous Christians Islam appears as a doctrine of death inasmuch as the spiritual is not separated from the temporal, and every aspect of activity, being subject to dogmatic law, formally forbids any change, evolution, and progress. They feel that Islam "condemns" all believers to live, to think, and to act as the Muslims lived, thought, and acted in the second century of the *Hegirā*, when the law of Islam and its interpretation were definitely crystallized. Attempts have been made in certain

²¹Servier, n.1, pp. 269-70.

²²F.S.C. Northrop, *The Meeting of East and West* (New York, 1947), p. 414.

Muslim countries to rationalize the principles of Islam, but these are confined only to a microscopic section. The masses are even today strict adherents of the traditional beliefs.²³

In contrast with the Western nations, thus, the Muslims have remained stationary and have made no effort to adapt themselves and their institutions to the requirements of modern times. Secure in their intransigent faith, they have not allowed any outside influence to affect them. On the contrary their hostility towards the infidels is more bitter than ever. The semi-education they have received in European schools has only served to strengthen their hatred by leading them to imagine that they can do without foreign guidance. It is due to this feeling that there is a Muslim nationalist party in every land governed or protected by a European Power. The aim of this party is to set the true believer against the infidel, to re-establish Islamic power, and to expel the foreigner.²⁴

In India, during the first half of the nineteenth century, the Muslims did bear bitter feeling against the Europeans. Farquhar observes :

The European had so unceremoniously helped himself to the empire of their [i.e. the Muslims'] fathers. The old education and culture rapidly declined, and for many decades the Muhammadans [*sic*] failed to take advantage of the new education planted by the conqueror.²⁵

This, however, does not mean that the Muslims had no urge for change and progress. In fact they welcomed, admired, and adopted the European techniques of war during the eighteenth century. But this tendency for the most part operated unperceived. And it did not go far enough in view of the antagonistic policies of the British rulers.

Psychology of the Muslim Ruling Class

In his political ventures the Muslim is guided by the direc-

²³Iqbal, n. 2, p.3.

²⁴Servier, n. 1, p. 253.

²⁵J.N. Farquhar, *Modern Religious Movements* (London, 1929), p.91.

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tions of the Holy Book : "Make war on those who do not profess the true religion until they, in their humiliation, shall pay the tribute with their own hands." At the same time Islam permits him to bow for the time being before a superior force. It does not impose upon him an attitude which might expose him to danger or reprisal. In extreme peril even a transgression of the dogmas is permissible.²⁶

The Muslim may, therefore, bend to foreign authority when he is not strong enough to resist. He may even make terms with it and accept titles and favours. However, as soon as he feels himself in a position to revolt, he should immediately do so. It is his imperative duty. This is what happened during 1857 in India. The Government, like others, is a religious institution. The Muslim may only be ruled by an Imam (Caliph) having the right and authority to watch over the observance of the precepts of Islam and to ensure that the legal penalties are properly enforced in order to defend the frontiers, raise armies, levy fiscal tithes, suppress rebels and brigands, celebrate public prayers, admit judicial proofs in contested cases, and, finally, proceed with the division of lawful booty.²⁷

In its origin the Caliphate was not a despotic Government. The Caliph had to consult before acting. However, this practice ceased when the Arabs in the course of extending their conquests found themselves in the midst of peoples accustomed to despotic rule. The doctors of the faith who drew up the legislative texts intended to reserve to themselves a share in the Government by specifying that the prince could not decide upon any matter without first consulting them. However, as they were at the mercy of his will and pleasure, it was he who in reality exercised power without control.²⁸ This happened in India too. The despotic Muslim rulers influenced the opinion of the doctors of the faith. When in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the rulers grew weak, the doctors of the faith felt that the time was opportune for efforts to restore Islamic beliefs and practices. But then it was too late: the power itself had passed from Muslim hands.

²⁶Servier, n. 1, p. 204.

²⁷Ibid., pp. 204-5 and 245-6. See, also, Ameer Ali, n. 12, pp. 124, 125, and 278.

²⁸Servier, n.1, pp. 204-5 and 245-6.

Psychology of the Nobility and the *Ulamā*

The vizier takes the sovereign's place in the administration of affairs, the command of the army, and the supervision of officials. His office is a dangerous one since the incumbent serves as a buffer between the prince and the people. He must submit to the caprices of the one and expose himself to the hatred of the other; but the position is so lucrative, and admits of so great abuse of actual power, that candidates have never been wanting. Hence the attitude of a vizier or his counterpart is determined by the patron, who is the real source of his power. He is loyal and obeys the prince; for it is on the prince that his lucrative career depends. This naturally leads to a degeneration of the character of the incumbent. Administrative divisions are looked after by a *divān*, or a council of State, composed of high personages; but, being concerned chiefly to curry favour with the prince or with his vizier, the councillors turn out to be servile creatures ready for any compromise.²⁹ This explains why the Mughal nobility so readily kowtowed to the British rulers as the power of the Muslim rulers declined.

The *ulamā*, or doctors of theology and jurisprudence, form a special body whose duty is to watch over the observance of the fundamental laws and to register as religious dogmas the decrees issued by the council of State. The *ulamā* depend upon the goodwill and pleasure of the sovereign. They are, in addition, charged with the dispensation of justice. Their supreme head is the Shai-khul Islam, who must be consulted before a law is proclaimed, a tax imposed, or a war undertaken. It is under his orders that the *qādis* dispense justice without appeal.³⁰ Strong-willed rulers have always sought to undermine the independence of the *ulamā*. In India in the eighteenth century, as the political power of the rulers declined, the nobles and the *ulamā* gained the upper hand in the affairs of State. The former sought to further their political and material ends, and the latter set about the task of religious restoration and purification of Muslim society. The *ulamā* had hardly begun their efforts in this direction when they were con-

²⁹Servier, n. 1, p. 206.

³⁰*Mishkāt Sharīf*, Noor Muhammad, trans. (Karachi, n.d.), p. 97. This is a collection of the Prophet's traditions.

fronted by a new but more formidable challenge. Since they had often criticized even their own Governments for adopting what they regarded as un-Islamic ways, they could not easily accept the decrees of the foreign rulers without judging them with reference to the basic principles of Islam. They were especially careful in dealing with the decrees of the foreign rulers because they were aware that these rulers, being Christians, were imbued with religious antagonism aimed at discrediting Islam and its civilization.

Psychology of the Muslim Elite

According to the *ulamā*, human knowledge is derived from two principal sources, viz reason and faith. The sciences are also of two kinds, viz the rational (*aqliā*) and the positive (*naqliā*). The rational sciences are those which man can acquire by his own reason, without the help of revelation, and include geography, mathematics, chemistry, physics, astronomy, etc. The Muslims had contributed to the development of these sciences even before the dawn of the European Renaissance. In fact it is admitted that Muslim civilization made no mean contribution even to the European Renaissance, which carried European civilization to new heights. Of course, the Christians deny this, and say that what the Muslim philosophers and scientists taught was all borrowed from Greek and Latin and that they did not contribute anything original. However, in course of time the study of the rational sciences among the Muslims was relegated to a secondary place and was made to yield the palm to the sciences of revelation. We find the same phenomenon in India during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. A section of Muslims felt the need to evolve a formula so that the rational sciences could be given their due importance in the curricula without prejudice to the study of theology. And in no case was a Muslim to avoid or go without religious education. Ibn-e Khaldun says in his prolegomena that "one of the distinctive marks of Musalman [*sic*] civilization is the practice of teaching the *Qurān* to young children".³¹

When the British rulers introduced a system of public instruction, the Muslims shied away from it. Had the Muslims been

³¹Servier, n. 1, pp. 167 and 201-3.

wise, they would have taken advantage of the new educational system. They felt, however, that it was not proper for the descendants of the ruling class to receive education in institutions which did not care to provide instruction in their religion and culture.³²

The Muslims obviously did not realize the extent of ruin suffered by the country in general and by the Muslims in particular. Nor did the *ulamā* in their ignorance of, and indifference to, the consequences of the loss of political authority, give a correct lead to the rest of the Muslim population of the country. The absence of a middle class among the Muslims owing to their want of aptitude for commerce and their hostility to modern education further aggravated the problem of Muslim backwardness.³³

In fact the Muslim rulers expected events to take a miraculous turn somehow, and the religious leaders propped up the masses who followed them. The nobility and the *élite* were susceptible to change because they were much more concerned to ensure their present prosperity than about some future religious revolution. Such Westernization as occurred at this time among the Muslims was confined to those two classes, viz the nobility and the *élite*. Even they had to come to terms with well-entrenched religious resistance.

British Strategy and the Muslims of India

Relations between the British and the Muslims in India are to be studied against this psychological and historical background and in the light of the inherent, mutually antagonistic attitudes of the two. Yusuf Ali observes:

In considering the interactions of the civilizations of India and the West, especially on the religious side, it should be borne in mind that the Indian Muslims stand on a somewhat different footing from their Hindu fellow citizens. The diffe-

³²Hafeez Malik, *Moslem Nationalism in India and Pakistan* (Washington, D.C., 1963), p. 149; and Hunter, n. 8, pp. 132-3.

³³Aziz-ur-Rahman Mallick, *The British Policies and the Muslims in Bengal, 1757-1856* (Dacca, 1961), p. 27.

rences are due partly to historical causes, partly to the sociological structure of the Muslim community, and partly to a difference in the nature of their religious ideals.³⁴

Islam is a world religion, and the historical causes as they affect Islam generally are, therefore, of world-wide significance:

From its origin it has been in intimate contact with Christianity and Judaism. . . . In politics, in commerce, in navigation, and in war-like enterprises of the crusades, there were intercourse and interactions, conflicts and borrowings, which left their marks deep on the history both of Islam and of Europe. . . . Even on the soil of India itself the Muslims were not as isolated as the Hindus from the rest of the world.³⁵

The Muslims have been particularly susceptible to outside influence on account of their social structure. However great the pull exerted by local factors, they have, on the whole, resisted the tendency to racialism. The absence of the feeling of racialism prepared the Muslim mind freely to receive impressions and influences from outside. "Seek knowledge", said the Prophet, "even though [it may have to be sought] as far as China."³⁶ This principle has gone a long way towards promotion of the religious ideals of Islam, which have always tended towards cosmopolitanism. It was with this spirit that the Mughal rulers adopted a secular policy and welcomed the Europeans. But the Europeans had different plans in mind from the very beginning.

In 1661 the English East India Company received a new charter which authorized it "to wage war or make peace with non-Christian powers, and to send warships, men, and arms" to protect its factories in India.³⁷

³⁴A. Yusuf Ali, "Muslim Culture and Religious Thought", in L.S.S. O'Malley, ed., *Modern India and the West* (London, 1941), p. 389. See, also, Qureshy, n. 20, pp. 213-14.

³⁵O'Malley, n. 34, pp. 389-90.

³⁶Shaikh Ali Muttaqi, *Kanzul Ummal fi Sunānil-Aqwāl wal-Afāl* (Hyderabad, A.H. 1312), vol. 5, p. 202.

³⁷A.B. Keith, *The Constitutional History of India* (Allahabad, 1961), pp. 7-8. See, also, Sir Alfred Lyall, *The Rise and Expansion of British Dominion in India* (Delhi, 1973), Indian edn, pp. 38 and 49.

There is no doubt that the Europeans entered India basically with commercial motives in mind. The Mughal rulers welcomed them as they felt that commercial relationships would be advantageous to both parties. When, however, they settled down in India and found political conditions in a chaotic state, the Europeans soon revised their aims and began to aspire at first to replace the Muslim power and then to remove the main obstacle, viz Islam and its culture, from the way of progress of Western civilization. However, we may freely admit that as compared with the other European nations, the English adopted a policy of restraint and patience. What they aimed at was *gradual* and *systematic* extinction of the Muslim power and culture. Hence, according to S.R. Sharma, "the history of the English in India is the story of the transformation of a company of traders into rulers of this paradise of commerce".³⁸ In fact it is more than that: it is a history of a part of the great struggle of the Christians to eliminate Islam and its culture from less Islamized India. The Muslim rulers of India belonged to such countries as Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey, etc.; they had embraced Islam but without giving up their cultures. They continued with their un-Islamic traditions. The British knew this well.³⁹ The tolerant Mughal rulers allowed the Christians even to carry on missionary activity. S.R. Sharma observes: "The extent of patronage shown to the missionaries under the Emperors of the house of Babar was extraordinary. They were the honoured guests of the Emperors; they enjoyed privileges which were the cause of envy of the Mughal nobility."⁴⁰ Bernier, a French traveller who toured India from 1659 to 1667, held a salaried post as a physician at the court of the Emperor Aurangzeb.⁴¹ Christian effigies and religious symbols were received within the Imperial

³⁸S.R. Sharma, *The Crescent in India* (Bombay, 1966), edn 3, p. 731.

³⁹Abdul Waheed Khan, *Musalmānon kā Isār aur Āzādi kī Jang* (Lucknow, 1938), p. 8.

⁴⁰Sharma, n. 38, p. 731. See, also, Ameer Ali, n. 12, p. 276, on the issue of toleration of *dhimmi*s in Islam.

⁴¹O'Malley, n. 34, p. 390. It was a Muslim who introduced Vasco da Gama to the Zamorin's court; Danishmand, a Mughal courtier, learnt from Bernier about Harvey's theory of circulation of blood. See, also, Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan* (London, 1967), p. 5; and Mohammad Mujib, *The Indian Muslims* (London, 1967), p. 513. Begam Samru, a lady from a respectable Muslim family, married a European. Hayatunnisa, *Begam* of Banaras, married an Englishman.

palaces; princes of the Imperial house were allowed to be baptized; churches were built at Agra and Lahore and in other Imperial cities; preaching and proselytizing were freely permitted; and the gospel was translated into Persian under Imperial auspices. Jesuit fathers like Maurique and Xavier even served as tutors to the princes. The careers of Mirza Zulqarnain and Donna Juliana show the extent of Christian influence. Even instances of reconversion of Christian fugitives from Islam are not wanting. Of course, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb did take some steps to check the rebelliousness manifested by some Europeans. Sir Thomas Roe warned the English East India Company against diverting energies into wasteful channels as the Portuguese had done. On the other hand Englishmen like Sir Josiah Child believed in the possibilities of establishing lasting English dominion in India. Though the attempts of that generation failed on account of the competence of the Mughal rulers, the ultimate achievement of the English testify to the essential soundness of that dream.⁴² The symptoms of weakness were already manifest by the end of Aurangzeb's reign. Indeed, as Munucci observed, "some 30,000 Europeans could easily destroy the authority of the Mughals".⁴³

That the English cherished political aims in the early eighteenth century is proved from the observations of Bolt. They had fully realized the political weakness of the Muslim rulers:

The Mughal Empire is overflowing with gold and silver; it has always been feeble and defenceless. It is a miracle that no European prince with a maritime power has ever attempted the conquest of Bengal. By a single stroke infinite wealth might be acquired, which would counter-balance the mines of Brazil and Peru. The policy of the Mughals is bad; their army is worse; they are without a navy. The Empire is exposed to perpetual revolts. Their ports and rivers are open to foreigners. The country might be conquered, or laid under contribution, as easily as the Spaniards overwhelmed the naked Indians of America.⁴⁴

⁴²Sharma, n. 38, pp. 730-2.

⁴³Quoted in Nagendra Singh, *The Theory of Force and Organization of Defence in India* (Bombay, 1969), p. 172.

⁴⁴Sharma, n. 38, p. 732.

Appointment of Europeans to the higher military posts became a common practice of the successor States of the Mughal Empire during the period of Mughal decline in the early eighteenth century and on the eve of the beginnings of the territorial empire of the English East India Company. This was an acknowledgement as much of the technical superiority of the Europeans in the manufacture and use of the instruments of artillery as of the higher sophistication of the European techniques and strategy of war.⁴⁵ Irvine asserts the superiority of the European armies over the Indian, and observes: "In the middle of the 18th century the French and the English had demonstrated the vast superiority of disciplined infantry when compared with the Indian soldier, who was little more than a night-watchman and a guardian over baggage."⁴⁶

Hence the use of force against rivals soon turned into use of force for expansion, and this ultimately led to assertion of sovereignty by a trading company which gradually assumed political power. Of Clive's character Horace Walpole said: "Our governors there [in India], I think, have learnt more of their treachery and injustice than they have taught them of our discipline." Nagendra Singh rightly disputes this statement, and says: "It was quite the reverse since the conqueror is always in a much better position to teach and impart his virtues and vices to the conquered than the latter can ever do to the former."⁴⁷ It may be asserted without doubt that the Company made political use of force in the battles of Plassey and Buxar in order to gain power and influence, not in order to uphold justice or respect recognized rights. Indeed the Company's presence in Bengal was *de facto*, not *de jure*, till the Third Mysore War in 1789-93, when the Company decided to annex a portion of the Mysore Kingdom, acquired a piece of territory for the first time in its history purely by right of conquest, and stood forth as the direct liege lord of some Indian subjects. It was the first instance of *de jure* assertion of political power in India by the Company.⁴⁸ Wellesley's Subsidiary Alliances, which obligated the princes to accept the protection of the English army and pay for its expenses, were a kind of modern

⁴⁵Aziz Ahmad, n. 41, p. 4.

⁴⁶Quoted in Singh, n. 43, p. 173.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 197.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 204.

version of *Ashvamedhayajna*. After establishing their political hegemony, the English began to destroy the economy of the Muslims. The various measures adopted by the Company from the Permanent Settlement of 1793 under Cornwallis to the resumption of the Land Act under William Bentinck badly hit the economy of the Muslim aristocracy.⁴⁹ Many of the finer and more skilled industrial arts of India were in the hands of the Muslims, and they were ruined by the fiscal policy of the East India Company. The army, the administration, and the learned professions were fields of employment for most of the Muslims. The upper middle classes were reduced to beggary. B.B. Misra observes: "Those who lost heavily with the establishment of British rule, for example in Bengal, were for the most part Muslims."⁵⁰

Ameer Ali observes:

It is no exaggeration to say that English officials generally are at this day as far from understanding the real feelings of the Indian Mohammedans [*sic*] as they were half a century ago. Want of sufficient interest on one side and absence of qualified exponents on the other explain the imperfect knowledge possessed by the official world of India with regard to the Musalmans [*sic*]. The changes introduced in 1793 affected the Muslims indirectly, but their general tendency was to deprive them of their influence and status. Up to this time higher offices, fiscal as well as judicial, were filled by Musalmans [*sic*]. But now the higher executive appointments were reserved exclusively for Europeans.⁵¹

After the award of *Divāni*, for about half a century, the Muslims were scrupulously maintained in their positions. And then silently, secretly, and insidiously, as the Muslims allege, the thunderbolt was forged which was to overwhelm them and deprive them of their status, power, and privileges.

⁴⁹O'Malley, n. 34, p. 392.

⁵⁰B.B. Misra, *The Indian Middle Class* (London, 1961), p. 186. See, also, Ram Gopal, *The Indian Muslims* (Bombay, 1959), p. 15.

⁵¹Syed Ameer Ali, "The Cry from the Indian Mohammedans", *Nineteenth Century and After*, 12 August 1882, pp. 193-4.

The English deprived the Muslim *jāgirdārs* of their power to collect Government revenue on the pretext of corruption and appointed their own men—Collectors—in their place. This was the first blow dealt at the political position of the Muslims. This was a usurpation of a most serious character. It was in direct conflict with the spirit of the treaty concluded between Shah Alam and Clive. Was it necessary to ruin the Muslims by taking their lands? Was it necessary to deprive them of their influence and wealth and impoverish them?⁵²

It was under William Bentinck that the Muslims suffered most. In 1828 the Company Government called for an examination of the title deeds of the *aindārs* and the *lakhirājārdārs*. At the most the rulers were entitled only to claim their revenue, but they used their power to oust all those who failed to establish, to the technical conviction of a legal court, their full title under written grants from the Mughal Emperors. The resumption proceedings, though intended to apply equally to Hindus and Muslims, fell more heavily on the latter.⁵³ The *Friends of India* of 10 and 12 August 1837 condemned the measures of the Government which reduced a number of respectable men to beggary.⁵⁴ In 1837 the rulers replaced Persian in the courts with English or the vernaculars. This resulted in the ouster of a considerable body of Muslim subordinate officers who were totally dependent for their subsistence on the remuneration they had been receiving from the Government. The change of language served as a constant reminder to the Muslims of the fact that they were now among the subject races of mankind.⁵⁵ Hafeez Malik, therefore, rightly remarks : "Their strategy was to oust the Muslims from the professions and positions of economic and administrative control. This policy ultimately pauperized them."⁵⁶

⁵²Ibid., p. 195. See, also, W.H. Sleeman, *Rambles and Recollections of the Indian Officials* (London, 1944), vol. 2, pp. 282-3.

⁵³Ameer Ali, n. 51, p. 197 ; Malik, n. 32, pp. 145-7 ; and Mallick, n. 33, p. 51.

⁵⁴*Friends of India*, 10 August 1837.

⁵⁵Syed Mohammed Tahir, *Musalmānān-i Hind kī Tanazzulī kī Vajah aur Taraqqī kī Tadbīr* (Calcutta, 1906), pp. 14-15 ; Sleeman, n. 52, p. 283 ; Ram Gopal, n. 50, pp. 186-90 ; and *Hindu Intelligencer* (Calcutta), 16 October 1854.

⁵⁶Malik, n. 32, p. 145. See, also, *Dillī Urdū Akhbār*, 28 June 1840, p. 69 ; and *Friends of India*, 8 March 1838.

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The English started placing reliance on the good will and co-operation of the Hindus rather than of the Muslims. This was an obvious course for them to follow.⁵⁷ In spite of these deliberate attempts by the British to disrupt Hindu-Muslim unity, friendship between the two communities remained undisturbed until after 1857.

In the beginning the English adopted apparently a policy of non-intervention. They also mixed freely with the Muslims. Later, as the new century advanced, things grew worse; so much so that at the time of Bentinck, in contrast with their attitude to the feasts of Hastings's days, the Muslims started feeling that to dine with the Europeans was degrading.⁵⁸ In the beginning the Company Government was strict in its avoidance of interference in the social and religious affairs of the people. It knew of the bitter experience of the Portuguese. Peace and political stability after 1818, however, enabled Company officials to inaugurate an era of Westernization. They gave up the policy of non-interference in social and religious affairs. The English, who used to claim boastfully to be the patrons and protectors of the religions and cultures of India, now considered them to be utterly backward and deserving to be replaced by those of the West. The first open attack on the policy of non-interference by the Government was the one made by the Christian missionaries in India. A missionary called Peggs came to India in 1821 for missionary work, but was totally wrecked in health. He, therefore, returned to England in 1826 and tried his best to draw the attention of the Government at home as well as of the English public to the passive religious policy of the Company Government in India. His cry, it would seem, was taken up by other missionary bodies and ultimately by the Christian officers of the Company Government.⁵⁹ With this began the final attempt to remove the great obstacle, viz Islam, from the way of progress of Western civilization. The attack upon the Muslim religion and culture was not as open as the attack upon the Hindu religion and cul-

⁵⁷Mallick, n. 33, p. 64.

⁵⁸Aziz Ahmad, n. 41, pp. 5-6.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 17. See, also, Romesh Chandra Banerjee, "State Patronage to the Hindu and Muslim Religions during the East India Company's Rule", *Bengal Past and Present* (Calcutta), vol. 56, pts 1-2, January-June 1939, p. 23.

ture; it was indirect. It was, however, clear that the idea was to denounce Islam and its impact through the less Islamized sections of the people. Thus, right from 1765 onwards, the English carried out intelligently and imperceptibly their policy of removing the obstacle that was Islam and eliminating its impact on society in order to impose their own "progressive" civilization. This is confirmed by the following observation by W.W. Hunter:

The truth is that had we hastened by a single decade our formal assumption of sovereignty, we should have been landed in a Mohammadan [*sic*] rising infinitely more serious than the mutinies of 1857. The admirable moderation of the East India Company's government, and their determination to let Mohammadan [*sic*] power expire by slow, natural decay, without hastening its death by a single moment, averted this danger. India passed from a country of Islam into a country of the enemy, by absolutely imperceptible gradations.⁶⁰

The following excerpts from the *Friends of India* would show how the Christian missionaries and the Company Government engaged in a conspiracy to replace Islam and its culture with Christianity and Western civilization: "India, China, Japan, Central Asia must be evangelized by native teachers. To prepare for such an instrumentality ought to be, next to the translation of the scripture, the great aim and business of our missionary."⁶¹

The Company Government, though interested in the translation of the Christian scripture, avoided direct interference. At the same time it allowed the missionaries to go ahead with their aims and objectives. The following excerpt from the *Friends of India* would vouch for this truth: "Considering our position as Englishmen in this country we hold that it is the duty of the Government to be strictly impartial in these matters and to leave the task of conversion to the missionaries."⁶² Sleeman observes: "The Mohammedans [*sic*] in India sigh for [the] restoration of the Mohammedan [*sic*] regime as it would give them all the offices in a country where office is everything." He added:

⁶⁰Hunter, n. 8, p. 102.

⁶¹*Friends of India*, 5 April 1838.

⁶²*Ibid.*

Perhaps there are few communities in the world among whom education is more generally diffused than among [the] Mohammadans [*sic*] in India. He who holds an office with twenty rupees a month commonly gives his son an education equal to that of a Prime Minister. They learn through the medium of the Arabic and Persian languages what young men in our colleges learn through those of Greek and Latin. He will talk as fluently about Socrates and Aristotle, Plato and Hippocrates, Galen and Avicenna. . . . He, therefore, thinks himself well fitted to fill the high offices which are now filled exclusively by [the] Europeans and naturally enough wishes the establishment of that power which would open the door to them. Besides this factor they pray every night for the Emperor and his family because their forefathers ate of the salt of his forefathers.⁶³

In spite of the onslaught of Western culture, the intellectual triumph of Europe, and the deliberate attempt to denounce Islam and its culture and establish the supposed superiority of Christendom, Islam as a religion and culture and as a way of life survived all the vicissitudes. It embraced gradually Western knowledge and at the same time preserved its purity:

For Islam's importance lies partly in the stress it lays on the social dimensions. It has preserved the ideal which the Prophet set before himself of a people united in sensible and sober brotherhood in which the *Qurān's* law will promote cohesion and justice. His entire dependence on Allah and strict adherence to the scripture have been both a source of weakness and strength in relation to the future of Islam.⁶⁴

Lichlenstadter observes: "The concept of change and evolution had been a basic function within Islam itself in its early, formative period." According to him, the concept of *jihād* and democracy are very near to Western ideas. He, therefore, visualizes the possibility of change and notices among the Muslims a willingness to learn from the West.⁶⁵ Smart comments: "Though the

⁶³Sleeman, n. 52.

⁶⁴Smart, n. 13, pp. 421-3.

⁶⁵Ilse Lichlenstadter, *Islam and the Modern Age* (London, 1959), pp.195-8.

West was intellectually triumphant, it was passing through a strange crisis in respect of morality and social cohesion. These qualities were what Islam could give."⁶⁶

The attitude of the Company Government offered a remarkable contrast to the attitude of the Muslim rulers towards their Christian guests. The Muslim rulers had not only tolerated the Christians but also allowed them to flourish and disseminate their religious teachings and culture. In contrast, the Christian rulers sought to uproot their Muslim patrons. They were not satisfied merely with establishing their political mastery over India by disguising themselves as vassals of the Mughals. They had a plan to accomplish the total impoverishment of the Muslims. They also wished to establish their religion and their civilization as superior to Islam and Islamic civilization.

Hence the Muslims, who were less susceptible than the Hindus to change, lagged behind partly because of their own drawbacks but largely because of the antagonistic attitude adopted by the British rulers. The policy of discrimination tended the Muslims to array themselves in a hostile camp against the British. Observes Abu Hayat: "The Muslim mind entertained the deepest distrust of the British and Western culture."⁶⁷ The Muslims as usual fell back on their religious defences in view of their political failure. They sought to restore the purity of Islamic beliefs and practices, which had drifted towards heresy on account of the policy of religious tolerance of the Mughal rulers. The time they spent on these efforts widened the gulf.

On the other hand the English, who aimed at demolishing Islamic civilization, chose the less Islamized sections in Indian society as their instruments. They easily won over the nobles, the *élite*, and the Shiahhs. Subsequently, however, not only the Muslims, but the Hindus also realized that material progress was necessary but not at the cost of their religion and culture. There was no possibility of a one-way traffic as the English believed. There should always be a compromise between materialism and religiousness, between traditionalism and progress.

The above psychological analysis is useful in understanding

⁶⁶Smart, n. 13, pp. 414-16. See, also, U.N. Mukerjee, *A Dying Race* (Calcutta, 1910), pp. 63-67.

⁶⁷Abu Hayat, *Musalmans of Bengal* (Calcutta, 1966), p. 16.

Introduction

the contradictions and disparities in the attitudes of the various Muslim classes and sections towards the British rulers and their culture. In the pages that follow, the political part deals at length with the attitudes of the Muslim rulers and the nobility. The patronage extended to the Europeans by the Muslim rulers, the reliance they placed on them, their disappointment with the treatment received by them, and finally the resistance put up by them and the holy war waged by them against the Europeans reflect their peculiar psychology. The major responsibility for Muslim humiliation at the hands of the British rulers, of course, rests upon the Muslim rulers; for they first provided a corridor and then gave over the whole country to their religious and political rivals. They became aware of their folly a little too late. The Mughal aristocracy, on which the whole edifice of the Government rested, proved to be most vulnerable to the British. The nobles clearly followed a course of adopting Western ideas of government and administration and of accepting whatever they deemed progressive in Western thought and civilization, but that did not help in retaining power in Muslim hands. They soon shifted their loyalties to the British rulers for lucrative gain. They were responsible for fostering a new outlook based on compromise with the West.

Another part deals with the attitudes of the *ulamā* and the general mass of the people. The *ulamā* also adopted practically the most obvious way: they fell back on their religious defences. However, their behaviour and attitude, though popular, prevented the Muslims from following the West. As a result, modernization and rational progress remained stunted for a long time. Though a compromise was reached between the two viewpoints, one represented by the nobility and the other by the *ulamā*, the problem of adjusting to rapidly changing conditions is still an unsolved problem before the Muslims.

In the final part dealing with the *élite* we shall see how the general assumption that the Muslims were hostile *en bloc* to British rule and culture is far from correct. The fact is that various sections and classes reacted differently. From the very beginning a section was in favour of Western civilization. Hence a study of the various sections of Muslim society does not admit of any monolithic approach. We also commit a mistake when we equate the Muslims and the Hindus in their reactions to British rule and

culture. As a matter of fact, the attitudes of the Muslims have to be studied in the context of the British attitude, which in its turn reflected the mutual relationships between the two in the past. The Hindus had no reason to be hostile to British rule, whereas the Muslims had many historical, religious, cultural, and psychological reasons.

After the establishment of British rule in India, the various sections of the Muslim community, though each one of them reacted to the event differently from the others, endeavoured to realize through their respective approaches the same goal—viz regeneration and re-establishment of the Muslim power and prestige. Hard realities are always the best teachers. The Muslims generally appreciated the need to give up their rigidity for a compromise with the changes of the time to avert the calamity of total destruction. This happened only after 1857, when a *rapprochement* occurred between the progressive Muslims and the traditionalists, between the secularists and the orthodox.

Attitudes of the Ruling Classes

Attitudes of the Ruling Classes

Chapter 2

MUSLIM RULERS AND THE BRITISH POWER

The position of the Indian rulers of the period under review *vis-à-vis* the British rulers was most pathetic: once mighty and absolute, they now faced utter humiliation under the British Government on account of their weakness and dependence. The last three Mughal rulers were the worst affected. Not only did they suffer for their own moral weaknesses, but, having inherited a shattered empire, they became victims of the doings of their corrupt predecessors and of the selfish nobles of the Mughal court. By the time they came to be at the helm of affairs, the situation was already out of control. By the end of the eighteenth century the British had eliminated their European rivals and overpowered the Indian rulers. The last three Mughal Emperors had lost all hope of revival of Mughal sovereignty. They were no longer concerned about the question of restoration of their real power; at the most they left it to some Providential occurrence. What engaged their minds was the question of their nominal existence and subsistence. How did the last three Mughal rulers adjust themselves to the new situation? And when even their nominal position was in peril on account of the devious ways of the British rulers, how did they react to it? Obviously the Mughal Emperors felt aggrieved over the attitude of the British Government. As a result their relations with the British rulers steadily deteriorated. They were perplexed by the problem of ensuring their own maintenance. They found it hard even to keep up appearances. Their hearts and minds were filled with anger and bitterness against the British. In such a situation it was only natural that they should fail to pay any attention to the Western institutions, which were the so-called harbingers of the modern age in India.

THE LATER MUGHALS

The Emperor Shah Alam II (r. 1759-1806), though adept at facing up to the vicissitudes of time and fortune, lacked the basic qualities required in a king to deal with the new conditions of his time. He was neither a brave nor a perspicacious ruler. His excessive patience and leniency defeated his attempt to restore his own sovereignty.¹ It would appear that after the failure of his daring though tiresome campaigns from 1759 to 1764 he lost all hope of regaining his power and prestige and found peace and happiness in reconciling himself to his titular position. This is well reflected in the following couplet which he composed:

Āqbat kī khabar khudā jāne
*Ab to ārām se guzartī hai.*²

Shah Alam appears to have been rather slow to recognize that the English East India Company had emerged as a new force in India after its conquest of Bengal. Once he realized it, he moved to enlist its help in his own cause. Disgusted with the self-centred policy of Shujauddaulah, the *Nawab Vizier* of Oudh, he appealed to the Company for help in regaining his throne and sovereignty. His correspondence with the British rulers reflects his eagerness to win them over. It also lays bare the weakness of his position in the country, especially among his own nobles. He misunderstood the British rulers: he thought that they were an independent mercantile force devoid of any political ambition.

Deserted by Shujauddaulah and daunted by the continual depletion of his army, Shah Alam applied at last, in 1759, to Clive for help against Mir Jafar. When he failed to secure help, he asked for asylum in Calcutta. Simultaneously Clive received a communication from Imad-ul Mulk Ghaziuddin, the vizier who had persuaded the Emperor Alamgir II to declare the prince a rebel and demand his surrender. Clive, who had nominally installed

¹John Clunes, *Sketch of the British Power in the East* (n.p., 1833), p. 35. "Shah Alam, when heir-apparent, had been invested as soobedar [*sic*] of the Bengal provinces and proceeded in 1759 to recover them from Jaffir Ali [*sic*] Khan, who was supported by the English."

²Mohammed Zakauallah, *Tārīkh-i Hind* (Aligarh, 1919), vols 9-10, p. 311.

installed Mir Jafar as the Nawab of Bengal, preferred to help the latter. He paid no heed to the requests of Shah Alam II for asylum. Nor did he pay heed to Ghaziuddin's request to him to hand over the prince. Instead he treated Shah Alam II honourably but requested him to return to Allahabad.³

Shah Alam II went back to Allahabad and waited for help to arrive, but no help came; for the Company Government never meant to help him. This must have annoyed Shah Alam II; for he now joined Mir Qasim against the British at the instance of Shujauddaulah. However, he took no part in the battle of Buxar fought in the year 1764.⁴ It was fought mainly by the combined forces of Shujauddaulah and Mir Qasim. All the same the consequences of the defeat were borne by all the three rulers. Mir Qasim disappeared for ever; Shujauddaulah signed a peace treaty and became an unshakably faithful ally of the Company Government for the rest of his life; and Shah Alam II, besides confirming British properties in Bombay, Madras, and the northern circars, awarded the *Divāni* of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa to the British in a treaty signed at Allahabad in 1765. Shah Alam II also presented a number of demands, particularly payment of arrears amounting to thirty-two lacs of rupees from out of the revenue of Bengal, and probably also assistance and escort to return to Delhi. Robert Clive, who met him personally on 9 August 1765, rejected the demands. Finally, after much bargaining, he agreed to pay him a sum of twenty-six lacs of rupees annually as tribute from out of the revenue of Bengal. He also allowed him to keep Allahabad and Kara, the annual revenue of which was estimated to be more than twenty-eight lacs of rupees.⁵ Further, he assured him of his policy of tranquillity and undertook to confine his activities to Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa. While refusing to take personal responsibility for escorting him to Delhi, he is believed to have suggested to him that he should seek help from the British

³A.L.H. Polier, *Shah Alam II and His Court*, Pratul C. Gupta, ed. (Calcutta, 1947), p. 14; G.R. Gleig, *Life of Robert Clive* (London, 1907), pp. 122-3; and H.G. Keene, *A Sketch of the History of Hindustan* (Delhi, 1972), p. 365.

⁴Keene, n. 3, p. 363.

⁵Gleig, n. 3, p. 233. See, also, Clunes, n. 1, p. 36. Shah Alam II felt relieved when he entered into an alliance with the British and secured his release from the thralldom of the Nawab Vizier,

sovereign. Accordingly, Shah Alam II reportedly wrote a letter to George III, but Clive for his own reasons avoided presenting this letter to the British sovereign.⁶ Shah Alam II's repeated failures badly damaged the Imperial position and the image of the Emperor. Verelst, a colleague of Clive's, thought poorly of Shah Alam II's competence as a ruler. He once wrote thus about Shah Alam II: "His abilities are rather below mediocrity, and his character seems calculated for private life [rather] than a throne."⁷ How did Clive look upon his own position as a noble at the court of Shah Alam II? This is revealed in the following interesting extract from a letter written by him to a cousin of his on 25 September 1765:

I have been seven hundred miles up the country, and have established firm and lasting peace, I hope, with the Great Mughal and Shujauddaulah. I have seen much of his Majesty, and he has appointed me one of his first *omrahs* [*sic*], or nobles of his Empire, with an immense title, not worth six pence in England.⁸

Shah Alam II had by now understood the attitudes of the Company Government and Shujauddaulah. Neither of these latter was in favour of Shah Alam II's going to Delhi. Shah Alam II, therefore, decided to seek the support of the Marathas, much to the chagrin of the British. He wisely chose Sindhia from among the various princes of India. With his help he eventually reached Delhi in December 1771.⁹

When the affairs of the Delhi court deteriorated in 1787 owing to the absence of Sindhia, Shah Alam II wrote a personal letter to Lord Cornwallis, seeking his help in crushing the wily nobles who were creating trouble for him. In the letter

⁶Indian Historical Records Commission (IHRC), *Proceedings*, vol. 16, pp. 97-98. Hereinafter cited as *IHRC Proceedings*. See Appendix I of the present work for Shah Alam II's letter to George III, asking for help.

⁷K.K. Dutta, *Shah Alam II and the East India Company* (Calcutta, 1965), p. 125.

⁸Gleig, n. 3, p. 243.

⁹J.N. Sarkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire* (Calcutta, 1972), vol. 3, p. 305. See, also, Zakauallah, n. 2, p. 321. According to Sarkar, Shah Alam II entered Delhi on 6 January 1772. See Sarkar, *ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 222.

he addressed Cornwallis affectionately as "my son", but this failed to move the Governor-General.¹⁰

In another letter to Cornwallis he wrote:

There is no difference between the King of England and us. The servants of this throne are the well-wishers of that. . . . we consider all the chiefs of the English nation without exception as our well-wishers.¹¹

In yet another letter he reminded the Governor-General of the orders of the King of England to the Company's officers to render full obedience to "the King of Delhi".¹²

The Governor-General paid no heed to the appeals of Shah Alam II. In fact Cornwallis was forthright in refusing formal recognition and help to Shah Alam II, partly because of his strict adherence to his policy of non-intervention and partly because of his total lack of respect for the Emperor.¹³

Cornwallis ignored even Shah Alam II's formal authority when, in 1790, the Government of Bombay made a suggestion that on the death of the Nawab of Surat, a *sanad* for the country in the Company's name might be obtained from Shah Alam II. Cornwallis would not hear of it. "I am unwilling", he observed, "to lay much stress on a *sanad* from the King as a formal acknowledgement of its validity might be turned to the disadvantage of the Company on some other occasion."¹⁴

In 1796, with all his appeals having thus failed to move Cornwallis, Shah Alam II felt utterly helpless and wrote a letter to Zaman Shah of Afghanistan, inviting him to India to punish the culprits surrounding him. As is revealed by an elegy written by him, he sought for help at this stage from all possible sources in order to save himself from the nobles of his court, especially from Ghulam Qadir. In a couplet he appealed to Asafuddaulah and the English for help:

Hasten, O Asaf, and ye English chief,
Nor blush to soothe an injured monarch's grief.

¹⁰Dutta, n. 7, p. 95. See, also, Clunes, n. 1. p. 37.

¹¹Quoted in Dutta, n. 7, p. 96.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid., p. 101.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 105.

He then appealed to the ruler of Afghanistan and finally to Sindhia in the following couplet:

Bright northern star from Kabul's realm advance,
Thee too, O Sindhia, illustrious chief.¹⁵

Ultimately it was Sindhia who came to the rescue of Shah Alam II. He already enjoyed the trust and confidence of Shah Alam II and marched to Delhi to contain the wily Ghulam Qadir.¹⁶

With the installation of Wellesley as Governor-General in 1798 there began a new phase in the history of India which had a serious bearing upon the relations between the Company Government and the Mughal Emperors. It was a period when the whole of Europe was holding its breath, as it were, on account of the aggressive ambitions and policies of Napoleon Bonaparte of France. Napoleon was a bitter enemy of the British and had sworn to destroy them everywhere. He had even threatened to wipe British influence off Asia, especially by attacking the British stronghold in India. Thus, as Keene observes, "the suspicion, if not the fear, of the French was strong upon Wellesley, and his Indian policy was a part of that far-seeing and resolute vigilance which characterized the British statesmen of those days".¹⁷

Wellesley's predecessor had consistently refused to act as the guardian of the Mughal Empire although he had been repeatedly requested to do so by the Mughal Emperor himself. In contrast Wellesley himself sought to become the guardian of the Mughal Empire. He could become the guardian of the empire only by defeating the Marathas, who had established their hegemony in the North. Besides, he regarded Shah Alam II as a weak king who might turn into a willing instrument in the hands of an ambitious Power. It was important for him to prevent Shah Alam II from falling under the influence of the French or the Marathas. He, therefore, appointed Lord Lake for the conquest of the North. On 27 July 1803, he wrote a letter to Lake, then at Kanpur, proposing an

¹⁵W. Francklin, *The History of the Reign of Shah Aulum* (Allahabad, 1934), edn 3, Appendix II, pp. 255-8. This work was first published in 1798.

¹⁶Sarkar, n. 9, vol. 3, p. 304.

¹⁷Keene, n. 3, p. 448.

alliance with Shah Alam II. He said that he was "anxious to accelerate M. Perron's departure", an event "which promises much advantage to our power in India". The French on their part left no stone unturned to deter Shah Alam II from accepting the protection of the British. Perhaps it was at their instance that the blind Emperor threatened to take the field in person if the British did not stop their operations in the North. However, the British victories over Sindhia facilitated the fulfilment of Wellesley's ambition to bring Shah Alam II under British control.¹⁸

A letter by Shah Alam II, which he sent confidentially to Saiyyad Reza Khan, reveals the fact that even now he was willing to accept the protection of the British. However, being sore with the British over their earlier attitude, he wanted full assurances from them as to his security. He also spoke of the French pressure under which he was acting.¹⁹

Though the fiction of Mughal sovereignty was still kept up, nothing could conceal the hard fact that the old Mughal Emperor was now practically a captive in his own capital. The empire had vanished in reality. In fact Shah Alam II spent the last days of his miserable career as a British pensioner in Delhi. (He died on 19 November 1806.)

Summing up the career of Shah Alam II, Sarkar concludes that he was an extremely weak man and that the main causes of his downfall were his lack of firmness of purpose and capacity for action.²⁰ Francklin believes that "the early part of his life had been active and enterprising. . . . But weak, effeminate, and irresolute, he suffered himself to be wholly ruled by the will of others."²¹

In the beginning of his reign Akbar II (r. 1806-37) was inclined to overlook the hard fact that he was king only in name. Indeed he expressed great satisfaction over the treatment given to him by the British officers. He even considered them his subordinates. He wrote to them: "Our sacred mind has long been impressed with. . . the fidelity and loyalty of the chief officers of the British government [which] exceeded even what you have

¹⁸*Asiatic Annual Register* (London), 1805, pp. 229-31; and Keene, n. 3, p. 448.

¹⁹*Asiatic Annual Register*, *ibid.*, p. 223.

²⁰Sarkar, n. 9, vol. 3, p. 305.

²¹Francklin, n. 15, p. 27.

represented in your address.”²²

As a matter of fact, after the permanent arrangement, Mughal sovereignty was confined only to the Imperial palace. Even the administration of the City of Delhi and its environs had passed under the charge of the British Resident. The Emperor was only the nominal overlord.

Lord Minto sought in his time to clear the confusion about the status of the Emperor. He felt that the views of Akbar II were directed to the gradual recovery and exercise of the Imperial authority instead of being confined to the enjoyment of the Imperial rank and title under the protection of the Company. In his minutes of 6 January 1806 he defined the British attitude as a “complimentary recognition of a nominal sovereignty”. In other words, he regarded the Emperor as a king in the palace and as a mediatized prince outside.²³

With the coming of Lord Hastings as Governor-General in 1813 even the titular dignity of the Emperor was questioned. Political expediency persuaded Hastings to extinguish the fiction of Mughal rule. His seal, therefore, no longer carried the phrase proclaiming the Governor-General as a servant of the Emperor. When Akbar II expressed a desire for an interview with Hastings, he was told that it would not be granted unless the Emperor was willing to waive all ceremonial which implied his supremacy over the British. The reluctance of the Emperor to agree to this condition annoyed the Governor-General; so much so that he reportedly encouraged the Nawab of Oudh to assume the title of King. By this act of abetment of disaffiliation Hastings exposed himself to the charge of high treason.²⁴

By the time Amherst arrived in 1827, the Emperor seems to have adjusted to the new situation; for he received Amherst without that ceremonial to which Hastings had objected. The two entered the *Divān-i Khās* in Delhi from opposite sides at the same moment. They met in front of the throne, exchanged em-

²²National Archives of India (New Delhi), Foreign Department, Political Consultations, No. 98, 12 February 1807, paragraph 3.

²³Percival Spear, *Twilight of the Mughal Empire* (Cambridge, 1951), pp. 38-44.

²⁴W. Haig, *Cambridge History of India* (Indian reprint, 1968), vol. 4, pp. 605-6; and Dutta, n. 7, p. 93.

braces, and then took their seats, the Emperor on his throne and the Governor-General on a State chair placed on the right. No *nazr* was offered. When Amherst was about to leave, the Emperor presented him with a string of pearls and emeralds. Amherst also modified the style of the letters to be addressed to the Emperor. He used forms which recognized the Emperor's superiority but which excluded all words and references which denoted allegiance or vassalage on the part of the British Government.²⁵

In 1835 the Company withdrew coins which had been in circulation since 1778 and which carried a superscription indicating their issuance in the nineteenth regnal year of Shah Alam II. It issued its own coinage instead—rupees which bore the English monarch's image and superscription. With this change it was clear that the old style and the titular dignity of Emperor were on the verge of extinction.²⁶

The elevation of Prince Mirza Jahangir to the position of heir-apparent was strongly opposed by the British as this prince did not have amicable relations with the British. The Emperor was warned of the consequences of nominating Prince Jahangir as heir-apparent. The Personal Secretary to the Governor-General wrote as follows to A. Seton, Resident in Delhi, on 13 March 1809:

His Majesty has declared his right to nominate his own executor among his children, and . . . the object of his choice for that office is, by the usage of the house of Timur, always constituted heir-apparent. This absurd principle is obviously inadmissible; and you will inform His Majesty that he is certainly at liberty to appoint his own executor, but that the British government can never acknowledge any other principle than the right of primogeniture and, therefore, can never recognize as heir-apparent any other than the prince on whom that station of right devolves.²⁷

²⁵Haig, *ibid.*

²⁶*Ibid.*

²⁷National Archives of India (New Delhi), Foreign Department, Political Consultations, No. 103, 13 March 1809. Also, *ibid.*, Secret Consultations, No. 23, 18 December 1806. The British recognized only the principle of primogeniture, and the Mughal practice of choosing any one was quite absurd to them.

In his early years Akbar II used to regard the British rulers as no more than his nobles. He treated the annual sum he was receiving from the British Government as tribute (*peshkash*). He discovered how mistaken he was when in 1807 he asked for a raise. Shah Alam II had in his last days passed a very miserable life, and hence the stipend of a lac of rupees a month along with other allowances was more than sufficient for him. He even left a sizable balance. Akbar II was a man of a different nature. He imitated his mighty predecessors in holding *darbārs* and spent money freely on pomp and show on festive occasions. Finding that his resources were inadequate for his style of life, he asked for increased tribute from the British Government. He argued that a raise had been promised by the British Government in the agreement it had concluded with his father.²⁸

Akbar II sent several letters on the subject to the British Government.²⁹ When, however, all his appeals to the Governor-General proved to be so many exercises in futility, he engaged the services of Raja Ram Mohan Roy to press his claim before the authorities in England. Having accepted the assignment, Ram Mohan Roy proceeded to England in 1829 and presented the claim of the Emperor before both the honourable Court of Directors and the Board of Control.³⁰ However, the attention of the members being engaged in more important political matters, especially the Reform Bill and the renewal of the Company's Charter, nothing was done in regard to the mission of Ram Mohan Roy until about twenty-three months after his arrival in England. Akbar II sent a letter to the King of England also through Ram Mohan Roy. In this letter he complained of the injustices done to him by the Governor-General, especially by Lord Amherst.³¹

²⁸Ibid., Political Consultations, No. 103, 13 March 1809. Also see Foreign Department, Secret Consultations, No. 422, 20 June 1805, Article 12.

²⁹National Archives of India (New Delhi), Foreign Department, Political Consultations, No. 60, 14 July 1810. In this letter Akbar II calls the Governor-General a loyal servant. See, also, *Friends of India*(Serampore), 14 July 1844.

³⁰National Archives of India (New Delhi), Foreign Department, Political Consultations, No. 25, 8 May 1837; and No. 15, pts 1-2, 31 December 1834. See, also, *Friends of India*, 14 July 1844; and *Dillī Urdū Akhbār*, 23 February and 14 June 1840.

³¹National Archives of India (New Delhi), Foreign Department, Political Consultations, No. 25, 8 May 1837.

After a long time, a compromise emerged between Ram Mohan Roy and the Court of Directors on the question of augmentation of the personal allowance of the Emperor. The court agreed to increase the tribute by three lacs of rupees a year provided it was released from all further claims connected with the provisions of the old treaty between Shah Alam II and the East India Company (1805-6).³² This was communicated to the Emperor through the Resident, M.H. Metcalfe.³³

Soon the British sought to buy even the titular dignity of Akbar II for three lacs of rupees. Besides other things, they insisted that he should not use the objectionable term "*peshkash*" for the personal allowance paid to him. They also said that the increased amount would be disbursed under the supervision of the British Government. In effect they rejected the Emperor's statement on the additional expenditure he said he had been incurring. The British Resident himself then proposed a statement of expenditure. In view of these humiliations Ram Mohan Roy started having second thoughts on the compromise; so much so that he advised Akbar II to reject it. He said that he would try to secure better terms through further talks. However, he died soon after.³³ Akbar II wrote to the Governor-General to reconsider the statement he had sent. Nothing, however, came out of his appeal, and the question of tribute was kept pending.³⁵

These events show how miserable was the position to which Akbar II had been reduced. No wonder, then, that he felt unhappy with the British. Indeed he was shocked at the treatment he was receiving from them. The common Muslim also was shocked at the humiliations being heaped upon the Emperor by the British Government.³⁶

Bahadur Shah succeeded to the tottering throne of the Mughal Empire in 1837. The 30-year struggle of Akbar II to get the grant enhanced and save the fiction of Mughal sovereignty

³²Ibid.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid., No. 15, pts 1-2, 31 December 1834; and No. 13, 26 September 1838.

³⁶*John Bull* (Calcutta), 14 March 1832. See Appendix II of the present work.

had resulted only in further deterioration in the position of the Mughal Emperor. Bahadur Shah II (r. 1837-57) inherited nothing but the dread responsibility of handing over charge of the empire to the British. After his accession he remained for the most part in Delhi Fort as a pensioner of the English East India Company. He was allowed no role in the administration of the city and the country. These remained entirely in British hands.³⁷

Bahadur Shah II was an educated and sensitive man and was conscious of the slow decline of the Mughal dynasty. He was also conscious of his incapability and openly admitted it. Of course he cherished the desire to restore Mughal sovereignty but felt that the task was beyond him. Even then he insisted upon British officials keeping up at least during his time such outward recognition of Mughal sovereignty as they had acknowledged at the commencement of his reign.³⁸ Now, however, the British were in a different mood, and they were the last people to miss an opportunity. According to Khwaja Hasan Nizami:

It is customary with the English in this country to proceed very carefully. They ride with farsightedness and caution. They are always careful that a wrong step might interfere with their administrative responsibility and create chaos in the country. Whenever they discover any weakness, they immediately attend to it. The great quality of Englishmen is that they do their job at the appropriate time.³⁹

The rule of Bahadur Shah II, like that of his father, was confined to the walls of the Imperial palace; and the palace was no bigger than the household of an aristocrat. Economically the court was in a poor way as there had been no augmentation of the personal allowance of the Emperor. The employees of the court did not receive even their salaries regularly. Often enough the Emperor found himself driven to the shift of even selling his own personal jewellery to find the wherewithal needed to pay the salaries.

³⁷Mahdi Hasan, *Bahadur Shah II and the War of 1857 in Delhi* (Delhi, 1958), p. xv. See, also, Pakistan History Congress, *Proceedings*, vol. 5 (1955), p. 162. Cited hereinafter as PHC *Proceedings*.

³⁸National Archives of India (New Delhi), Foreign Department, Political Consultations, No. 13, 26 September 1838.

³⁹Quoted in T.A. Nizami, "Muslim Political Thought and Activities in India during the First Half of the Nineteenth Century", *Studies in Islam* (New Delhi), vol. 4, no. 2, p. 105.

On 13 February 1835 the Court of Directors sanctioned a raise in the Imperial allowance. They now fixed it at fifteen lacs of rupees a year. They authorized the Governor-General to distribute an additional sum of three lacs of rupees at his discretion and also directed him especially to allot a sufficient amount for the repair of the palace. They further, advised him to release the grant with effect from the date on which the Emperor would agree to renounce all other claims. It was stated in this connexion that the Emperor must consider the increase sanctioned as ordered to recompense him for claims of every description which he might suppose himself to possess against the British Government. Akbar II had refused to renounce the claims. He had, therefore, been obliged to pass all his life in a vain struggle to secure augmentation of his allowance. Bahadur Shah II raised the issue again in view of the deplorable economic state of the court, a fact which was by no means hidden from the British Government.⁴⁰

Bahadur Shah II wrote a letter to the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Province in the month of March 1838, reminding the British Government of the promises made by Lord Lake and the Marquess Wellesley to Shah Alam II. He said that the British had assured Shah Alam II that "no want of attention should ever take place on any occasion wherein the honour, dignity, and happiness of the Royal House might be concerned". Bahadur Shah II also objected to the list prepared by the British for the distribution of the additional three lacs of rupees; for it made no provision for his privy purse. All the same he ordered that the palace should be repaired in the meantime.⁴¹

The British rulers were now determined to wind up the Mughal Imperial establishment in Delhi on account of the economic dependence of the Emperor. In a letter to Bahadur Shah II, Governor-General Lord Auckland expressed his wish to meet the Emperor in Delhi on a footing of perfect equality. However, as Bahadur Shah II was unwilling to treat Lord Auckland as an equal, Auckland left Delhi without paying a visit to the palace.⁴²

⁴⁰*Dillī Urdū Akhbār*, 23 February 1940, 13 December 1940, and 4 June 1941. See, also, Hasan, n. 37, p. xv.

⁴¹National Archives of India (New Delhi), Foreign Department, Political Consultations, No. 13, 26 September 1838.

⁴²*The Englishman* (Calcutta), 22 December 1837; and I.H. Qureshy, "A

When Ellenborough became the Governor-General of India, he abolished the practice of *nazr*. He regarded *nazr* as signifying feudal submission to the Emperor. Bahadur Shah II remonstrated, but in vain. "The episode of *nazr*", remarks Spear, "is the outstanding example of the changed attitude towards the Mughal family."⁴³

Lord Dalhousie, a diehard imperialist, pretended to realize the responsibility of the East India Company to ensure that the Indian people were properly looked after and started deposing such rulers of India as had failed in his view to improve the administration and the conditions of the people. To reduce the importance of Imperial Delhi too he had a plan. In 1849, when Dara Bakht, the heir-apparent, died, he negotiated with Mirza Fakhruddin, assuring him of succession after Bahadur Shah II in return for a promise that he would shift his residence to Mehrauli and allow the palace to be used as a magazine. He also wanted him to renounce the title of Emperor.⁴⁴

Mirza Fakhruddin died in 1856. This provided another opportunity for Dalhousie to give effect to his plan. The Emperor wanted to nominate Jawan Bakht, his son by the Empress Zeenat Mahal, as heir-apparent. To that end he sent a petition after having it signed by all the eight sons for the approval of the British Government. However, instead of conveying its approval, the British Government started negotiations with Mirza Quwaish. It assured him of succession if he agreed to give up the Imperial title and the palace. It also promised to give him fifteen thousand rupees a month as allowance. In distress Bahadur Shah II could only exclaim that the Mughal Empire would end with him and that there would be neither an empire nor a successor to the throne after his passing. He saw that the British Government was intent on destroying the illustrious house of the Mughals.⁴⁵

As regards Bahadur Shah II's participation in the Uprising of 1857, it appears from our study of the various accounts that the Emperor adopted an ambivalent attitude towards the event. At

Year in Pre-Mutiny Delhi", *Islamic Culture* (Hyderabad), July 1943. See, also, National Archives of India (New Delhi), Foreign Department, Political Consultations, No. 122, 9 May 1838.

⁴³Ibid., pp. 57-58.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 58; and PHC *Proceedings*, vol. 5 (1955).

⁴⁵Spear, n. 23, p. 59. See, also, PHC *Proceedings*, vol. 5 (1955), p. 163.

first he refused to lead the rebels. Indeed he offered to negotiate with the British. Later, however, he agreed to associate himself with the Uprising.

However, it can be presumed that he still visualized the possibility of some settlement through negotiation. In any case he possessed neither the necessary calibre nor the requisite resources to go to war against the British. A long period of inertia had deprived the Mughals of the qualities required for vigorous leadership. They were suited to activities appropriate to a time of peace rather than to war or diplomacy. They had, therefore, no right to continue as leaders of the people or as kings. Even then the way the British slighted and humiliated them was uncalled for and was against all political ethics.

THE NIZAMS

The history of the Deccan from the death of Nizam-ul Mulk Asaf Jah in 1748 till the accession of Nizam Ali in 1761 is conspicuous for the political chaos and instability brought about by the Carnatic wars. Nizam Ali gave some peace and stability to the State but was confronted with the newly emerging Powers, viz the Marathas, Haidar Ali, and the British. Playing off one Power against another, Nizam Ali managed to maintain a posture of independence till the arrival of Wellesley in 1798. He suffered a setback due to his impolitic ways thereafter; so much so that his successor Sikandar Jah inherited in 1803 a State dependent on the British Government. The three alliances between Nizam Ali and the British (signed respectively in 1798, 1800, and 1802) provided no strong basis for establishing durable equations. The successors of Nizam Ali till 1857 grumbled under British rule like other Indian rulers. They had neither the courage nor the resources needed to revive the glory of the illustrious days of their ancestors. The nobles who were playing an important role in the governance gained the upper hand at the Deccan court. Although they might not have been as unwise or cruel as the nobles of the Mughal court, some of them, either from selfish motives or otherwise, attached themselves to the British. The Nizam tried in vain to assert his authority against all manner of pressure that was brought to bear upon him by the British Government, but the nobles tried to reconcile the Nizam with the British Govern-

ment not so much in the interests of the State as in their own interests and with greater obedience to the British Government than to the Nizam.

On 14 July 1798 Wellesley advised C. Kirkpatrick, Acting Resident in Hyderabad, to urge Azim-ul Umarah to enter into a Subsidiary Agreement with the British. He made it clear in the letter that the British troops to be stationed at Hyderabad under the agreement were to be employed strictly within the territories of the Nizam's Dominions and only at times when the person and the authority of the Nizam were endangered. Kirkpatrick accordingly negotiated with Azim-ul Umarah. Azim-ul Umarah agreed to the proposal but laid down certain conditions. He wanted to support Sikandar Jah's succession, use the British detachments in implementing certain measures of internal reform, and arbitrate the differences obtaining between Poona and Hyderabad.⁴⁶ Wellesley cautiously agreed to all the conditions, but insisted that the Nizam should first dismiss the French from his court. He also stipulated that the Nizam should agree to an increase of six battalions in the original quota of troops, called Subsidiary troops, that the British had supplied to the Nizam. It is believed that the Minister kept the Nizam in the dark on the various issues dealt with in the treaty. The Nizam was not willing to dismiss the French from his court. However, ultimately, in view of the dangers looming large before him at the time, he agreed. The treaty was concluded on 1 September 1798. This was the beginning of the end of the Nizam's sovereignty. The treaty proved to be a stepping-stone for the British to establish their stronghold at the court of Hyderabad.⁴⁷ With it Hyderabad became the first State to accept the paramountcy of the Government of the English East India Company. By accepting the treaty Nizam Ali forfeited his right to conduct his foreign policy independently. Even his internal autonomy was eroded; for, from now on, the British Resident and the British forces began to play a decisive role in the internal

⁴⁶M. Martin, ed., *Wellesley's Despatches*, vol. 1, pp. 30 and 288-92. Wellesley's letter to Henry Dundas states the advantages of the treaty signed on 11 October 1798. See Yusuf Husain Khan, "Anglo-Hyderabad Relations", *Islamic Culture*, vol. 27, January 1953, pp. 52-53.

⁴⁷See Khan, n. 46, pp. 52-53; Martin, n. 46, vol. 1, pp. 271-3; and Captain Hastings Fraser, *Our Faithful Ally: The Nizam* (London, 1865), p. 219.

affairs of Hyderabad. Under the other clauses of the treaty the Nizam undertook to pay the expenditure on the augmented forces. The British on their part committed themselves to provide protection to the Nizam and his heirs and successors and to overawe and chastise all the rebels.⁴⁸

According to Mani Gopal Chaudhuri, "the treaty of 1798 established the British influence in Hyderabad but did not provide any security to the Nizam against the Marathas' attack". The Nizam now could scarcely be numbered among the sovereigns of India.⁴⁹

When the British fought their last war against Tipu Sultan in 1799, Nizam Ali, in accordance with the treaty, supported the British and turned down Tipu Sultan's request for support. As a result Tipu was defeated and killed. Under the partition treaty of Mysore, however, the British took care to keep the most advantageous parts of Tipu Sultan's territories with themselves and gave only the insignificant ones to the Nizam. This made the Nizam rather sore over the partition of Mysore.⁵⁰

Realizing that sooner or later hostilities with the Marathas were inevitable, Wellesley sought to strengthen the British alliance with the Nizam by entering into a new agreement with him. The preamble to this treaty, which was signed in 1800, declared that "the Nizam and the Company have in fact become one and the same in interest, policy, friendship, and honour". By this treaty the strength of the Subsidiary forces with the Nizam was increased to eight battalions of sepoy and two regiments of cavalry, with the requisite equipment of guns, European artillery men, etc. To meet the cost of maintaining these troops, the Nizam ceded to the Company, albeit unwillingly, all the territories he had gained by the Treaty of Seringapatam in 1792 and by the Treaty of Mysore in 1799.⁵¹

⁴⁸Martin, n. 46, vol. 1, Appendix F, pp. 682-5 and 271-2.

⁴⁹Mani Gopal Chaudhuri, *British Relations with Hyderabad* (Calcutta, 1964), p. 69.

⁵⁰Sarojini Regani, *Nizam British Relations, 1724-1857* (Secunderabad, 1963), pp. 183-4; and Fraser, n. 47, p. 223.

⁵¹National Archives of India (New Delhi), Foreign Department, Secret Consultations, No. 1, 20 November 1800. The Nizam's proposal to appoint an Ambassador in England was rejected. National Archives of India (New Delhi), Foreign Department, Secret Consultations, Nos 8 and 68, 20 November 1800.

Thus, by the Treaty of 1800, the Nizam was reduced to the position of a subservient ally. Not only did he lose his external sovereignty, but even his internal autonomy was impaired to a great extent on account of the Subsidiary Alliance. The Subsidiary forces were a drain on the economy of the State. In addition, by a commercial treaty with the Nizam in 1802, the British acquired the right to trade with duty limited to a paltry 5 per cent.

Sikandar Jah (1803-29) succeeded to the protected throne of Hyderabad after the death of Nizam Ali. In his princely days he had been very friendly with the French, and it was with a sense of shock that he had reacted to the dismissal of the French under the Treaty of 1798. He hated the manner in which the Resident interfered in the affairs of his dominions; and yet, on account of the vicious grip of the Subsidiary forces on his country, he could not openly object to it. "He had always entertained and seldom failed to express the most inveterate jealousy of the British power and considered every man to be his enemy who was attached to the British power and every man his friend who was hostile to the British."⁵²

In view of Sikandar Jah's hostility the Governor-General decided to introduce certain measures to ensure the co-operation and loyalty of the Nizam and wrote a letter to the Resident accordingly. The Nizam at first refused to consider the scheme drawn up by the Governor-General. He did so reportedly on the advice of two of his courtiers, Mahipat Ram and Ismail Yar Jang. He was afraid lest the British should overthrow him and raise Faridun Jah to the *masnad*. Eventually, however, he accepted the scheme on the good counsel of Amjad-ul Mulk, Ihtesham-ul Mulk, and the *Begam*, who argued that far from diminishing the interests, rights, and the honour of the State the scheme was designed to confirm its stability and independence.⁵³

The British Resident demanded that Rao Rambha and Nur-ul Umarah, who were anti-British, should be dismissed. The Nizam agreed at first but changed his mind subsequently. The Resident reported this to the Governor-General. When Chandu

⁵²Regani, n. 50, pp. 187-8; and Chaudhuri, n. 49, p. 262. In fact Sikandar Jah wanted only British protection, not British control and interference.

⁵³National Archives of India (New Delhi), Foreign Department, Secret Consultations, Nos 26-27, 8 June 1807. Also, *ibid.*, 8 January 1807, Nos 1-4.

Lal conveyed the news to the Nizam, the latter burst out: "What is it to me that he [i.e. the Resident] received such a communication? Of course he did, and he wrote to the Governor-General; for every Resident is an *akhbār navis*."⁵⁴ And in a huff he dismissed Chandu Lal from his presence.

The Resident wrote a letter to the Nizam, reminding him of his promise to dismiss Nur-ul Umarah and declaring that it would not now be proper for him to go back on his word. He also warned him of the consequences of any breach of promise. The Nizam exclaimed, saying: "What is that to the Resident? I may give a hundred pardons of leave a day and take them back again if such be my pleasure. Who is to judge of my interests and dignity but myself? How do they concern the Resident? They are of no consequence to any other person."⁵⁵

Chandu Lal reported the entire matter to the Minister, Mir Alam, and the Resident. Mir Alam explained to the Resident that Sikandar Jah had always been hostile to the British power. As a prince, he had not liked the action of his father in placing the Government under the influence of the British. He detested Chandu Lal as a creature of the British Government and considered him a traitor to the Asafia State. He had ascended the throne fully determined to extricate himself from the control of the British Government. And it was still his most anxious desire. Mir Alam added: "His Highness would have rejoiced if you had been defeated; for in that case he would readily have combined with the Marathas to complete your defeat and expulsion."⁵⁶

Mir Alam not only informed the Resident of the Nizam's anti-British disposition but also described to him how he was being encouraged by Mahipat Ram and Raja Raghottam. These two, according to him, wanted the Nizam to assert his independence as had Sindhia, who was also a Subsidiary Ally. Secret negotiations were going on between the Nizam on the one hand and Maratha chiefs like Holkar, Sindhia, and Ghate on the other, and Mahipat Ram was acting as the channel of communication. Mahipat Ram had advised the Nizam not to dismiss Rao Rambha and Nur-ul Umarah. This was why the Nizam had

⁵⁴National Archives of India (New Delhi), Foreign Department, Secret Consultations, No. 2, 8 January 1807.

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Ibid.

withdrawn his orders of dismissal against Nur-ul Umarah.⁵⁷

Meanwhile the Governor-General, being apprised of the developments taking place in the Hyderabad State, sent a letter to the Nizam, reminding him of the magnanimity of the British Government and the friendly relations obtaining between the two. He also threatened to use force in the event of the Nizam not fulfilling his promises. The Nizam at first decided to oppose the British, even by force if necessary. When, however, he came to know about the military preparations on the other side, he abandoned the plan. After consulting Amjad-ul Mulk and the *Begam* he agreed, on 4 December 1806, to sign the memorandum presented by the Resident. He also agreed to transfer Mahipat Ram from Berar to far-off Saugar and appoint to the administration of Berar only those who enjoyed the confidence of the Minister and the Resident. He consented to grant interviews to the Resident without any condition. He also promised to act on the advice of the Minister and to submit to the arbitration of the British Resident in case of any difference with the Minister.⁵⁸

The Resident insisted that the Nizam should dismiss the troops he had newly recruited. In order to create an impression of ready compliance with the wishes of the Resident the Nizam advised his friends to be friendly with the British for the sake of the greater good of the State and give up all activities that might injure British interests or lead to unsavoury consequences.⁵⁹

Mir Alam, who had played a very dirty role in the negotiations and was responsible for degrading the position of the Nizam, was a British imposition on the Nizam.⁶⁰ From now on it became common practice to appoint a vizier of British choice. With the help of the vizier the British raised the Hyderabad contingent which ruined the economy of the State. The Nizam attempted to remove the Minister in 1806 at the instigation of Mahipat Ram, but in vain. The Minister was unable to improve

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹National Archives of India (New Delhi), Foreign Department, Secret Consultations, No. 2, 8 January 1807.

⁶⁰Fraser, n. 50, p. 226. See, also, Government of Hyderabad, *Freedom Struggle in Hyderabad* (Hyderabad, 1956), vol. 1, p. 18.

the administration of the State as the Nizam never listened to him.⁶¹ He, therefore, wrote to the Resident, expressing his inability to manage the affairs of the State. He gave two reasons therefor. First, according to him, the powers and rights given to him were limited. Second, he never had the confidence of the Nizam. When the Resident advised him to gain the confidence of the Nizam through some well-placed courtiers, the Minister replied that the Nizam was immune to good advice. His habits were execrably low and depraved, his companions loose and profligate, and his advisers short-sighted and evil-minded. His character was fickle, capricious, suspicious, and perverse. He added that the Nizam could only be conciliated by those who abused the Company—such as Mahipat Ram, Raghottam Rao, *et al.* At last, on the advice of the Resident, the Minister approached the *Begam*, Amjad-ul Mulk, and Ihtesham-ul Mulk for a reconciliation with the Nizam. On their advice the Nizam agreed to ask the Minister to prepare a plan for the improvement of the affairs of the State. The Minister presented a plan which the Nizam eventually approved. He, however, died in 1808.⁶²

The Nizam kept pending the question of appointing a new Minister in spite of the pressures of the Resident. A great tussle ensued after the death of Mir Alam between the Nizam and the British Resident over the issue of appointment of a new Minister. According to Regani, "it was indeed an indirect struggle for internal supremacy in the State between the Nizam and the British".⁶³

The British Resident proposed two names to the Nizam and the Governor-General, viz Shams-ul Umarah and Chandu Lal. The Governor-General consented to the appointment of the former as Minister; but the Nizam approved neither of the two names as he regarded them both as pro-British. In an interview to the Resident the Nizam said: "I must have a Minister who will not dispute with me and who will conduct my affairs with regularity."⁶⁴ In fact he wanted a man who would be completely obedient to him and who would at the same time be

⁶¹Fraser, n. 47, p. 227.

⁶²National Archives of India (New Delhi), Foreign Department, Secret Consultations, Nos 42-44, 15 May 1806.

⁶³Regani, n. 50, p. 208.

⁶⁴Fraser, n. 47, pp. 230-1.

acceptable to the British. As such a man was not readily available, he put off indefinitely the question of appointing a Minister. He proposed instead to form a Council in which the Resident would be allowed to have a representative. He thus sought to ensure that no single functionary representing the Hyderabad State became too intimate with the Resident.

On the other hand the British Resident wanted a man who would exert himself to preserve and improve the alliance between the Nizam and the British. In other words, he wanted a man who would strengthen the British position at the court of Hyderabad. He, therefore, disapproved of the proposal of the Nizam for a Council. It would appear that eventually, being fed up with the stubborn attitude of the Nizam, the British Resident conveyed to the Nizam his decision to use Chandu Lal as the link between the Nizam and the Residency, whoever might be the *Divān*. To this the Nizam agreed and postponed the appointment of a *Divān*. After six months the Resident again urged the need to appoint a Minister. In order to keep up the appearance of friendship the Nizam agreed to appoint Munir-ul Mulk as *Divān* and Chandu Lal as *Peshkār*. Munir-ul Mulk was a man of low calibre and proved ineffectual. As a result Chandu Lal became the *de facto* Minister.⁶⁵

Sikandar Jah very soon started disliking Chandu Lal for his pro-British orientation. Chandu Lal, however, was an indispensable man; there was nobody else with his qualifications and experience. Even then he failed to improve the state of affairs. Also, suspecting that Chandu Lal had misappropriated funds and misused his position, the Nizam ordered an inquiry into the accounts since his appointment. The British Resident opposed the inquiry.⁶⁶

Once Henry Russell, the Resident, visited the Nizam's court. The Nizam, however, did not show him the courtesy of embracing him. Russell felt humiliated and demanded an explanation from the Nizam through Chandu Lal. The Nizam replied that it was not customary for him to embrace the Resident except on important occasions like *Īd* and that it was really ridiculous on

⁶⁵National Archives of India (New Delhi), Foreign Department, Political Consultations, No. 57, 15 August 1809.

⁶⁶Ibid., Secret Consultations, No. 4, 20 February 1809; and Political Consultations, No. 14, 2 May 1815.

the part of the Resident to take umbrage at such a minor "offence" and demand an explanation. To avoid bitterness, however, he agreed to embrace him in future.⁶⁷ He was so shocked by this incident that he fell ill soon after and ceased to take keen interest in the affairs of the State.⁶⁸ With the retirement of Sikandar Jah from active administration of the State, the British exercised absolute power in the State through the Resident.

By way of a last attempt to eliminate British influence Sikandar Jah decided to nominate Akbar Jah, his brother, instead of his son, as his successor. Akbar Jah was very hostile to the British.⁶⁹ This shows Sikandar Jah's constant hostility to the British from his princely days till the last. Unfortunately, however, all his attempts to assert his sovereignty and root out British influence from Hyderabad ended in failure. The British Government knew why Sikandar Jah was seeking to nominate Akbar Jah and exclude the "rightful" heir from the throne. How could the British allow another hostile Nizam to succeed? In the Company's interest, therefore, they made the Nizam nominate the mild Nasiruddaulah in line with the law of primogeniture.⁷⁰

Not that Nasiruddaulah (r. 1829-57) was pro-British. Indeed he too gave resistance in his early days to British interference, but gave up the effort subsequently in view of its futility. Consequent upon his succession the British took advantage of the changed situation and sought to do away with formalities signifying the Nizam's theoretical superiority over the British. In his correspondence with the British, the Nizam used to call himself "*Mābadaulat*", a mode of expressing his superiority over the addressee. The British, in their turn, used to write "*Niyāzmand*" in the end, which put them in an inferior position. These phrases were mutually discontinued.

Probably on the suggestion of Chandu Lal, the Nizam requested Governor-General William Bentinck to discontinue British interference in the civil matters of the State. The request was readily granted in view of the fact that William Bentinck had

⁶⁷Regani, n. 50, p. 211.

⁶⁸Ibid.

⁶⁹National Archives of India (New Delhi), Foreign Department, Secret Consultations, No. 8, 8 September 1826.

⁷⁰Ibid., Secret Consultations, No. 8, 8 September 1826.

adopted, in general, a policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of the Indian States.⁷¹ After Chandu Lal's retirement in 1843 the Resident advised the Nizam to appoint a successor. The Nizam said that he was unable to suggest any name himself as he had been kept aloof from the people by the wily Minister.⁷²

Although the Nizam appointed Siraj-ul Mulk as his *vakil*, he was not ready to appoint him as his Minister because of his pro-British sympathies. In fact, he was now as distrustful of Siraj-ul Mulk as he had been of Chandu Lal. It was only after some eighteen months, owing to the insistence of the British, that he appointed Siraj-ul Mulk as his Minister.⁷³ Very soon he replaced him with Amjad-ul Mulk. The British had a good opinion of Siraj-ul Mulk and were annoyed at his dismissal. The British Resident even refused to attend the investiture ceremony of Amjad-ul Mulk. In fact Amjad-ul Mulk was Minister only in name; for the affairs of the State were handled by the Nizam himself. Within five months he dismissed Amjad-ul Mulk also and appointed Shams-ul Umarah. The British had no objection to the appointment of Shams-ul Umarah. Indeed they even felt happy. Shams-ul Umarah tried his best to improve the affairs of the State. He paid the salaries regularly, but failed to settle the debt and resigned in 1749.⁷⁴

The duties of Shams-ul Umarah were now entrusted to Raja Ram Bakhsh. Raja Ram Bakhsh too could not carry on for long, and after a brief interval Siraj-ul Mulk was once again made Minister.

In 1853 Siraj-ul Mulk died. He was succeeded by Salar Jang, the grandson of Munir-ul Mulk. Salar Jang (later Sir) was a learned man and had acquired a mastery over the English language. He was also well known for his pro-British views. As Minister he handled the affairs of the State with much wisdom. The Nizam had appointed him as his Minister reluctantly; he was unable to ignore the advice of the British.

For all his pro-British orientation, Salar Jang was a man genuinely interested in the good of the State, and he managed to

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Ibid., Political Consultations, No. 77, 18 November 1843.

⁷³Ibid., Nos 77-88, 18 November 1843.

⁷⁴Ibid., No. 81, 18 November 1843.

win the confidence of both the British and the Nizam.⁷⁵ During the Uprising of 1857-58, when most of the country raised the banner of revolt against the British, the Deccan too fell in line. Salar Jang, however, saved the State by his shrewd policy. Nasiruddaulah had already died. He had advised his son and successor Afzaluddaulah to adopt a policy of friendship with the British, saying that any opposition to the British was sure to be an exercise in futility. Hence, whatever his real feelings about the British, Afzaluddaulah made it a policy always to be friendly with the British.⁷⁶ Very little is known about his relations with the British and about his princely days.

The revolutionaries directed the Uprising in 1857 from the Makka Mosque. When they attacked the Residency on 17 July 1857, they were not checked by the troops of the Nizam. Fraser observed: "The fact of the insurgents having been permitted to march against the Residency unmolested and the escape of most of them afterwards with their wounds are sufficient proof that the Nizam's own troops were not very warm in our cause."⁷⁷ The Nizam never punished the troops responsible for this failure to protect the Residency. All that he did was to express regret verbally through the Minister for what occurred on 17 July 1857. This proves that he was not truly sincere and loyal towards the British. Obviously he shared the feelings of his troops.⁷⁸

The British never trusted the Nizam. In fact none of the Nizams from Nizam Ali to Afzaluddaulah was a faithful ally of the British as Fraser so fondly believed. If Afzaluddaulah and his predecessors submitted to the wishes of the British, they did so because of the force of circumstances. And they did so most reluctantly. Indeed, wherever possible, they sought to oppose and frustrate the British. It was in the Ministers that the British found their most faithful allies.

THE RULERS OF OUDH

Oudh, another important quasi-independent State like

⁷⁵Fraser, n. 47, pp. 285-7.

⁷⁶Syed Murad Ali Talai, *Afzāluddaulāh Āsaf Jāh V* (Hyderabad, 1943), p. 21.

⁷⁷Fraser, n. 47, p. 287.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, p. v. See, also, *Friends of India*, 15 April 1857.

Hyderabad, emerged as a result of the disintegration of the Mughal Empire during the second half of the eighteenth century. Mohammed Amin Sadat Khan Burhan-ul Mulk (r. 1722-39), Governor of Oudh, is considered to have been the founder of the Oudh State. However, it was only in 1753 that Abul Mansur Safdar Jang (r. 1739-54), son-in-law of the founder of the State and the Vizier of the empire, assumed virtual independence after having been forced to dissociate himself from the Mughal court by a rival group consisting of Intizamuddaulah Imad-ul Mulk, Shamsuddaulah, the Marathas, and the Emperor himself. Safdar Jang died in 1754. He was succeeded by his son Shujauddaulah (r. 1754-75), who was superior to his father both as a statesman and as a soldier. He enjoyed an independent status though he nominally supported Shah Alam II, who had meanwhile been forced out of Delhi by the same group that had ousted his father. The domination of Imad-ul Mulk Ghaziuddin continued at the Mughal court until after the death of Alamgir II in 1759. Imad-ul Mulk Ghaziuddin looked upon Shujauddaulah and Shah Alam II as the two chief obstacles in the way of the perpetuation of his own absolute dictatorship.⁷⁹

After the battle of Panipat in 1761, when Ahmad Shah Abdali confirmed Shah Alam II as Emperor, Shujauddaulah was appointed as his Vizier, and Najibuddaulah became Regent. Shah Alam then decided to return to Delhi, but Shujauddaulah persuaded him to remain at Allahabad. About this very time Mir Qasim approached Shujauddaulah and requested him to make common cause with him against the British. Shujauddaulah jumped at the idea. He thought that it would enable him to annex Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa, as also to appropriate to himself as large a part as possible of the huge wealth that Mir Qasim still possessed.⁸⁰ On Shujauddaulah's persuasion Shah Alam II also joined Mir Qasim against the British forces, but did not participate directly in the ensuing battle of Buxar (1764). The joint forces were defeated.

⁷⁹Hit Prasad, *Tavārikh-i Avadh* (1860, MS available in the Raza Library, Rampur), pp. 17-27.

⁸⁰Saiyyad Kamaluddin Haidar, *Nādir-ul Asr : Svanihāt Salātīn-i Avadh* (Lucknow, 1896), vol. 1, pp. 54-66 and 19-27; Abdul Halim Sharar, *Guzishtā Laknav*, Shamim Anthonvi, ed. (Kanpur, n.d.), pp. 36-37; and Mohammad Ahad Ali, *Muraqqā-i Avadh* (Lucknow, 1912), pp. 17-18.

A treaty was signed in 1765. According to it, Shujauddaulah agreed to compensate the British for their losses by paying them fifty lacs of rupees in cash. He also promised never to provide any help to the enemies of the British in future. Besides, the two parties agreed to assist each other if attacked by their respective enemies.⁸¹ Malleon observes:

The decisive victory at Buxar bound the rulers of Oudh to the conqueror by ties of admiration and gratitude, absolute reliance and trust, ties which made them for ninety-four years that followed the friends of his friends and the enemies of his enemies.

He, however, condemns the British for their ill treatment of their sincere friends, the Nawabs of Oudh. He says that "that constancy of friendship England repaid" by deposing King Wajid Ali Shah eventually (1856).⁸²

The Treaty of Banaras, signed subsequently in 1773 at the instance of Warren Hastings, was a master-stroke of British diplomacy. Annoyed with Shah Alam II, who had now allied himself with the Marathas in sheer frustration over the British failure to escort him back to Delhi, Warren Hastings made over Banaras to Shujauddaulah in return for the immediate payment of a sum of fifty lacs of rupees and for an annually recurring payment of twenty-five lacs of rupees. Besides, Shujauddaulah agreed to maintain a brigade of British troops on the borders of his kingdom. And for the first time a British Resident was appointed for Oudh. This was the beginning of the end. These ties with Oudh subsequently proved to be highly profitable to the British. This way, at first, they created a buffer state against their enemies and, second, managed to gain a foothold in the North. Very soon they became the *de facto* rulers in Oudh, and for all practical purposes the State lost control over its external relations as well as internal autonomy.⁸³ When Haidar Ali of Mysore wrote

⁸¹ *Asiatic Annual Register*, 1806, pt 1, pp. 1-8; and Gleig, p. 3, p. 232.

⁸² Malleon, n. 2, p. 207. See, also, *Asiatic Annual Register*, 1806, pt 1, pp. 1-8.

⁸³ *Asiatic Annual Register*, 1806, pt 1, p. 14. See, also, Mohammad Masihuddin Ahmad Khan, *Oude : Its Princes and Its Government Vindicated* (London, 1857). This book was suppressed by the British soon after it was published. Recently it has been brought out under the title, *British Aggression in Avadh*, Safi Ahmad, ed. (Meerut, 1969), p. 25.

letters to Shujauddaulah, advising him to free himself from the clutches of the British, Shujauddaulah replied:

Fanaticism in religion is for those who have relinquished all interests in worldly affairs, but it would be culpable in persons who, like us, have relative duties to perform towards thousands professing a totally different religion to our own. As for the large army and those ample resources which you have heard that I possess, they are maintained for the purpose of employing them against the enemies of the East India Company. Do not, therefore, expect me to use them otherwise.⁸⁴

This was the tone and policy laid down by Shujauddaulah, who was the first to join the system of British alliances. Professor Mohammed Habib observes: "Utter lack of character was displayed by the Indian rulers; they knew that they would be losing the loyalty of their subjects, but one thing of which they seem never to have thought was resistance."⁸⁵

Shujauddaulah died in 1775, leaving a British-protected State to his son and successor Asafuddaulah (r. 1775-97). At the time of his accession Asafuddaulah entered into a new agreement confirming all the previous treaties with the British. In addition he agreed to cede to the British the District of Banaras in perpetuity. He fixed the charges of the brigade of British troops at two lac and sixty thousand rupees a month.⁸⁶ As a result the State and the people continued to suffer. Asafuddaulah had no aptitude either for soldiering or for administration. His defects were, however, covered up by his extraordinarily generous habits. These played an important role in the opening of a new, a cultural era in Lucknow.⁸⁷ Mirza Abu Talib, a competent official and scholar who served the State in various capacities, points out the incapability of the Nawab, the selfishness of the Ministers, and participation in the alliances as the causes of the misery of the State. He preferred direct British control to the imperceptible

⁸⁴Quoted in Masihuddin Khan, n. 83, p. 25.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. x.

⁸⁶*Asiatic Annual Register*, 1806, pt 1, p. 14.

⁸⁷Sharar, n. 80, pp. 36-39. See, also, Ahad Ali, n. 80, pp. 24-26.

interference exercised by the British in the affairs of the State.⁸⁸ More misery was added when Sir John Shore, a confirmed non-interventionist, forced the Nawab in 1797 to grant fifty thousand rupees for an additional body of Subsidiary troops. Asafuddaulah died a broken-hearted man that very year, on 21 September.⁸⁹ At death he left a Will conferring the succession on Wazir Ali, his natural son.

Wazir Ali (r. 1797-98) succeeded with the full approval of the mother of the late Nawab and the nobles of the court. The Governor-General, Sir John Shore, congratulated him and was satisfied with his mildness and general behaviour. He found him decorous and suitable to his station. The new Nawab told the Resident that he depended entirely on the support of the British and promised to take no step without his advice and that of the Minister, Tafazzul Husain.⁹⁰ Very soon, however, he became unpopular among his own courtiers and kinsmen. The elder *Begam* sought to secure the succession of Mirza Jangli. Sadat Ali Khan was another contender for the throne. Indeed he had started negotiations with the British long before with a view to securing his own succession. Also, the new Nawab failed to maintain good relations with the Resident and the Minister. The British Government noticed that he had developed a hostile and arrogant attitude towards them. Sadat Ali Khan sought to depose the Nawab on the ground of illegitimacy of birth.⁹¹ Shore at first dismissed the plea of illegitimate birth and unpopularity of the Nawab. However, when he visited Lucknow himself and made inquiries, he found that the Nawab was definitely opposed to the interests of the British. The Minister, Tafazzul Husain, personally met the Governor-General and told him of the hostility of the Nawab. The Governor-General, therefore, directed the Resident to sound Sadat Ali Khan. Sadat Ali Khan agreed to the terms and

⁸⁸ *Asiatic Annual Register*, 1806, pt 1, p. 17. See, also, Mirza Abu Talib, *The Travels of Mirza Abu Talib Khan in Asia, Africa, and Europe, 1799-1803*, Charles Stewart, trans. (London, 1810).

⁸⁹ Masihuddin Khan, n. 83, p. 36; and Purnendu Basu, *Oudh and the East India Company, 1785-1801* (Lucknow, 1943), pp. 157-61.

⁹⁰ Hit Prasad, n. 79, pp. 42-43; Haidar, n. 80, pp. 133-4; and Tota Ram Shayan, *Tilism-i Hind* (Lucknow, 1874), pp. 326-8.

⁹¹ Hit Prasad, n. 79, pp. 46-47; and Shayan, n. 90, pp. 326-8. See, also, *Bengal Past and Present* (Calcutta), January and March 1937; and Najmul Ghani, *Tārīkh-i Avadh* (Lucknow, 1919), pt 4, pp. 3-4.

conditions of the British, and it is believed that in a light mood he even promised to cede half the country to the British in return for their help in the matter of succession.⁹²

The British proceeded immediately to depose Wazir Ali on the same basis of illegitimate birth and unpopularity that Sir John Shore had overruled at the time of the Nawab's accession.⁹³ Wazir Ali then organized a resistance movement. He even wrote to the ruler of Afghanistan for help. When the British learnt of it, they put him down with a firm hand. Indeed, from then on, they started playing a more direct role in the politics of Oudh.⁹⁴

Basu argues that the British were not justified in deposing Wazir Ali on the ground of illegitimate birth and unpopularity as Sir John Shore had overruled it himself at the time of the Nawab's accession. According to him, the main reason why the British brought about the change was that they expected many economic, political, and territorial gains from Sadat Ali Khan with his undoubted loyalty.⁹⁵

The nineteenth century in Oudh begins with a new deal between Sadat Ali Khan (r. 1798-1814) and the British. Sadat Ali Khan was undoubtedly a better administrator, but he had succeeded to the throne by giving a blank cheque to the British—an action of which he repented throughout his life. In committing himself to the British he had not foreseen the consequences thereof.

Immediately upon his arrival in India, Wellesley started disturbing the *status quo*. He gave up the old policy of non-interference; for his avowed objective was to assert British paramountcy. He invented pretexts either for war or for Subsidiary Alliances. Sadat Ali Khan was a sincere subordinate ally of the British and had never faltered in his fidelity. And yet, with a view to securing further advantages, Wellesley wrote in 1799 to the Resident of Oudh, asking him to talk to the Nawab and make him enter into a Subsidiary Alliance. He found a basis and

⁹²Hit Prasad, n. 79, pp. 46-50; and Haidar, n. 80, pp. 149-51.

⁹³IHRC *Proceedings*, vol. 23, December 1946, pp. 45-46.

⁹⁴Ibid., See, also, Hit Prasad, n. 79, p. 50; and Ghani, n. 13, pp. 3-4. See, further, *Bengal Past and Present*, January and March 1937.

⁹⁵Basu, n. 89, pp. 163-4.

justification for the proposed alliance in the agreement that the Nawab had signed in 1798. This agreement provided that if need arose, the strength of the troops could be raised to a level beyond 13,000 and that Sadat Ali Khan would meet the additional expenditure involved. The pretext for the demand was the alleged danger from Zaman Shah, the ruler of Afghanistan. Wellesley knew that the Nawab would never ask for a Subsidiary Alliance himself as he did not perceive any danger, internal or external. Wellesley wanted to raise and maintain a formidable army for the perpetuation and stability of the British Empire without incurring any expenditure. This was why he sought to raise the strength of the troops. The Nawab at first resented the proposal. He even threatened to abdicate in favour of his son. This was taken as an affront to the honour and sense of justice of the Governor-General. The Governor-General even agreed to the Nawab's proposal to abdicate on the condition that he should hand over the Government to the British. Finally he ordered the Company forces to deal with the Nawab. This left the Nawab with no alternative but to agree to enter into a Subsidiary Alliance.

A treaty was accordingly signed on 10 November 1801.⁹⁶ Under this treaty the Nawab agreed to increase the subsidy from seventy-six lacs of rupees to Rs 1,30,12,999 to support the augmented British forces. He also agreed to cede Allahabad and Kara, which were fertile parts of his country, in lieu of the subsidy. Further, he disbanded very reluctantly, some of his own troops. Thus the British acquired complete mastery over Oudh.⁹⁷

James Mill, H. H. Wilson, and Marshman unequivocally condemn Wellesley's use of coercion in the process of negotiation. Mill observes: "If the party injured submits, his consent is alleged. If he complains, he is treated as impeaching the honour and justice of his superior—a crime of so prodigious a magnitude as to set the superior above all obligations to such a worthless connexion." Sir Alfred Lyall's verdict is that Wellesley subordinated the feelings and interests of his ally to the para-

⁹⁶Gope R. Gurbax, "Saadat Ali Khan, Nawab Vizier of Oudh, and Wellesley", in *IHRC Proceedings*, vol. 18, January 1942, p. 246; and P.E. Robert, *India under Wellesley* (Gorakhpur, 1961), pp. 123-9.

⁹⁷Ghani, n. 91, pp. 40-49; and Robert, n. 96, p. 131.

mount considerations of British policy in a manner that showed very little patience, forbearance, or generosity.⁹⁸ Commenting on the treaty, P.E. Robert says: "[The] objects achieved were far better than the means employed to attain them." He concludes that the Nawab of Oudh was unnecessarily coerced and that the treaty was illogical and unreasonable. The rulers of Oudh had clung to their suzerain with an embarrassing fidelity.⁹⁹

The treaty having been ratified, the Governor-General intimated to the home authorities the several advantages he wished them to believe to have resulted from it. Upon these supposed advantages, Mill remarks:

The impatient desire to extinguish the military power of the vizier exhibits the sort of relation in which the English government wishes to stand with its allies. It exhibits also the basis of hypocrisy, on which that government has so much endeavoured to build itself. The Nawab was stripped of his dominions, and yet things were placed in such a form that it might still be affirmed he possessed them.¹⁰⁰

The manner in which cession of territory was accomplished may be gathered from the paper entitled "Memorandum of the Final Result of the Discussions between His Excellency the Most Noble the Governor-General and the Nawab Vizier". The Nawab said: "I have been induced to cede the districts for the charges of the troops merely to gratify His Lordship, deeming it necessary to do so in consequence of Mr Wellesley's arrival resolving to conform to His Lordship's commands."¹⁰¹

Professor Habib observes:

The treaties contracted between the parties were agreements of the kind into which we might expect a tiger and a lamb to enter into with each other. The Nawabs had bartered away this freedom practically at their first diplomatic contact with

⁹⁸Quoted in Robert, n. 96, pp. 131-2.

⁹⁹Ibid., p. 119.

¹⁰⁰James Mill, *The History of British India* (Lahore, 1820), edn 2, pp. 213-14.

¹⁰¹Masihuddin Khan, n. 83, p. 48.

the Company. They had given up that part of their sovereignty which is really of the greatest significance to a state. Their foreign relations were entirely controlled by the East India Company. Not only this. They had handed over the defence of their dominions also to this body of foreign merchants. A state which depends for its defence upon others can be a state only in name.¹⁰²

Bhatnagar observes:

The Treaty of 1801, which regulated the relations of Oudh with the Company, had armed the Resident with enormous powers of intervention, leaving not much scope for the rulers to function independently. The character of the rulers cannot exonerate the British from their share of responsibility for misrule.¹⁰³

Every new succession in Oudh implied more control and more interference by the British in the affairs of the State. After the death of Sadat Ali Khan in 1814, the nobles of Oudh were in favour of installing Shamsuddaulah on the throne. The British, however, overruled the proposal on account of Shamsuddaulah's well-known hostility to them. They wanted a weak man. They, therefore, supported the eldest son of the late Nawab, Ghaziuddin Haidar (r. 1814-27), on the basis of the law of primogeniture. A tussle ensued, but the British succeeded in helping their candidate to the *masnad* of Oudh on 12 July 1814. The same day the new Nawab and the Company Government entered into the usual agreement confirming all the previous treaties. Lord Hastings had been annoyed with the Emperor Akbar II for his refusal to offer a chair for him to sit by the Imperial throne during a visit to Delhi. Just to spite the Emperor, therefore, he allowed Ghaziuddin Haidar in 1819 to strike and circulate coins in his own name and use the title of King.¹⁰⁴ With this even the formal

¹⁰²Quoted, *ibid.*, p. viii.

¹⁰³G.D. Bhatnagar, *Awadh under Wajid Ali Shah* (Varanasi, 1968), pp. x and xi.

¹⁰⁴Hit Prasad, n. 79, p. 72; and Saiyyad Kamaluddin Haidar, *Qaisar-ul Tavārikh* (Lucknow, 1896), vol. 2, pp. 243-4. See, also, *The Englishman* (Calcutta), 1 August 1837.

allegiance of Oudh to the Mughal Emperor was broken. It was a shrewd move by Hastings; for the British Government could now enter into direct agreement with the rulers of Oudh and extract more advantages without being bound to abide by the terms of the treaties signed during the *vizārat*. It was also intended to create a rift between the Mughal and the Nawab. Although Ghaziuddin felt flattered, it actually signified no change in his position. The British exercised direct control over the State.¹⁰⁵

Ghaziuddin Haidar was a stickler for economy, and he possessed enormous wealth. Whenever the British needed money while fighting the Burmese and the Nepalese, he lent it to them according to their needs. He later demanded restoration of his territories in lieu of the loans. The British, however, did not agree. Of course they paid him interest. They also consented to the nomination of Nasiruddin Haidar as heir-apparent.¹⁰⁶

During the term of Ghaziuddin Haidar, thus, relations between the British Government and Oudh were cordial on the whole. Lord Hastings and Lord Amherst both appear to be full of gratitude to the King for generously lending them money during the Burmese and Nepalese wars. Whenever requested for loans, the King said that his *jān-o-māl* were at the command of the British rulers.¹⁰⁷

The control of the British Residency over the State suffered a slight setback during the unsteady rule of Nasiruddin Haidar (r. 1827-37) : in spite of all the opportunities which came their way during this period, the British failed to advance their interests further. As the succession was peaceful, they were left without any pretext on which to interfere and bargain to advantage. They only reminded the King of the territorial and financial benefits which they had enjoyed during the time of his predecessor. With the connivance of the wily Minister Agha Mir, the King assumed a posture of boldness, and replied that his predecessor owed his succession to British help and that in his own case they had done nothing for which he should be especially grateful. He was not, therefore, bound to extend favours to them as his predecessor had done.¹⁰⁸ At this the Resident could only

¹⁰⁵Bhatnagar, n. 103, p. ix.

¹⁰⁶Ghani, n. 91, p. 200. See, also, *The Englishman*, 1 August 1837.

¹⁰⁷Masihuddin Khan, n. 83, p. 59.

¹⁰⁸A. Mukherji, "King Naseeruddin Haider of Awadh", *Journal of Indian History* (Trivandrum), vol. 45, pt 2, August 1967, p. 583.

admonish the King to attend diligently to the affairs of the State and the conditions of the people.

Not that the King was wholly unmindful of the importance of keeping the British happy. For instance, he often extended loans to the British. On 1 March 1829 he signed a treaty on the mode of repayment of a loan of Rs 62,40,000 he had extended to them.¹⁰⁹ He also dropped the title "Ghazi" from his name in compliance with a demand from them therefor—just to avoid unnecessary unpleasantness with them.¹¹⁰ The readiness with which the King complied with the demand made it difficult for the British Resident to interfere in the internal affairs of the State.

This unexpected independence of the King was derived not so much from boldness of character as from the peculiar circumstances which then obtained. The King, however, failed to use it for the benefit of the people. On the contrary he gave himself over to two mutually contradictory interests. One of these was pleasure-seeking, and the other initiation of religious innovations. He emptied the State treasury in the pursuit of these two interests. Though impotent, he was excessively given to the company of women; and, paradoxically, he assumed such a pious character during the month of Muharram as to want to punish any man or woman found guilty of sexual misdemeanours during that holy month. He himself participated in, and spent lavishly on, his absurd religious innovations. He remained so busy about them throughout the year that he never had any time to devote to administration.¹¹¹

The period of Nasiruddin Haidar was one of unrelieved gloom in the history of Oudh. In dissipation and wild revelry, according to Rajab Ali "Surur", he outdid even the Emperor Mohammad Shah.¹¹² On pleasure-seeking and religious innovations he spent so lavishly that, according to Kamaluddin Haidar, even if he had commanded the treasure of the wealthy King Qarun, it would not have proved sufficient. He humiliated his mother Badshah Begam in a way that no one else would have done. He pleased neither the

¹⁰⁹*The Englishman*, 1 August 1837.

¹¹⁰Mukherji, n. 108, p. 583.

¹¹¹Kamaluddin Haidar, n. 104, vol. 2, p. 314; and Sharar, n. 80, pp. 57-58.

¹¹²Mirza Rajab Ali Surur *Fasānā-i Ibrat*, Masud Hasan Rizvi, ed. (Lucknow, 1957), pp. 9-16. Surur blames the period rather than the King.

British nor the people. He detested good counsel and was ever receptive to the schemes and conspiracies of wicked people. He banished from his court all wise men like Hakim Mahdi Ali Khan. According to Kamaluddin Haidar, if the British had wanted to depose him, they would have been fully justified in doing so. The King, however, was fortunate that William Bentinck and Charles Metcalfe were not in favour of annexation.¹¹³

The British did not find any pretext for intervention during the reign of Mohammad Ali Shah (r. 1837-42) because the King was extremely diligent and paid full attention to the tasks of administration. However, Mohammad Ali Shah repeated the history of his father Nawab Vizier Sadat Ali Khan both during the tussle over the succession and at the time of his accession, when he signed an unconditional treaty with the British. The only difference is that whereas Sadat Ali Khan had to contend with the aggressive policy that the British had adopted in his time, his son had a comparatively easy time owing to the Directors having decided to follow a policy of strict non-interference. British interference in the internal tussle over the succession was as arbitrary and forceful this time as before. In the fighting that took place on the occasion more than five hundred troops lost their lives.¹¹⁴ The British interfered with a view to deterring hostile candidates from staking their claims, whatever their competence.

On 11 September 1837, soon after the accession of Mohammad Ali Shah, Governor-General Auckland proposed to the King through the Resident, Colonel Low, a revision of the old agreement. An important new clause was provided for the raising of an army at the expense of the King.

On the following day, i.e. on 18 September 1837, the revised treaty was signed. The home Government, however, disapproved of that part of it which made the Oudh State bear the expenses of raising an additional force. On 8 July 1839, therefore, the King was informed by letter that he was being relieved of the obligation to maintain the additional force. In fact the whole treaty was annulled subsequently, but the King was never informed of it.¹¹⁵

¹¹³Kamaluddin Haidar, n. 104, vol. 1, pp. 314 and 340-1.

¹¹⁴Masihuddin Khan, n. 83, p. 72. See, also, *The Englishman*, 17 July and 15 August 1837.

¹¹⁵Masihuddin Khan, n. 83, pp. 75-76.

Mohammad Ali Shah was a sick, old man of sixty-three years when he came to the throne. And yet in his short reign of five years he managed the affairs of the State so well that his administration was considered a definite improvement on that of his predecessors. He never gave room to any complaint from any quarter, whether from the people or from the British Government.¹¹⁶ The Resident, Colonel Low, developed a great respect for his wisdom; so much so that he told him more than once: "It is not necessary for His Majesty to consult me upon every point, possessing, as His Majesty does, so much information, judgement, and knowledge of business."¹¹⁷

Amjad Ali Shah (r. 1842-47) was a religious fanatic and a miser, and he undid all the good done by his father. He too, like his father, paid personal attention to the administration and went through State papers in the beginning. However, he lacked the great personal qualities of his father. He also lacked competent men to advise him. No wonder, therefore, that he failed to maintain the spirit and system of his father. All that he did efficiently was to save money and extend loans to the British and to earn interest thereon.¹¹⁸ He loved money so much that he would not even pay salaries to his employees in cash. Instead he assigned to them villages and *parganās*. This system proved highly oppressive to the people. The State was exposed to the danger of revolt. *Risālā-i Sādiqā* describes the reign of Amjad Ali Shah as a "period of great darkness".¹¹⁹ The British were content to maintain the *status quo*. Occasionally, of course, they warned the King to improve the affairs of the State.

Kamaluddin Haidar confirms that Amjad Ali Shah was a God-fearing man, always busy in observing religious duties and injunctions. Otherwise his short reign was uneventful.¹²⁰

Wajid Ali Shah (r. 1847-56), given over to romance, music, and the fine arts in his princely days, surprisingly showed in the beginning of his reign an unusual keenness for the tasks of administration. He was well educated and possessed an amiable disposition. Temperamentally he was well endowed to discharge

¹¹⁶*Imperial Gazetteer of India*, vol. 23, p. 283.

¹¹⁷Hit Prasad, n. 79, pp. 99-106; and Masihuddin Khan, n. 83, p. 77.

¹¹⁸Masihuddin Khan, n. 83, p. 78.

¹¹⁹Quoted in Ghani, n. 91, pt 5, pp. 20 and 35-39.

¹²⁰Kamaluddin Haidar, n. 104, vol. 2, pp. 376-88.

his administrative duties with justice and mercy. There is no doubt that he would have proved a better administrator than many of his predecessors if he had been given a fair chance. He, however, felt discouraged right at the start on account of undue British interference. Before long he lost all interest in administration. To cite a few instances. Almost immediately after his accession, he introduced certain new styles in his administration which were known as *Mashgalā-i Nausherwāni o-Mashghalā-i Sultāni*. He started inspecting the State troops on parade.¹²¹ He also sought to introduce certain revenue reforms. He even suggested a switch to the British system of administration in some parts of the Kingdom. However, to his great frustration, he was opposed at every step either by the Resident or by the British Government. This discouraged him from involving himself in administration. Indeed he felt so fed up with British interference that he started detesting the very British race. He did not allow any European even to enter his private apartments. Gradually he left the tasks of administration to his Minister, advising him to abide by the *Dastūr-i Wājidi*, carefully prepared by himself.¹²² This marks the commencement of maladministration during his reign.

Like his predecessor, Wajid Ali Shah had never intended to displease either the British Resident or the Government of India.¹²³ And yet very soon he found himself in conflict with the British on various issues. It all started with the King's decision to remove the pro-British Minister, Aminuddaulah. He felt that the Minister was more loyal to the British than to him. In his place he appointed one of his trusted men, Amiruddaulah Mirza Mahdi Ali. Certain acts of Mirza Mahdi Ali too created misgiving in the mind of the King. The King, therefore, started toying with the idea of dismissing him too. The Resident was taken aback. He advised the King not to make hasty decisions but to wait for the arrival of the Governor-General. Meanwhile the Governor-General sent his clearance for the dismissal of Mirza Mahdi Ali. The King appointed Ali Naqi Khan as his Minister on 5 August 1847.¹²⁴

¹²¹Ghani, n. 91, pt 5, pp. 46, 47, 120, 123, and 126.

¹²²*Hindu Intelligencer* (Calcutta), 13 March 1854. Quoted in *The Englishman*, 8 March 1854. See, also, Bhatnagar, n. 130, pp. 46-48.

¹²³Bhatnagar, n. 103, p. 44; and Ghani, n. 91, pt 5, pp. 127-9.

¹²⁴Ghani, n. 91, pt 5, pp. 130-1; and Kamaluddin Haidar, n. 104, vol. 2, pp. 17-19,

A new Governor-General, Lord Dalhousie, arrived in 1848. He was an entirely different kind of man from his predecessor. In response to complaints alleging maladministration in Oudh he ordered a thorough inquiry into the affairs of the State. He also called for the Resident's observations on the rights and the authority of the British Government under the Treaty of 1801 in the matter of affording relief to the suffering people of the State.¹²⁵ Sleeman, the Resident, along with other English officials and the officials of the King, visited all the districts of the State. In the light of the petitions the people submitted to him the Resident sent a report to the Governor-General. The report set forth in lurid detail the cruelties and oppressions being perpetrated on the people by the officers (*āmils*) of the King. The officers and men of the 70,000 strong army of the King were paid only meagre salaries and irregularly at that. They, therefore, oppressed the people and looted money and grain wherever these were to be found. They proved to be worse than the dreaded dacoits for the common people. The fertile lands of the *zamindārs* had turned into wasteland and jungle and were being used as hide-outs by the dacoits and the Thugs. Unmindful of the suffering of the people, the King passed his time in licentious revelry. He generously patronized those who specialized in the arts which lent glamour to his licentious life. Bribery was rampant in the State. Sleeman, once a supporter of the Indian States, observed that the conditions in the State were beyond the control of the King. Even the King's predecessors had failed for the past fifty years to set things right. Sleeman, therefore, suggested that the British Government should take control of the State on behalf of the King. He did not advise the Governor-General to annex the State. In fact the Governor-General and the Resident differed with each other over the question of annexation, and this in fact led to their parting. However, as a first step, following the recommendations of Sleeman, the post of messenger between the King and the Resident was abolished on 1 September 1850. The King had already been reduced to a status equal to that of the Resident. He was now further downgraded to a position of subordination to the Resident and was asked to see the Resident personally at least twice a month. The King

¹²⁵Ghani, n. 91, pt 5, pp. 149 and 239.

protested against this new procedure. Thereupon it was suspended for the time being.¹²⁶

General Outram continued the inquiry after the departure of Sir William Sleeman. He too had been a supporter of the Indian States at one time like Sleeman, and he too now reached conclusions similar to those at which Sleeman had arrived. He emphatically observed that it would be a waste to maintain the irresponsible King and his family. Lord Dalhousie was a confirmed imperialist and an adept at devising ways and means of annexing territories belonging to native rulers. He had successfully asserted the paramountcy of the Government of the English East India Company elsewhere in the country. He ordered the annexation of Oudh on 31 January 1856. The Resident called the Minister, Ali Naqi Khan, and asked him to get the instrument of annexation signed by the King. At the same time he gave assurances as to the full safety of the King and his household. When the Resident and the Minister presented the document to the King, the King wept virtually like a child. He placed his turban at the feet of the Resident and refused to sign. He reminded the Resident of the consistent loyalty and submission of his predecessors to the British Government. He also made an appeal on moral grounds. He argued that it would be against the moral law to snatch away from him the State of his ancestors as they had never broken their commitments or turned disloyal. At the same time the King was shocked at the selfishness and disloyalty of the Minister; for, although the Minister was not a party to the annexation proceedings, he was guilty of a treacherous passiveness.¹²⁷

The people were shocked at the news. The troops also grumbled. Surprisingly, however, nobody uttered a single word. They all cursed the disloyal Minister, Ali Naqi Khan. Perhaps they never expected such an extreme step on the part of the British Government and were hence not in a position to make any violent protest. The King too avoided doing anything aggressive or violent as he knew that it would be a sheer waste of men and

¹²⁶Ibid., pp. 240-5. See, also, W.H. Sleeman, *A Journey through the Kingdom of Oude* (London, 1858), vol. 1, pp. xiv-xxii; and vol. 2, pp. 353-93. See, further, Mohammad Zakaullah, *Tārīkh-i Hindostān* (Aligarh, 1919), pp. xvii, xviii and 12.

¹²⁷K. Sajan Lal, "The Amir ul Akhbar", *IHRC Proceedings*, vol. 25, pp. 172-4.

money to resort to arms against the British. At the same time he refused to sign the instrument of annexation although the Resident and the Minister tried hard to get him to do so. Finally, on 13 February 1856, the State was officially confiscated. The King was granted an annual pension of fifteen lacs of rupees for the maintenance of his household. He was at the same time enjoined to transfer his residence to Calcutta. His appeal against this proceeding to the Government of Britain fell on deaf ears. Such was the reward the rulers of Oudh received for their loyal friendship.

The *Friends of India* applauded the practical statesmanship of Dalhousie and compared him to Robert Peel in political acumen. It also recorded the shock with which the people of Oudh received the news of annexation. It said that the soldiers, the *tālukdārs*, the Hindu rajahs, and the people were arming to defend the State.¹²⁸

The idea of annexing Oudh was by no means new. The British missed the opportunity during Nasiruddin Haidar's time. Annexation brought them immense political and economic gain as Dalhousie had expected. He wrote with unconcealed joy: "So our gracious Queen has 5,000,000 more subjects and £ 13,000,000 more revenue than she had yesterday."¹²⁹

The *Hindu Patriot* of 29 May 1856 confirmed how annexation had resulted in untold gain for the British. It wrote on 6 March 1856 condemning Dalhousie's policy of depriving the native rulers of their sovereignty. On 14 February 1856 it called it an unparalleled development. *The Hindu Intelligencer* of 5 January 1857 also condemned what it called British tyranny over the King, his family, and the nobles and the people of Oudh after annexation.¹³⁰

Masihuddin Khan observes:

Of an amiable disposition, rendered still more attractive by

¹²⁸*The Friends of India* reported on 21 February 1856 that all classes were happy over the deposition of the King; and on 6 March 1856 it said quite the contrary: "All the classes were aggrieved over the deposition of the King." *Bengal Harkaru* (Calcutta) reported on 22 July 1858 that the *tālukdārs* were in a rebellious mood on account of the British injustice.

¹²⁹Bhatnagar, n. 103, p. x; and Masihuddin Khan, n. 83, p. 91.

¹³⁰*Hindu Patriot* (Calcutta), 14 February, 6 March, and 29 May 1856; and *Hindu Intelligencer*, 5 January 1857.

affable and engaging manners, Wajid Ali Shah is much beloved and respected by his subjects, from the highest to the lowest, from the rajah to the ryot, and this is the more so, as he has ever discharged the duties of his high office with justice tempered by mercy.¹³¹

Even Dalhousie admitted: "Whatever the faults of the sovereigns of Oudh towards their own subjects, they have ever been faithful and true to their friendship with the English nation."¹³²

Wajid Ali Shah has nevertheless come in for much criticism at the hands of the historian. He has been held responsible for all the misdeeds of his predecessors. Numerous serious moral evils have been attributed to him. Indeed he is the very devil in the pages of history. He is represented as having been a licentious, vulgar, unjust, characterless, foppish, effeminate, and callous ruler, one who was even worse than the Emperor Mohammad Shah.¹³³ In fact, however, he was a prince with many fine qualities; and but for his lack of courage to challenge the formidable power of the British, he should have proved himself to be one of the best rulers in India. Bhatnagar says: "Lack of training for the office which he filled, a life of ease and dissipation and artistic attainments, kindly disposition and benevolence could hardly be a substitute for the qualities which go to make a successful ruler." Added to this was the legacy of misrule which he had inherited. During his nine years' rule Wajid Ali Shah had to struggle against difficulties which were none of them his creation. He sincerely attempted to improve the administration, but the nature of the Subsidiary Alliances and undue interference by the Resident rendered the task extremely difficult.¹³⁴

Wajid Ali Shah had an abiding interest in the writing and staging of plays. He once wrote a play on the basis of a story relating to the god Indra and asked the court poet "Amanat" to turn it into verse. The play was entitled *Indra Sabha*. He built a beautiful theatre in Qaisar Bagh, and he himself played the hero.¹³⁵ A

¹³¹Masihuddin Khan, n. 83, pp. 78-90 and 131.

¹³²Quoted in the *Hindu Patriot*, 31 August 1854.

¹³³Bhatnagar, n. 103, pp. x and 4-8.

¹³⁴Ibid., pp. x and xi.

¹³⁵Kamaluddin Haidar, n. 104, vol. 2, especially the handwritten pages at the end. See, also, Appendix III of the present work. See, further, Sharar, n. 80, pp. 79-80.

masterpiece and a rare contribution to the literature of drama, *Indra Sabha* came nearest to the European opera. However, it has since acquired a bad odour. Any scenario in which the hero passes his time in the company of bad women is often described as "Wajid Ali Shah's *Indra Sabha*".

It can be said that with all his fine qualities Wajid Ali Shah would have made a greater name than many Mughal rulers if only he had given up the meek policy of trusting to British justice. Indeed he is regarded as next to Shah Jahan¹³⁶ in the construction of magnificent buildings. And he was certainly unique among the rulers of India for his personal achievements in the field of music, dance, and drama.

RULERS OF RAMPUR AND TONK

In analysing the nature of the relations of the Muslim ruling class with the British, we have so far considered only a few important political centres such as Imperial Delhi, Hyderabad, and Oudh. It is just as well that we should now turn to a few representative small States like Rampur and Tonk. Rampur and Tonk acquired great significance during a crucial period in the history of India and were conspicuous in their responses and reactions to the new phenomenon of British ascendancy in India. Both came into being thanks to the courage, valour, and power of their founders, who chose and pursued a military career against all manner of hazards. One should have thought that they and their descendants, who were all great military leaders and lovers of independence, would never accept a position of subordination to the British power. And yet they did so. To be sure, both States at first gave tough resistance to the British, but subsequently they preferred survival to independence.

Rampur emerged from out of the destruction of Rohilkhand at the hands of the rulers of Oudh. It owed its survival to an

¹³⁶Kamaluddin Haidar, n. 104. See, also, Appendix III of the present work. See, further, A. Yusuf Ali, "Muslim Culture and Religious Thought", in L.S.S. O'Malley, ed., *Modern India and the West* (London, 1941), p. 397. Yusuf Ali traces the impact of the European opera on the growth of the stage and drama in Lucknow. Sharar describes Wajid Ali Shah as another Shah Jahan in point of construction of magnificent buildings. Sharar, n. 80, pp. 79-80.

alliance with the British. The Rohilkhand State was founded by an Afghan adventurer, Daud Khan by name, in the early years of the eighteenth century. It was nurtured by his adopted son Saiyyad Ali Mohammad Khan, who added to the glory of the State by his administrative qualities and maintained its strength till his death in 1749. He was succeeded by his minor son, Sadullah Khan. The other two elder sons of Saiyyad Ali Mohammad Khan, Abdullah Khan and Faizullah Khan, were in the custody of Ahmad Shah Abdali.¹³⁷ Saiyyad Ali Mohammad had at his death appointed Hafiz Rahmat Khan as the guardian of the new Nawab. The Hafiz divided the State among the brothers to maintain his own power and position. He thus managed to save the State till 1774, when Nawab Shujaudaulah and Rahmat Khan signed a treaty ostensibly to forestall a possible onslaught by the Marathas. Later, as the Hafiz did not fulfil his obligations under the treaty, Shujaudaulah appropriated the Rohilkhand State to himself.¹³⁸

Following intervention by the British, Faizullah Khan, one of Saiyyad Ali Mohammad Khan's elder sons who had been in the custody of Ahmad Shah Abdali, and Shujaudaulah signed a treaty on 17 October 1774. Under this treaty Faizullah Khan received Rampur, which was his part of the old Rohilkhand State. In return he accepted complete submission to Shujaudaulah. As the British had helped in these negotiations, he promised not to have any relations with any Power except with the knowledge and concurrence of the British. The British on their part underwrote the treaty when it was renewed in 1778.

The transaction was followed by a rather striking incident. Nawab Faizullah Khan made an offer of all his cavalry, about 2,000 strong, to Governor-General Warren Hastings as soon as he heard that in Europe Britain had declared war against France. This he did despite the fact that he was under no obligation to supply a single man.¹³⁹ The Governor-General was impressed by the friendly

¹³⁷*Gazetteer of the Rampur State* (Allahabad, 1911), pp. 81-82. See, also, Najmul Ghani, *Akhbār-us Sanādīd* (Rampur, 1906), pt 1, pp. 46-67; and Charles Hamilton, *An Historical Relation of the Origin, Progress, and Final Dissolution of the Government of Rohilla Afghans* (London, 1738), edn 2, pp. 30-40 and 93 and Appendix II.

¹³⁸Ghani, n. 137, pp. 123 and 327.

¹³⁹*Ibid.*, p. 91; and Hamilton, n. 137, Appendix III, pp. 293-5.

gesture of the Nawab and wrote a letter on 8 January 1778, expressing his gratitude: "In his own name, as well as that of the Board, he [i.e. Warren Hastings] returned him the warmest thanks for his instance of his faithful attachment to the Company and the English nation."¹⁴⁰ When the Nawab died in 1794, the State was stable and prosperous and friendly to the British. Although officially subordinate to Oudh, the Nawab had developed direct relations with the British in the belief that the English East India Company was his real suzerain.¹⁴¹

Faizullah Khan was succeeded in 1794 by his son Mohammad Ali Khan, who was thoroughly incompetent. As a result he was deposed and replaced by his younger brother Saiyyad Ghulam Mohammad Khan. The main cause of Mohammad Ali Khan's unpopularity among his subjects was his pro-British disposition. The *sardārs*, under Nuchoo Khan and Qamar Khan, were wholly annoyed with him on account of his pro-British policies; so much so that when, after deposing Mohammad Ali Khan, Saiyyad Ghulam Mohammad Khan proposed that his imprisoned elder brother should be accorded kind and generous treatment, the *sardārs* did not allow him to do so. They felt content only after murdering the deposed Nawab.¹⁴²

After deposing and killing Mohammad Ali Khan, the *sardārs* wrote the following letter to the Nawab Vizier of Oudh: "If after this representation our request is denied, it will be conspicuous throughout the empire of Hindostan that in the days of Asafuddaulah, assisted by the English Company, the Rohilla nation was extirpated."¹⁴³ However, the Nawab Vizier declined to recognize Ghulam Mohammad Khan as the Nawab of Rampur. Instead he supported the claim of Ahmad Ali Khan, a minor son of Mohammad Ali Khan. This led to a long-drawn tussle between the two rival groups. The British supported the Nawab Vizier in

¹⁴⁰James Mill, *History of British India* (Lahore, 1920), vol. 4, p. 410. *Gazetteer of the Rampur State*, n. 137, pp. 90-91.

¹⁴¹*Ibid.*, p. 92.

¹⁴²Francklin, n. 15, pp. 221-3; Hit Prasad, n. 79, pp. 33-34; and Shayan, n. 90, p. 318. Mohammad Ali's conversion to Shiaism under the influence of Asafuddaulah was another cause of his unpopularity. See Niaz Ahmad Khan Hosh, *Tārīkh-i Rohilkhand* (Rampur, n. d.), vol. 1, p. 50.

¹⁴³Francklin, n. 15, p. 239; and Ghani, n. 137, pt 2, p. 630.

a battle fought against Saiyyad Ghulam Mohammad Khan. The latter offered tough resistance. When the issue of the battle was still hanging in the balance, the British as usual resorted to a trick. They drew Saiyyad Ghulam Mohammad Khan away by holding up before him the prospect of a reasonable compromise and then took him into custody. They also announced that they had decided to recognize Ahmad Ali as Nawab.¹⁴⁴ The *sardārs* thereupon continued their resistance, but they were handicapped by the absence of their leader. The British did not allow Saiyyad Ghulam Mohammad even to meet his people. Shocked and disgusted, the Nawab then sought the permission of the British to perform *Hajj*. This was granted. At first the Nawab went to Afghanistan to meet Zaman Shah, the King. It is believed that being angry with the British for their deceitfulness, he requested Zaman Shah to invade India and teach the British a lesson. Zaman Shah had been receiving similar invitations from India for one reason or another. He, therefore, drew up a plan to invade India, but could not carry it out on account of certain domestic difficulties.¹⁴⁵ Thus, observes Francklin,

. . . terminated a revolution which, though at the first appearance exhibited but a slight speck in the political horizon of Hindostan, had nevertheless by a variety of circumstances and incidental causes during its progress threatened to prove fatal to the interests of Great Britain or at least to give a severe check to their authority.¹⁴⁶

When Sadat Khan ceded Rohilkhand permanently to the British under the revised Treaty of 1801, the Rampur State passed officially and permanently under the control of the British. The British found the friendship of the Nawab of Rampur very useful in the years that followed.¹⁴⁷

When Henry Wellesley visited Bareilly, he was accorded a warm welcome by Nawab Saiyyad Ahmad Ali. This led to durable friendship between the two.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁴*Gazetteer of the Rampur State*, n. 137, p. 96.

¹⁴⁵*Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶Francklin, n. 15, p. 242.

¹⁴⁷Ghani, n. 137, pt 2, pp. 702-7.

¹⁴⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 702-3.

After the death of Nawab Saiyyad Ahmad Ali in 1840 the British intervened to settle the issue of succession. The late Nawab had no male issue. The British did not want his daughter Tajdar Begam to accede to the throne. Instead they chose Saiyyad Mohammad Sayid Khan, son of Saiyyad Ghulam Mohammad Khan. Saiyyad Mohammad Sayid Khan had gained the confidence of the British. The British had treated him well after the departure of his father for *Hajj*. They had appointed him Deputy Collector of Badaun, and in that position he had strengthened his relations with the British.

Saiyyad Mohammad Sayid Khan was formally proclaimed Nawab of Rampur on 20 August 1840.¹⁴⁹ He maintained his relations with the British so well that when the *begams* of the late Nawab once complained of ill treatment at his hands, the British just dismissed the complaint out of hand.¹⁵⁰

In 1851 Lord Dalhousie visited Rohilkhand. He received a warm welcome. In the *darbār* held in his honour he proclaimed the Nawab's son Yusuf Ali heir-apparent.¹⁵¹

In his last days Nawab Saiyyad Mohammad Sayid Khan advised his son Yusuf Ali to remain always loyal to the British Government. He also advised him to deal with the members of the family in accordance with the instructions of the British Government. On the death of Saiyyad Mohammad Sayid Khan on 10 April 1855 Yusuf Ali was officially proclaimed Nawab of Rampur.¹⁵²

Nawab Yusuf Ali remained firmly loyal to the British during the nation-wide Uprising of 1857 and helped in suppressing the rebels. The British in their gratitude bestowed on him many honours and titles and other presents. Lord Canning appreciated the services of the Nawab in the Fatehgarh *darbār* held on 15 November 1859.¹⁵³

Along with Rampur, Tonk was one of the few Muslim States to offer resistance, at least in the beginning. Of course it too

¹⁴⁹*Gazetteer of the Rampur State*, n. 137, p. 101.

¹⁵⁰Ghani, n. 137, pp. 3 and 13. See, also, *Dillī Urdū Akhbār*, 30 May 1841, p. 248.

¹⁵¹*Gazetteer of the Rampur State*, n. 137, p. 101.

¹⁵²Ghani, n. 137, pt 2, pp. 24-25.

¹⁵³*Gazetteer of the Rampur State*, n. 137, pp. 101-10; and Ghani, n. 137, pp. 32-97.

accepted the suzerainty of the British in course of time. The first two rulers of Tonk—Amir Khan, the founder, and Wazirud-daulah—carried on a crusade, as it were, against the British. The former resisted subordination to the British through his valour, power, and arms; the latter devised indirect and secret means of resistance as the British had already established their physical superiority in the time of his father and had forced him to enter into a no-war pact.

Amir Khan (1758-1834), founder of the Tonk State, belonged to the Salarzai tribe of Bonair in the north-west frontier of India. Mohammad Hayat Khan, father of Amir Khan, had fought in the Rohilla wars, but had settled down to lead a peaceful life after the defeat of Hafiz Rahmat Khan (1774). Amir Khan was keenly interested in the military profession and adopted a career of military adventure. After gathering a sizable army he helped one group against another and looted much wealth and distributed it among the soldiers. He thus acquired great fame as a consistent fighter and brave soldier.¹⁵⁴

During the last phase of the Anglo-Maratha wars, Amir Khan joined Jaswant Rao Holkar upon the latter's insistence. Holkar at first decided to maintain peace with the British and refused to support the various Maratha factions in the struggle against the British. After defeating those Maratha factions the British eventually turned against Holkar also.¹⁵⁵

Amir Khan and Holkar together fought bravely against the British and went as far as the Punjab. The British were afraid lest the Sikhs should join the two in their crusade against them. They, therefore, offered Indore to Holkar in order to tempt him into suspending hostilities. Amir Khan, who was determined to fight the British out, stood out against any compromise with the British; and the British were not ready to conclude any treaty with Holkar without the concurrence of Amir Khan. Amir Khan eventually yielded his consent to the compromise when Holkar begged him to do so by putting his *pagri* at his feet.¹⁵⁶

Amir Khan continued to defy the British all the same. Preferring to remain an independent *sardār*, he moved on to Rajputana

¹⁵⁴Ghulam Rasul Mehr, *Saiyyad Ahmad Shahid* (Lahore, 1952), vol. 1, pp. 86-87.

¹⁵⁵*Imperial Gazetteer of India*, vol. 23, p. 409.

¹⁵⁶Mehr, n. 154, pp. 87-88.

and settled in Tonk, where he carved out for himself an independent State known as Tonk. He followed an anti-British policy and led many expeditions against the British. He helped even the Pindaris against the British.¹⁵⁷

Amir Khan gradually grew in power and gathered a formidable army. He was the last crusader of independent India. He was determined to fight the British to the last. The British dreaded him very much; so much so that they avoided a direct clash with him for a long time. They lay low, looking for some suitable opportunity to put him down. Gradually Amir Khan found himself isolated; for all his friends drifted away from him after making their peace with the British. After subduing the whole of Central India, the British turned to Amir Khan of Tonk; for he was the lone survivor among the free rulers. During the famous Pindari wars General Donkin placed his troops between the Pindaris and Amir Khan. At the same time British army reserves, under General David Ochterlony, advanced to the south of Jaipur, separating the two principal divisions of the Nawab's troops. Thus blew out the last Indian hope. Helpless and hopeless, the Nawab ensured his survival by accepting a treaty dictated by the British.¹⁵⁸

Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi, who was at this time in the service of the Nawab, advised him to renew hostilities against the British and to fight unto death, adding that if they lost their lives they would become martyrs and that, if they emerged victorious, they would be honoured as *ghāzis*. Amir Khan was not able to accept the advice as his troops had already been affected, and the British had succeeded in corrupting his officers. Faizullah Khan Bangash, a powerful lieutenant of the Nawab, had gone over to the British side along with his battalion. Amir Khan was left with no alternative but to yield to the British. He signed the final settlement with Ochterlony on 15 December 1817.¹⁵⁹

Although the Nawab was politically subdued by the British,

¹⁵⁷Hafeez Malik, *Moslem Nationalism in India and Pakistan* (Washington, D.C., 1966), p. 159.

¹⁵⁸Baswan Lal, *Amīr Nāmāh* (available in the National Library, Calcutta), pp. 561-2.

¹⁵⁹Ibid. See, also, Mehr, n. 154, pp. 100-9.

he continued to provide every possible help to the movement of Saiyyad Ahmad Bareilvi, for whom he had great reverence.¹⁶⁰

Amir Khan was undoubtedly a brave man and a crusader against British rule, but he lacked a broad outlook. The most unfortunate part of it is that in spite of the presence of Saiyyad Ahmad Bareilvi at his court he did not set before himself any goal greater than that of surviving in the midst of hostile Powers. Although he started off full of determination, he eventually accepted the meek policy of retaining and maintaining his own Kingdom. This tainted his reputation. He would have achieved much fame if, like Tipu Sultan, he had died fighting against the British.¹⁶¹

Wazir Muhammad Khan Waziruddaulah (r. 1834-64), son of Amir Khan, was a religious man and had great reverence for Saiyyad Ahmad Bareilvi. Although he was politically under British rule, he proved to be the greatest supporter of the *jihād* undertaken by Saiyyad Ahmad Bareilvi and gave the maximum help possible to the *mujāhidin*. After the martyrdom of Saiyyad Ahmad Bareilvi he gave generous grants of money and land to his dependents. He appointed the *mujāhidin* to high posts. Those who refused to accept office were given generous grants. His country was an unfailing refuge for the *mujāhidin*. He founded a *muhallā* known as *Muhallā-i Qāfilā* specially for the *mujāhidin*.¹⁶² Even after the martyrdom of Saiyyad Ahmad Bareilvi, when Maulvi Saiyyad Nasiruddin Dehlvi became *Amir-i Jihād*, he continued to support the movement.

As regards the British, it would appear that Wazir Mohamad Khan Waziruddaulah maintained the *status quo* in his relations with them. The British did not interfere in the internal affairs of his State so long as he did not do anything that hurt their interests. The support he gave to the *mujāhidin* went unnoticed. At that time the British did not consider the movement as one directed against them. However, to maintain peace in his country in 1857 he dealt severely with the rebels, the Nawab of Banda and Tantia Tope, when they attacked the fort of Tonk. For these services, his salute was raised from fifteen

¹⁶⁰Malik, n. 157, p. 165.

¹⁶¹Ibid.

¹⁶²Ghulam Rasul Mehr, *Jamāt-i Mujāhidin* (Lahore, 1955), pp. 189-92.

guns to seventeen. His son and successor Mohammad Ali Khan was, however, deposed owing to his avowedly anti-British orientation. In his place his minor son Mohammad Ibrahim Ali Khan was made the Nawab. This prince maintained good relations with the British.¹⁶³

¹⁶³ *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, vol. 23, pp. 40C-1.

Chapter 3

MUSLIM ARISTOCRACY

The Mughal nobility was multinational, multi-religious, and multiracial in character. The Mughal Emperors, great patrons of art and learning, appointed men to the various *mansabs* of the Government strictly on the basis of merit. These men included both those who belonged to the country and those who came from outside, from lands as far away as Persia (Iran), Turkey, Afghanistan, and even Europe : "The Mughal Emperors regarded nobility of birth as an important qualification ; but merit and learning were even more important. . . . They never showed much predilection for ethnic, national, or clan exclusiveness. It was thus very different from. . . hereditary feudal nobility of Mediaeval Europe."¹

Thus we notice a continual influx of learned men and brave soldiers into India during the time of the Great Mughals. A number of them came during the time of the later Mughals as well. Most people who came to India and settled here did so to make their fortunes under the generous Imperial patronage. And India, as they expected, proved to be a cornucopia for them. They not only achieved great success but rose to positions higher than the ones they had held in their own countries besides acquiring enormous wealth and extensive *jāgirs*. They made India their home and progressively lost contact with the lands of their birth.

Those who came during the time of the later Mughals were not of high calibre generally though not completely devoid of merit. Their mundane interests often took precedence of the larger interests of the State. The nobles, who together constituted an important pillar of the State and who had contributed handsomely to the ideological and physical strength of the Government during the time of the Great Mughals, started concentrating on their own narrow interests and security. It goes without saying that a healthy nobility

¹Satish Chandra, *Parties and Politics at the Mughal Court, 1707-1740* (New Delhi, 1972), edn 2, p. xxix.

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should remain loyal and sincere to the State and its welfare. This, however, is possible only when the State or the ruler is capable of holding the nobles together by imbuing them with a sense of security. So long as the rulers were strong, they inspired confidence and succeeded in maintaining a psychological cohesion within the nobility ; but as the rulers degenerated, the nobility too lost its sense of security and unity. The divisive tendencies and rivalries began to play a destructive role and undermined the loyalty of the nobility. "Thus the nobility", says Satish Chandra, "ceases to play a dominant role in shaping the politics of the country after the invasion of Nadir Shah."² Malleson says : "In the disruption of the Mughal Empire which followed the death of Aurangzeb in 1707, the powerful nobles, each fighting for his own hand, had sought to secure for their respective families, in permanent possession, provinces and districts which they might claim as their own."³ Once the process of disruption set in, even competent and sincere nobles—and their number, alas, was very small—were not able to stem the rot from spreading further and arrest the fall of the Mughal Empire. They turned their backs on the tasks of government and started seeking their fortunes elsewhere.

However, there are times when, under certain peculiar circumstances, a ruler gets eclipsed. At such times a powerful noble or group of nobles comes to his rescue. Of course it is not often that one comes across such loyalty on the part of the nobility. Generally, when a ruler exhibits constant weakness, the nobility gains the upper hand. Satish Chandra observes: "During the latter part of the 17th century and in the early part of the 18th century, stresses were placed on the nobility which, combined with its internal weaknesses, led to growing factionalism in the nobility and disrupted the Empire."⁴ The principle of merit worked well so long as the rulers had the wisdom needed to differentiate the meritorious from the others. When such wisdom became a scarce commodity, the hereditary system replaced merit. Simultaneously there arose the twin evils of nepotism and favouritism.

²Ibid., p. xviii.

³G.B. Malleson, *The Decisive Battles of India* (London, 1914), edn 4, p. 164.

⁴Satish Chandra, n. 1, pp. xxxv and xxxvi.

The first half of the nineteenth century inherited this phenomenon from the preceding century. By the beginning of the nineteenth century the Mughal nobility fully realized that the Indian rulers stood nowhere in power and position in comparison with the British and that the Muslim States would not be able to carry on without the help of British forces. Whenever any Indian ruler opposed the interference of the British and wished to get out of their clutches, the nobles persuaded him not to do so. And if any ruler went to the extent of dismissing such nobles, the officials of the British *rāj* forced him to take them back. Most surprisingly some of the rulers stupidly dismissed even those nobles who were sincere and loyal to them. They did so because of the pressure brought upon them either by nobles who were pro-British or by the British officials. Nobles who were pro-British then found it easy to dominate court affairs. Of course, there was always a group of nobles opposed to British interference and domination, but it lacked calibre, strength, and influence. Indeed it would not be wrong to conclude that there was complete disorder in the Muslim administrative hierarchy in the early nineteenth century.

Largely owing to the preoccupation of the nobles with their own selfish interests and to some extent because of the nature of the times, there was no united resistance to the growing British dominance. A large number of nobles thought it expedient to adopt a dual policy, a policy of being loyal to two masters at the same time. They claimed to be the courtiers of the Muslim States and drew their salaries from those States ; and yet they behaved as if they constituted yet another "Subsidiary force" of the British Government.

In the beginning of the nineteenth century some Indian rulers were not too unhappy with such nobles as they looked upon them as providing a good link between themselves and the British. Hence they preferred nobles who were *personae gratae* with the British. This, however, proved to be counter-productive ; for ultimately such nobles started overlooking the interests of their own rulers. This kind of behaviour on the part of the nobles eventually made the Indian rulers realize the dangers in employing them or in placing their trust in them. But such nobles could not easily be dislodged as they had the stout support of their British patrons.

However, the anti-British sentiment survived and was strengthened with the passage of time, and whenever it found an opportunity, it manifested itself in various forms. The Uprising of 1857 proved to be the greatest opportunity for the anti-British sentiment; for it manifested itself then in full fury in all the sections of the Indian people. However, this time too the most loyal "Subsidiary nobility" and the Subsidiary forces saved the British power in India.

It is at the same time important to note that the pro-British nobles were not all time-servers. Some of them were sincere men who wanted to learn from the West and reorganize the State on modern and scientific lines. They were inclined to accord more priority to the tasks of modernization of the State apparatus than to the question of making the State completely autonomous or getting it out of British control.

Thus, a close examination of the different modes of behaviour of the nobility shows that it is possible to place the nobles in a few clear-cut categories. One group of nobles sincerely considered friendship and alliance with the British indispensable for the continued existence of the Indian States and made it their policy to be friendly with the British with the consent of the King if possible or without it if necessary. Another group was so completely impressed by the British and their culture that it sought to organize the affairs of State and the conditions of society on British lines. A third group was loyal neither to the State nor to the British Government and followed a policy which, in its view, best suited its own personal and selfish interests. There was, finally, a fourth group which was totally opposed to British dominance and the British connexion. The first three groups were in a majority, and with the powerful support of the British they sought to serve British interests and remained dominant throughout the period under study. The last group was much too small in size, albeit very strong in feeling. It had a considerable following too. However, it lacked intrinsic power, and as such it could not curb British dominance.

Nobles of the Delhi Court

In spite of internal dissensions within the ranks of the nobility, some of the nobles like the Saiyyad brothers, Nizam-ul Mulk Asaf Jah, Sadat Khan, and Safdar Jang remained thoroughly

loyal to the Mughal Empire and were able to hold on to the area from Agra to Panipat during the first half of the eighteenth century. They maintained its independence against the onslaughts of the Marathas, the Jats, the Sikhs, and the Afghans during the lean years of the Mughal Empire. However, their dominance at the court and control over the emperors stirred up the envy of rival nobles and led to intense infighting.

A complete rot set in in the ranks of the nobility during the reign of the Emperor Mohammad Shah; so much so that even nobles who were sincere in their loyalty to, and goodwill for, the Emperor were left with no choice but to leave the court owing to the follies of the Emperor.

As a prince Shah Alam started asserting his sovereignty over the Bengal State, which his father had assigned to him. He sought help for his cause from Shujauddaulah, the Nawab of Oudh. Indeed he placed the utmost reliance in Shujauddaulah. However, the cunning Shujauddaulah, who was a candidate for the *vizārat*, politely and diplomatically avoided giving him direct help. He directed him instead to his cousin Mohammad Quli Khan, then Deputy Governor of Allahabad. This shrewd move on the part of Shujauddaulah was intended to remove his cousin and annex Allahabad. The cause of Shah Alam was further vitiated by the policy of the wicked vizier Imad-ul Mulk, who compelled the Emperor Alamgir II, an unhappy puppet in his hands, to pronounce Shah Alam a rebel.⁵

Shujauddaulah's opportunism was laid bare when he openly joined Mir Qasim against the British for political and economic gain. He persuaded the Emperor Shah Alam II to join hands with him. Shah Alam II agreed because he still needed the vizier's help in carrying out his plan to return to Delhi. Of course he did not participate personally in the war, but that did not save him from his share of the humiliations of the defeat at Buxar. As if this were not enough, Shujauddaulah deserted him and signed a peace treaty with the British.⁶

The Rohilla chief Ghulam Qadir, another noble, was loyal neither to the Mughal Emperor nor to the empire. In 1787, when

⁵Quoted in K.K. Dutta, *Shah Alam II and the East India Company* (Calcutta, 1965), p. 22.

⁶Ibid., p. 26.

Sindhia was absent from court, he suddenly marched on Delhi, sacked the palace in search of hidden treasures, blinded and deposed Shah Alam II, and maltreated the Imperial family. Malika Zamani, widow of Mohammad Shah, took this opportunity to settle old scores. She told Ghulam Qadir that she would pay him twelve lacs of rupees if he helped her in making her grandson Bedar Bakht Emperor of Hindostan. Nobles of lower status like the eunuch Manzur Ali too betrayed Shah Alam II and sided with Ghulam Qadir.⁷

Not many nobles were loyal to the Emperor Shah Alam II and the Mughal Empire. Loyal nobles were indeed so few that one could count them on the tips of one's fingers. Najibuddaulah Rohilla was certainly a loyal man, strong and sincere. After the battle of Panipat in 1761 Ahmad Shah Abdali had entrusted the reins of the empire to his hands. From that date onwards to the time of his own death in 1771 he kept the Mughal Empire intact for Shah Alam II. It is surprising that Shah Alam II hesitated to return to Delhi during the period when Najibuddaulah, a strong man, was there to help him.⁸

Another noble who was sincere in his loyalty to Shah Alam II was Najaf Khan. After Shah Alam II's return to Delhi in 1771 it was he who looked after matters of State. He succeeded in keeping the Mughal Empire safe till his own death in 1782. It would, however, appear that he too assumed vast powers and kept Shah Alam II in a position of political inactivity. At his death, consequently, the Mughal Empire appeared to have been completely weakened.⁹

In 1803 Sikandar Jah obtained a *sanad* from the Emperor, confirming his succession as the Nizam. It was the last occasion when a Nizam did so. Indeed it was already an empty formality. In 1819 the Nawab of Oudh too broke his nominal relations with the Mughal Empire after he had been encouraged to assume the dignity of King by Lord Hastings. The fact that the Emperor was a mere puppet in the hands of the British was no closely guarded secret. And yet the nobles pretended to be loyal to the Emperor.

⁷Ibid., p.93.

⁸W. Francklin, *The History of the Reign of Shah Aulum* (Allahabad, 1934), p. 34.

⁹Ibid., p. 291; and P. Spear, *Twilight of the Mughal Empire* (Cambridge, 1951), pp. 20-21.

Sometimes they even took undue advantage of the weak position of the Emperor.¹⁰ Zakaullah Khan thus relates an unfortunate incident.

Once the Emperor Akbar II, in his eagerness to get his personal allowance augmented and his son Mirza Jahangir recognized as heir-apparent, sought the help of some nobles to negotiate with the British. Two rascals, one Hindu and the other Muslim, conspired to make a fool of him. A *maulvi* too is said to have been privy to their disgraceful conspiracy. They presented a letter purporting to be from Chief Justice Russell to the Emperor, and said that they would be willing to go to Calcutta to get Mirza Jahangir recognized as heir-apparent. The Emperor accepted their "offer" and sent them to Calcutta. The *maulvi* remained with the Emperor to console him. The impostors wrote many letters to the Emperor from Calcutta, and assured him that his cause was receiving sympathetic consideration at the hands of the British authorities. They also claimed that Russell had expressed a sense of shock at the contents of the Emperor's letter to him and had agreed to write to Metcalfe, strongly advising him to look after the interests of the Emperor. They once wrote that they were accompanying the Governor-General to London in connexion with his suit and that he should, therefore, send them immediately the money required for the trip. They also wanted their monthly remunerations to be sent to their dependents. They continued thus to make a fool of the Emperor for a long time. Eventually the British Government learnt of the hoax, and Metcalfe advised the Emperor to beware of such impostors.¹¹

Akbar II assigned jobs only to those nobles who were friendly to the British. Once he wrote to his son Mirza Jahangir in Lucknow to take the help of the Nawab Vizier of Oudh in getting his personal allowance augmented. And, finally, by way of a last attempt, he sent Raja Ram Mohan Roy to England to plead his cause before the authorities there. Raja Ram

¹⁰W. Haig, *Cambridge History of India* (Indian reprint, 1968), vol. 4, pp. 605 and 606.

¹¹Mohammad Zakaullah, *Tārīkh-i Hindostān* (Aligarh, 1919), vols. 9-11, p. 345. See, also, National Archives of India (New Delhi), Foreign Department, Political Consultations, No. 103, 13 March 1809.

Muslim Aristocracy

Mohan Roy was chosen especially because he had cordial relations with the British.¹² The Government of Britain, however, paid no heed to his pleadings. And by accepting the job Roy only fulfilled his long-cherished desire to visit England.

With Bahadur Shah II on the throne, the position of the Delhi court deteriorated further. The behaviour of the nobility during this period passed all limits of decency. By any standards it was most shameful. It appears from the records that in view of the gross mismanagement of court affairs, most of the trusted and competent nobles left the court. The Emperor was surrounded by incompetent, selfish, and disloyal nobles. The chaos and anarchy at the court was further aggravated when the salaries of the servants of the court ceased to be regularly disbursed for want of resources. The nobles took for themselves whatever they could lay hands upon in the Imperial treasury. Tajuddin Khan and Hamid Ali Khan were always in search of opportunities to dispossess the Mughal treasury. They were eagerly hoping for augmentation of the personal allowance of the Emperor so that they might help themselves to a considerable part of it. Wilayat Ali appropriated a few lacs of rupees from the Mughal treasury. Maulvi Mohammad Naqi Khan, an apparently sincere noble, resigned his office in view of the mismanagement of court affairs and paucity of funds.¹³ The rest of the nobles stayed on, having learnt how to provide liaison between the two masters. In fact they paid much more respect to British officials than to the Emperor himself because of their fear and greed. When Lord Auckland visited Delhi on 16 February 1838, the rajahs and the nawabs offered *nazr* to the Governor-General in a *darbār* held by him. The heir-apparent also went to see him. The *jāgirdārs* were extravagant, but their extravagance was not discouraged. These presents were not always voluntary. For instance, the Nawab of Jhajjar was informed that he should submit fifty-one gold *muhrs* on the occasion of enthronement of Queen Victoria.¹⁴

¹²National Archives of India (New Delhi), Foreign Department, Political Consultations, No. 25, 9 May 1837. See, also, *Dillī Urdū Akhbār*, 23 February and 1 March 1840.

¹³*Dillī Urdū Akhbār*, 23 February and 1 March 1840.

¹⁴I.H. Qureshy, "A Year in Pre-Mutiny Delhi", *Islamic Culture* (Hyderabad), vol. 17, no. 3, July 1943, pp. 100-1.

Hakim Ahsanullah Khan and Mahbub Ali Khan, two of the trusted nobles of the Emperor, were in alliance with the British. When in 1857 the rebels asked for food, money, and equipment, these two pleaded their helplessness, saying that they had nothing in the fort. They accused the rebels of making a nuisance of themselves. Subsequently, however, the poor Emperor, to everybody's surprise, supplied enough money and war equipment to the rebels.¹⁵

A Persian work, ascribed to one Syed Mubarak, a *kotwāl* of Delhi who was loyal to the British, and translated by one Edward, a British civilian officer, under the title "A New Account of the Siege of Delhi", says that when the rebels approached the Emperor, the latter offered to mediate between them and the Resident with a view to securing redress of their grievances. It gives Ahsanullah Khan a high testimonial as regards his loyalty to the British and exculpates the Nawab of Jhajjar from the charge of treason. The Nawab, it says, "only sent fifty horsemen to Delhi nominally to assist but really to mislead the mutineers". Ahsanullah Khan maintained correspondence with the British officers at Meerut till the last week of May 1857.¹⁶

The work is more informative on the loyal Muslims. It says : "Nawab Ameenodeen Khan and Ziaodeen Khan, sons of Nawab Ahmad Bux, an old Jagirdar of [sic] Lord Lake, were really well-wishers of the British Government. These men did not take any part [sic] with the rebels or join the King's son." Similarly it exonerates Mufti Sadaruddin Azurdah from the charge of treason. (The Mufti is, however, said to have signed the *fatvā* for waging war. Perhaps he did so unwillingly, or under duress.) We learn from other sources that the Mufti was not in the good books of the rebels. The comments in the work on Mirza Ilahi Bakhsh's loyalty are much less emphatic.¹⁷

During the Uprising of 1857 the British appointed agents from among trusted Indians to report to them on the day-to-day

¹⁵S. Zahiruddin Zahir, *Dāstān-i Ghadar* (Lahore, 1955), pp. 100-1.

¹⁶Syed Mubarak, "A New Account of the Siege of Delhi", *Bengal Past and Present* (Calcutta), vol. 76, Jubilee number.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 43.

happenings at the court and on the activities and whereabouts of the revolutionaries. The agents so appointed included Gauri Shankar, Ishwar Singh Mehru, Mam Raj, Patwari Mohammad Ali, and Mir Mohammad Ali. Gauri Shankar reported to Hodson on 7 August 1857 about the "plans" of Bahadur Shah II to conquer London. He also gave details of an explosion and fire in an arsenal of the Indian forces inside the walled city and described how people raided the house of Absanullah Khan, whom they suspected of sabotage. Another report dated 15 July 1857 and attributed to two agents, Ishwar Singh Mehru and Mam Raj, described a battle which took place between the Indian and British forces. Patwari Mohammad reported to Hodson how Mir Mohammad Ali had enlisted himself as a *sovār* of the Emperor for reasons of policy. The agent in his report admitted that the Indian troops were in high spirits and that the Emperor had reviewed the entire Indian forces in Delhi on 7 July. He also said that in his address to the troops the Emperor had declared that any member of his armed forces dying on the battle-field would die in the cause of God and that a grant of fifty *bighās* would be made to the family of each such soldier in his own *parganā*. Gauri Shankar's house inside the walled city is now become a monument to treachery. Even today it is called *namak harām kī havelī*.¹⁸

Response of Delhi Society to Western Culture

With the British establishing their ascendancy in Delhi in 1803, what little charm and glamour the Mughal court had possessed was gone. The nobility had enjoyed much patronage at the Mughal court. Now, finding hardly any attraction there from the viewpoint of personal advancement, it showed little attachment to the Mughal Empire. The administration of the Mughal Empire, which was now more or less confined to Delhi, was taken over by the British Government. And yet some of the nobles continued to maintain their traditional links with the Mughal court. There were also, as usual, some scholarships, salaries, *khil'ats*, and titles to be had. A few nobles continued to be in the direct service of the Emperor. There was, however, hardly anything for them to aspire for. Many of them,

¹⁸*Times of India* (New Delhi), 11 May 1971.

therefore, turned to the British for pecuniary gain, keeping up only nominal links with the Mughal court. The nobles in the direct service of the Emperor were those who served by and large as intermediaries between the Imperial palace and the Residency. They helped the Emperor in maintaining good relations with the British Government. Thus, with loss of power, there was a notable change in the attitude of the nobles.

The Mughal court, however, acquired a great reputation in the cultural field. Poetic assemblies held by the Emperor from time to time attracted many far-famed poets and writers. It was considered a great honour to be invited to participate in them. The popularity of Urdu helped retard substantially the spread of the new language English and of Western culture.

In matters of administration the British Government was popular because in the beginning it did not attempt to change the environment of the City of Delhi. It restored efficiency and law and order, removed the stagnation and dullness that had brought Government work almost to a standstill, and instilled a new life in society. It took control of *wakf* lands, appointed a Muslim *daroghā*, and used the revenue that accrued to make regular payments to the stipendiaries and to maintain the mosques. It also had the Jamuna Canal repaired, and in 1820 water again flowed down Chandni Chowk. One Major Smith had the Qutab Minar thoroughly renovated. The Jama Masjid was also repaired several times. Ali Mardan Khan's palace became the Residency. It had then rich mosaics and elaborate ornamentation in some rooms. There was, besides, a large garden, laid out in Oriental style. With its prosperity reviving, its monuments and mosques being restored, and its Mughals (whom it regarded as a sort of prized possession inherited from ancient times) intact, the city seemed to be content. Hope was born, and enterprise revived, as in the case of the work just mentioned. In the words of a contemporary observer, Delhi was not yet a city of trains and clock towers.¹⁹

Delhi society meant predominantly the Mughal aristocracy. Between Delhi society and the English community there was not much intercourse. After Ochterlony, who lived like a Nawab

¹⁹*Bengal Past and Present*, April-June 1930, pp. 39-40 and 130-3.

in his palace, Simon Fraser seems to have been the only man to mix to any extent with the city society. Fraser was murdered in 1835 at the instigation of Nawab Shamsuddaulah. There is evidence enough for us to conclude that Delhi society was gradually responding to the new forces. It did not consist merely of greybeards who saluted each other with elaborate ritual, of pensioned princes parading on caparisoned elephants, or of men drinking themselves to death like Mirza Jahangir at the rate of one glass of sherry or brandy an hour. European fashions captured the imagination of the youth. So did European ideas. And there arose visions of a new world before the people. The Grecian style appeared in Chandni Chowk. The shops were choked with European goods. Burhanuddin Khan, seal engraver to Akbar II, introduced shop signboards written up in Roman characters.²⁰

And in 1827, when the then recently founded Delhi College introduced English as a subject of study, the new learning descended on the city. In 1835, according to a British observer of the time, "in no other part of our imperial possessions do the natives show so earnest a desire to imitate European fashions".²¹ The memoirs of Maulana Zakaullah show how eagerly the new ideas were welcomed and discussed.²² Some writers even testify to considerable social and intellectual intercourse between the Europeans and the city people. The Muslims invited the Europeans, including ladies, to the parties they gave. At these parties the nautch-girls too performed (1835), sometimes five or six sets together. However, the Muslims did not find some of the English habits acceptable, and they satirized them in the newspapers.²³ The following excerpt from a paper illustrates their abhorrence :

The gentlemen of exalted dignity had a great feast last night to which all the military chiefs and lieutenants were invited. There was a little hog on the table before Mr...[name not given] who cut it into small pieces and sent some to each of the party; the women ate of it. In their language the pig is called ham. Having stuffed themselves with the unclean food and

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid., p. 134. The College was founded in 1825.

²²Ibid.

²³*Bengal Past and Present*, April-June 1930, p. 134.

many sorts of flesh, taking plenty of wine, they made for some time a great noise, which doubtless arose from drunkenness. They all stood up 2 to 4 times, crying : "Hip! Hip!" and roared before they drank more wine. After dinner they danced in their licentious manner, putting about one another's wives.²⁴

This shows that Delhi society, though it had begun to accept the norms of the new culture, still showed resistance to, and did not hesitate to express its abhorrence of, some of them. As Maulana Abdul Haq points out, this was on account of the peculiar characteristics of the old families of Delhi. He says that the people of Delhi had two characteristics. First, they considered themselves superior to those living in other parts of India; and, second, they did not readily accept change.²⁵ Yet another factor was that during the period of political decline much stress was placed on literary and cultural life. As a result there emerged a most sophisticated new language, Urdu, which was commonly loved by all Indians. In course of time this language did not just remain a language but became representative of a composite culture much more attractive than Western culture. Indeed the Urdu language became an obstacle in the way of the progress of Westernization. Gradually, however, the economic factor proved too powerful, and the old ties with feudal traditions were broken one by one.

Nobles of the Hyderabad Court

Nizam-ul Mulk Asaf Jah, the great Mughal noble who carved out an independent kingdom of his own in Hyderabad, followed the Mughal policy of appointing nobles and Ministers on the basis of merit alone. His successors too followed the same policy. Thus his nobility comprised a number of different social, racial, and religious groups such as the Sunnis, the Shias, the Rohillas, the Arabs, and the Hindus. The Shias were generally preferred for appointment as Ministers. Briggs says: "The Government, though Mohammadan, has no jealousy of employing Hindus among its officers. They were especially entrusted with financial responsibilities."²⁶

²⁴Ibid., p. 135.

²⁵Abdul Haq, *Marhūm Dillī Kalej* (Delhi, 1943), edn 2, p. 13.

²⁶H.G. Briggs, *The Nizam: His History and Relations with the British* (London, 1861), vol. 1, pp. 118-19.

However, the nobility degenerated with the passing of time, and the relations of the Government of Hyderabad with the British made the nobles adopt a peculiar mode of behaviour. Sir Henry Russell thus wrote in 1819 :

Among persons of rank at Hyderabad there are few, if any, men of talent and experience. Those of them who reflect it at all appear to be sensible that the Nizam's Government could not support itself without the English alliance. They certainly dread and respect us, but we have no hold upon them except through their interests and fear. They are mutually jealous and suspicious, and many of them perhaps hate one another still more than they hate us.²⁷

Owing to the utter weakness of the Nizams the whole responsibility of administration slipped into the hands of nobles with pro-British sympathies. However, some of these nobles proved quite sincere in their loyalty to the Nizam and sought to save the prestige of the State by reorganizing it on modern lines.

The nobles of the Hyderabad court, unlike those of the Mughal court in Delhi, were quite alert to the sea change wrought by the advent of the British on the political scene in India, but they were not great enough to rise above their narrow interests. For one reason or another, they favoured a policy of alliance with the British, in the belief that their own personal survival and the survival of the State were inseparable from each other.

Ghulam Syed Khan Azeem-ul Umarah Arastujah (1734-1804) supported Nizam Ali against Salabat Jang. For some time he was eclipsed by other courtiers. Soon, however, he regained his place in the Nizam's Government. He is said to have joined Cornwallis along with a detachment of the Nizam's army against Tipu Sultan in the Third Mysore War (1790-92).²⁸ When the Marathas defeated the Nizam in 1792-93 at Kharda, they detained Ghulam Syed Khan Azeem-ul Umarah as a hostage. They released him eventually in 1797. On his return he took charge of the administration from Mumtaz-ul Umarah and Raja Saon Raje and continued to execute it with almost

²⁷Ibid., p. 119.

²⁸Mani Gopal Chaudhuri, *British Relations with Hyderabad* (Calcutta, 1964), p. 58.

absolute authority until his death in 1804.²⁹ He sought constantly and consistently to promote and strengthen the Nizam's alliance with the British Government in the teeth of opposition from Shams-ul Umarah and Mumtaz-ul Umarah.³⁰

Mir Abul Qasim Mir Alam (1804-8), son of Mir Syed Razi Shah, a Persian, was first noticed by Azeem-ul Umarah, who employed him on a mission to Lord Cornwallis in 1789. He later accompanied the Nizam's army to Seringapatam and conducted the negotiations for peace on behalf of his Government. At the instance of Azeem-ul Umarah the Nizam appointed him Minister for English Affairs, and in that capacity he negotiated with Captain Kirkpatrick the Treaty of 1798. After the fall of Seringapatam he called on Wellesley in Madras. Azeem-ul Umarah, jealous of his growing influence, had him dismissed by the Nizam in 1800, but the Resident interceded on his behalf and had him reinstated in 1803. When Azeem-ul Umarah died, the British recommended the name of Mir Alam for the vacant post of Minister.³¹ Nizam Sikandar Jah, who was well aware of his pro-British inclinations, was reluctant to appoint him, but he did so eventually under British pressure.³² During his tenure of four years he proved to be a very favourable link between the British and the Nizam and managed to carry on the administration in accordance with the earnest wishes of the British Government. He, however, failed to win the confidence of the Nizam.

The British looked upon Mir Alam as the fittest man for the post of Minister as he had shown his loyalty and "enlightened appreciation of the English alliance". Fraser wrote: "The inexperience of the Nizam rendered it highly important that the resources of the Hyderabad State should be under the control of a Minister who owed his elevation exclusively to our influence."³³ The British sought to keep up their influence on the State through a trusted man, not because of the inexperience of the Nizam as they pretended, but because of the Nizam's well-known anti-British disposition.

²⁹Briggs, n. 26, p. 139.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Ibid.

³²Hastings Fraser, *Our Faithful Ally: The Nizam* (London, 1865), p. 226. See, also, Government of Hyderabad, *Freedom Struggle in Hyderabad* (Hyderabad, 1956), vol. 1, p. 18.

³³Fraser, n. 32, p. 226.

After the death of Mir Alam in 1808 the Nizam was unable to find a suitable person for appointment to the office of Minister. He wanted a man who could be depended upon to serve him and the people loyally and sincerely. This situation again delayed the appointment of a Minister for about six months. There were four possible candidates for the post. They were : Shaikh Fakhruddin Shams-ul Umarah, son of the old Shams-ul Umarah ; Munir-ul Mulk ; Rajinder ; and Chandu Lal. These four candidates as a matter of fact represented four different categories of the Hyderabad nobility. The Nizam disliked Shams-ul Umarah because of his marked Western orientation. The second candidate, Munir-ul Mulk, was thoroughly incompetent. Rajinder was hostile to the British, and hence the British would not hear of his being appointed. Chandu Lal, though an experienced official, was the meanest and the most selfish of the four candidates. When the British at first suggested Shams-ul Umarah's name, the Nizam rejected it for the obvious reason that he was too pro-British. He was personally in favour of appointing Munir-ul Mulk, but when the British proposed the name of that noble, the Nizam began to suspect him too. When the British Resident raised the question again after a few months, the Nizam said that he wanted a man who would not differ or argue with him and who would conduct the affairs of the State with regularity. He also said that he had had bitter experience of such a contentious Minister in Mir Alam. However, finding no other man fit for the job, he eventually appointed Munir-ul Mulk as his Minister. He made Chandu Lal his Deputy on British advice.³⁴

Munir-ul Mulk (1764-1832) was married to a daughter of Mir Alam's. When Mir Alam was Minister, he had tried his best to become his Deputy. Although he was not pro-British, he mixed with the Europeans with ease and was familiar with some of their peculiar habits and customs. Unfortunately, however, neither the Nizam nor the British liked him for the obvious reason that he was thoroughly incompetent.³⁵

Munir-ul Mulk enjoyed a long tenure of twenty-three years as Minister. For all practical purposes, however, it was his Deputy,

³⁴S. Regani, *Nizam-British Relations* (Secunderabad, 1963), pp. 208-10 and Fraser, n. 32, pp. 230-1.

³⁵Briggs, n, 26, p, 142.

Chandu Lal, who exercised authority. The Nizam heartily detested Chandu Lal, but he could not dismiss him as the British would not concur in his doing so. Supported by the British Resident, Chandu Lal entered upon office ostensibly as *peshkār* but in reality as Minister of the State. As the Nizam too withdrew from public affairs about that very time, Chandu Lal may be said to have ruled supreme in Hyderabad for many years. Through Chandu Lal the British established full control at the court of Hyderabad.³⁶

In fact Chandu Lal was loyal neither to the Nizam nor to the British Government. He served his own selfish ends. It was to retain his own position that he posed as the most loyal friend of the British. When, however, his insincerity was discovered, both the Nizam and the British forced him to retire.³⁷

After the retirement of Chandu Lal in 1843 the new Nizam, Nasiruddaulah, kept the appointment of the Minister pending for quite some time. He wanted a noble possessing both ability and strength of character. The British Resident suggested the name of Nawab Alam Ali Khan Siraj-ul Mulk for the office, but the utmost that [the Nizam consented to do was to make an interim arrangement. Siraj-ul Mulk officiated as Minister for eight years.³⁸ The Nizam made so many changes during those eight years that the Resident was much annoyed. Finally the Governor-General of India intervened and settled the nomination of Siraj-ul Mulk in 1851.³⁹

Siraj-ul Mulk was the only man on whom the Resident found it possible to pin his hopes. He was a man whose mind had been enlarged by intercourse with the Europeans. Siraj-ul Mulk was very unhappy over the terms of the Treaty of 1853, under which the Nizam agreed to cede the districts of Berar and Raichur to the British. Strangely enough he died just three days after it was concluded. He had played a significant role in the negotiations that culminated in that treaty.⁴⁰

³⁶Ibid., p. 93.

³⁷*Freedom Struggle in Hyderabad*, n. 32, p. 217. See, also, *The Englishman* (Calcutta), 16 May 1837.

³⁸Briggs, n. 26, p. 154.

³⁹National Archives of India (New Delhi), Foreign Department, Political Consultations, Nos 77 and 88, 18 November 1843.

⁴⁰National Archives of India (New Delhi), Foreign Department, Political Consultations, Nos 77, 81, and 88, 18 November 1843.

Siraj-ul Mulk was a very clever man but without the slightest pretensions to being a statesman. Office had come seeking for him; he had never sought for office. He was preferred to other candidates again and again in view of his literary attainments. He was a most agreeable companion, hospitable and liberal almost to a fault. He was a perfect epicure in his habits.⁴¹ He was succeeded by another pro-British but sincere and worthy man known as Salar Jang.

Mir Torab Ali Salar Jang (1829-83), nephew of Siraj-ul Mulk and grandson of Munir-ul Mulk, was elevated to the position of Minister at the age of twenty-four.⁴²

Salar Jang was a highly educated man. Besides receiving traditional education he had learnt the English language at a time when it was not in vogue and had acquired great proficiency in it. Monier-Williams observed: "I conversed with both these great Ministers [Sir Salar Jang and Sir T. Madhava Row] and found them capable of talking on all subjects in as good English as my own."⁴³

When elevated to the office of Minister, he wrote thus in a letter to his friends in England:

I should have been quite content to remain in unmolested possession of my uncle's *jāgirs*, were it possible without the cares which such an office would impose upon me, especially in the present critical state of affairs here, and I was advised by friends, Europeans and natives, and with too much appearance of truth to reject the advice, that if I declined the office, myself and family would be utterly ruined.⁴⁴

Salar Jang was hardly four years in office when the Uprising of 1857 occurred. All Muslims in Southern India turned their eyes towards the Nizam's capital. The Muslims of Hyderabad, who cherished the great Imperial house of Babar, showed their sympathy for the sepoys who had espoused the cause of the Mughal Emperor in Delhi. Some openly manifested their displea-

⁴¹Briggs, n. 26, p. 155; and Fraser, n. 32, p. 287.

⁴²Briggs, n. 26, p. 157.

⁴³Quoted in G.A. Natesan, *Eminent Musalmans* (Madras, 1926), edn 1, pp. 41-42.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 43.

sure with the British Government. The people of the city assembled in large numbers in the streets clamouring for war against the British.⁴⁵

Just at that critical moment the Nizam, Nasiruddaulah, died. The new Nizam, Afzaluddaulah, was inexperienced, untried, and unpredictable. Salar Jang firmly adhered to the policy of ensuring that Hyderabad did not join in the general revolt. He was a Muslim serving a Muslim State; to him it was a great trial. The tension which the dilemmatic situation engendered in him could never be understood by a European or a Christian. If Salar Jang had ever wanted to be disloyal to the British Government, he had now before him the best opportunity to do so. Information reached him almost daily about the success of the mutineers in Delhi. What would have been the fate of the British officers assembled in the Nizam's palace on the day of the *darbār* if Salar Jang had only indicated that he sympathized with the mutineers!⁴⁶

Salar Jang's statesmanship, however, saved the situation. As Fraser put it, the danger of the Uprising was overcome thanks largely to the sagacity of the Minister. With him at the helm of affairs the British felt secure. Salar Jang himself, however, became unpopular. A determined attempt was made on his life on 15 March 1859⁴⁷ while he was leaving the Nizam's Darbar Hall with the Resident. The attempt was indicative of the strength of the anti-British sentiment among the people of Hyderabad.

The Duke of Southerland, who accompanied the Prince of Wales on a tour of India in 1875, invited the Minister to Britain. Salar Jang accepted the invitation and visited Europe in the summer of 1876 and was profusely honoured. His death on 8 February 1883 was deeply mourned by the British.⁴⁸ The Resident said as follows in a letter written to the Governor-General of India on the same day:

The British Government will lament the death of one whose loyalty and attachment to it, based as they were on an intel-

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 45 and 46.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 46.

⁴⁷Natesan, n. 43, pp. 46-47.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 50.

lignant appreciation of the true interests of the Hyderabad State, were only second to his loyalty and attachment to his own sovereign.⁴⁹

Briggs wrote:

No native of India has deserved more at the hands of the British Government [than Salar Jang], . . . who, from his position and ability together, saved the honour of his own country, and so largely contributed to prevent [*sic*] the impending ruin of the English name during the rebellion of 1857.⁵⁰

Resistance to the British in Hyderabad

The anti-British sentiment existed more strongly at the Hyderabad court than at any other centre of Muslim power from the very beginning of the nineteenth century. It was outwardly rather subdued but manifested itself forcefully from time to time. What happened at the popular level in Hyderabad in 1857 was in fact the culmination of a regular movement to resist the spread and consolidation of British rule in the State, a movement which had been building up slowly but surely and which had gained in strength and momentum with each passing year. Though it was successfully suppressed by loyal nobles like Salar Jang, it was no less genuine than other, similar movements in Delhi, Oudh, and other centres.

From the records that are available it would not be difficult to trace the presence, and at times even the ascendancy, of the anti-British elements at the Hyderabad court during the first half of the nineteenth century. Sikandar Jah's unconcealed reluctance to accept British control, Mubarizuddaulah's strained relations with the British throughout his life, and the increasing support gathered by the anti-British movement of Saiyyad Ahmad Bareilvi are illustrative of the continuous and strong opposition to the British in Hyderabad. Saiyyad Ahmad Bareilvi even wrote letters to Sikandar Jah, inviting him to participate in his movement.⁵¹ He told him that in the event of his not being in a position to

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 69.

⁵⁰Briggs, n. 26, p. 158.

⁵¹*Freedom Struggle in Hyderabad*, n. 32, pp. 125-6.

participate in the movement actively he might provide help in other ways. It would be difficult to tell how much real help Sikandar Jah eventually gave the movement; for we have very little material before us which has a bearing thereon. All the same, from his hostile attitude to British rule and from the fact that his son Mubarizuddaulah emerged afterwards as one of the leaders of the Wahhabi movement in Hyderabad, we may reasonably infer that he did help the mission of Saiyyad Ahmad Bareilvi even if indirectly. At least it can be said that he knew quite well of the anti-British activities in the State.⁵² Saiyyad Ahmad also sent Maulvi Wilayat Ali and others to Hyderabad for the propagation of his movement.

Mubarizuddaulah became the central figure of the resistance movement in Hyderabad.⁵³ We may recall here an interesting incident illustrative of his early hostility to the British. In 1815 Sheerin, a servant of Mubarizuddaulah, had a quarrel with a tailor in the Residency Bazar. Soon it took a serious turn, and Sheerin, who felt that his life was in danger, took refuge in the house of Mubarizuddaulah. Mubarizuddaulah had the tailor arrested and brought to the office of the Minister. As the tailor belonged to the Residency area, Russell, the Resident, became interested in the case. Munir-ul Mulk, the Minister, promised to investigate, but the Resident ordered his native force to besiege the house of Mubarizuddaulah. Mubarizuddaulah's men resisted. In the scuffle that followed, an Englishman was killed by an arrow discharged by Mubarizuddaulah. The mob, infuriated, went on the rampage. However, Chandu Lal managed the affair through his diplomacy. Under his orders Mubarizuddaulah and Shamsuddaulah were kept in detention for five years. Upon his release Mubarizuddaulah became the focal point of the anti-British movement in Hyderabad. He had another confrontation with the British in 1829.⁵⁴

In 1838 General Fraser was appointed Resident in Hyderabad. Soon after his arrival there occurred what has since been known as the Wahhabi conspiracy in Hyderabad. Somehow or other the Resident got scent of the conspiracy. He also found that

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 120.

Mubarizuddaulah was the leader of the conspiracy.⁵⁵ From a seal of Mubarizuddaulah's which he chanced to see, he also discovered that he had assumed the title "Rasool Muslimeen" and that he was carrying on vigorous correspondence with chiefs who professed Wahhabism both inside and outside the State. Mubarizuddaulah was also in correspondence with the Nawab of Kurnool and with some Hindu chiefs. His main purpose was to throw off the British yoke.

Having discovered the conspiracy Fraser took stern steps to snuff it out. First he marched against the Nawab of Kurnool and forced him to surrender. In Hyderabad he prevailed upon the Nizam to take Mubarizuddaulah into custody and have him tried by a Commission of Inquiry. The Commission came to the conclusion that Mubarizuddaulah had indeed been engaged in a conspiracy with the Nawab of Kurnool and had tried to correspond with the Princes of Tonk and Rampur and with others with the objective of overthrowing British rule.⁵⁶ He was thereupon placed under confinement in the Golconda Fort. He remained there till his death in 1851. The Nizam was a helpless witness to this humiliation of his brother. He wrote to Mubarizuddaulah: "You have committed no fault against me. I am helpless; the Ferangees [i.e. the Europeans] have confined you."⁵⁷

Even after the death of Mubarizuddaulah the anti-British sentiment and the resistance movement survived. As we have just seen, the people in Hyderabad, as in other States, revolted against British rule in 1857 also. It was Salar Jang who eventually saved the State for the British by his tactful but firm handling of the Uprising.

Response of Hyderabad Society to Western Culture

In spite of the presence of an anti-British lobby, Hyderabad society could not escape the impact of Western culture and civilization. The beginnings of Western education in Hyderabad can be traced to the early decades of the nineteenth century. A high school called St George's Grammar School was established in 1834. The Resident started a medical school at Bolaram

⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 123-7.

⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 127-33.

⁵⁷Ibid., pp. 179-80.

in 1839. The Roman Catholics set up a school in Hyderabad in 1855. As soon as he became Minister in 1853, Salar Jang submitted a proposal for the founding of an institution of higher education of the Western type. This was how Dar-ul Ulum or the Oriental College was founded in Hyderabad in 1855. The languages taught in this institution included English, Arabic, Persian, Telugu, and Marathi.⁵⁸

Among those who reacted favourably to Western influence the name of Shams-ul Umarah (1783-1863) stands out. From the very beginning he evinced keen interest in the rational sciences. He was fascinated by articles of European manufacture. He took great delight in mechanics and in experiments in the field of natural philosophy. He showed active concern about the propagation of learning and production of suitable literature on various subjects, especially of a scientific nature. He saw very early that what the people needed was acquisition of knowledge through translations of useful works into the various Indian languages. Consequently he established a Translation Bureau in Hyderabad in 1834. He also established a printing press known as Sangi Chhapekhana.⁵⁹

Shams-ul Umarah was very well acquainted with the English and French languages. He also started a number of schools. The most important of them was located in his own place and served as a centre of higher learning through the medium of Urdu. This school was known as Madarasah-i Fakhriah (established in 1829). The subjects taught in this school included not only theology but also natural sciences like physics, chemistry, and mathematics.⁶⁰

Shams-ul Umarah was the author of two important books. He published *Shams-ul Hindsā*, a book on geometry, in 1823. It was a translation of a French work by one M. Clarke. The second book by him was also on geometry. His sons too wrote books dealing with subjects like arithmetic, algebra, mensuration, etc.⁶¹ Thus did Hyderabad society react during the first half of the nineteenth century to Western influence.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 211.

⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 211-15.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Ibid.

Nobles of the Oudh Court

The Oudh court showed utter weakness in its dealings with the British right from the beginning. Very soon, therefore, the rulers came under the iron heels of the British rulers. They were the pioneers as well as the worst victims of the British alliance system. The nobles of the Oudh court learnt their first lessons in the new mode of behaviour, viz submissiveness to the British, from their masters themselves. In course of time they duly mastered the art of serving two masters simultaneously. Indeed they became such experts in the matter that they occasionally taught a thing or two even to their first masters in that mode of behaviour, viz their own rulers. As British stooges they had few equals.

Once the process of ignoring, and thereby weakening, the Royal authority started, there was no end to it. By the beginning of the nineteenth century the British discovered some nobles who were willing to help them control the court. They needed such nobles especially because, with the gradual weakening of the authority of the Nawab Vizier the State had begun to depend upon them more and more in matters of administration. The nobles who volunteered to sell themselves to the British were, as might be expected, men of low calibre intent on accomplishing their own selfish ends. There were, to be sure, a few nobles who were sincerely loyal to the State and the people, but they never got a real chance because of strong opposition to them both within the court and outside. Sometimes the rulers themselves foolishly dismissed loyal nobles—as, for instance, Hakim Mahdi Ali Khan—under British pressure.

In Oudh, unlike in Hyderabad, the anti-British nobles never showed any sign of great resistance. They just devoted themselves to improvement of the administration without opposing the British. Indeed none of the more important nobles was totally anti-British. The participation of the Oudh nobles in the Uprising of 1857 under the leadership of Hazrat Begam was more a result of the immediate shock of deposition of King Wajid Ali Shah than an expression of any strong and sustained feeling of resistance in Oudh. As the anti-British nobles lacked strong leadership, the inspiration and guidance for participation in the Uprising of 1857 came from outside from leaders like Maulvi Ahmadullah and others.

The nobility in Oudh was completely without any sentiment of loyalty either to the rulers or to the State and the people. And there was hardly any noble notable for his strong reaction either in favour of, or against, Western culture. As we have seen already, Hyderabad led the way in reacting strongly in both the directions. This was so possibly because it had had a longer and more direct experience of the West.

Except for Wazir Ali, all the Nawab Viziers/Kings of Oudh were notorious for their submissiveness to the British, and that, among other things, convinced the subordinates that the real masters of the State were the British. While signing the Subsidiary treaties the Nawab Viziers at first surrendered their right to handle foreign affairs. Gradually they developed such a mistrust of their own judgement that they often sought the guidance of the British even in settling such internal issues as the issue of succession or nomination of the heir-apparent. The slow loss of authority of the early Nawab Viziers ultimately set the fashion and pattern for the nobles and society as a whole for their subsequent relations with, and behaviour towards, the British. The nobles even excelled the rulers in flattering the British authorities. In course of time, most of them became loyal to the interests of the British and responsible to British officials rather than to their own masters, i.e. to the ones who paid them their huge salaries.

It is significant to note that Wazir Ali was deposed on the basis of reports received from, and at the instigation of, the Minister Tafazzul Husain, a British stooge who was annoyed with the Nawab Vizier's attitude.⁶²

Immediately after his succession to the Oudh throne the British persuaded Sadat Ali to appoint Sarfarazuddaulah Hasan Raza Khan, their friend, as Minister in succession to Tafazzul Husain. Sarfarazuddaulah was an old official of Shujauddaulah's time. He had been Minister for twenty years during the reign of Asafuddaulah. Though he had not been properly educated, he was a shrewd man. He was, besides, an adept in the art of currying favour with the British, having gained their full confidence fairly early in his career. The British now helped him in getting the prize post of Minister so that he might continue to

⁶²Najmul Ghani, *Tārīkh-i Avadh* (Lucknow, 1919), pt 4, pp. 34 and 63. See, also, Purnendu Basu, *Oudh and the East India Company* (Lucknow, 1943), pp. 163-4.

serve as their willing tool. The Nawab Vizier, however, was never happy with his performance. Nor was he satisfied with his competence as Minister. Fed up with his ignorance and his negligence of his administrative duties, the Nawab Vizier dismissed him. However, so great was the influence that the British commanded at this time in Oudh that they were able virtually to force the Nawab Vizier to reinstate the Minister. The Nawab Vizier, who was keen on toning up the administration, often complained of the ignorance and incompetence of the Minister in handling administrative matters, but he never dared to dismiss him again. Strained relations with the ruler, however, affected the health of the Minister, who died in 1801.⁶³

The death of Sarfarazuddaulah made hardly any difference to the British as they manoeuvred to secure the services of another pro-British man, Mirza Haji Khan.⁶⁴ Ghaziuddin Haidar meekly accepted Mirza Haji Khan as Minister. He was in no position to offend the British: he owed his succession to them.⁶⁵ He was never happy with Haji Khan. He felt that Haji Khan always acted in a manner that went against the interests of the State and that he was continually engaged in a conspiracy with the Resident, John Belly, against the King. Hakim Mahdi Ali Khan, an important noble sincerely attached to the interests of the State and loyal to the King, advised him to dismiss the Minister and bring the matter directly to the attention of the Governor-General. He further suggested that this task should be entrusted to the English servants of the court. These Englishmen had somehow developed an aversion to the Resident, John Belly. Accordingly the King sent an Englishman as his envoy to the Governor-General. The envoy reported to the Governor-General how the King was finding it difficult to get on with the Resident on account of the way the Resident was throwing his weight about. The Governor-General at once ordered the Resident to get a clearance from the King as to his behaviour.⁶⁶ In order to regain the favour of the Governor-General the Resident consulted Munshi Ali Naqi Khan, another pro-British noble. Munshi Ali

⁶³Ghani, n. 62, p. 63.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 117.

⁶⁵Kamaluddin Haidar, *Qaisar-ut Tavārikh* (Lucknow, 1896), vol. 1, pp. 187-9,

⁶⁶Ghani, n. 62, pt 4, pp. 117-18.

Naqi approached Saiyyad Mohammad Khan alias Agha Mir, a man who was much trusted by the King and who had been a servant of the King from his princely days. He told him that if he succeeded in getting pardon for the Resident, John Belly, from the King, he would get him appointed as Minister.⁶⁷ In spite of much opposition from the English servants and from Hakim Mahdi Ali Khan, Agha Mir ultimately succeeded in persuading the King to pardon the Resident. It later transpired that Agha Mir succeeded because he had frightened the King by saying that in the event of his not pardoning the Resident he might be deposed and replaced by his old rival Shamsuddaulah. The King is said to have been so upset by the possibility of his being replaced that he even dismissed some of his most trustworthy servants, including Hakim Mahdi Ali Khan, and the English servants. Agha Mir was rewarded with the post of Minister along with a *khil'at* and the title of Mutamiddaulah.⁶⁸

Agha Mir proved thereafter a most effective instrument in the hands of the British in their attempts to gain full control over the Oudh court. He even persuaded the King to grant loans to the British Government. His extreme loyalty to the British became well known to everyone. Besides the King, the heir-apparent and Bahu Begam developed an intense dislike for him.⁶⁹ Once when Lord Hastings paid a visit to Farrukhabad, the Minister went to receive him along with the heir-apparent. The Minister kept the Prince altogether in the dark about the important matters of State he was discussing with the Governor-General. Instead he kept him busy with dance and music. During their sojourn it was observed that the Minister was paid more attention than the Prince and was provided with all comforts and amenities, including a body of servants always to be in attendance in his camp. The Prince was utterly ignored. When, in a storm, the tents of the Prince and his entourage were blown off, there was hardly anyone to help him, whereas the Minister received all attention.⁷⁰ Enraged by this incident, the Prince

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 200-1.

⁶⁹Ibid., pp. 135-6.

⁷⁰Ibid.

started hating him. When the King came to know all about the disloyal behaviour of the Minister, he put him under house arrest, and said that he wanted to see with whose influence he would manage to get himself released. However, strangely enough, when the British intervened, the Minister was not only released but also reinstated.⁷¹

Agha Mir was a very shrewd man. Although he repaired his relations with the King and the Prince, yet he feared their displeasure, especially the displeasure of the Prince. Hence in 1825, during the negotiations between the King and the British Government as regards the terms and conditions of a loan that the former was advancing to the latter, he prevailed upon the British Government to secure a guarantee for his pension after retirement. As a result it was stipulated in the same agreement that the King should pay a sum of Rs 25,000 a month to the Minister after his retirement: Rs 20,000 was meant for the Minister for his personal expenses, Rs 2,000 for his wife, another Rs 2,000 for his son Aminuddaulah, and the remaining Rs 1,000 for his daughter Atia Begam. In this way Agha Mir managed shrewdly to extract a grant in perpetuity.⁷²

When, after the death of Ghaziuddin Haidar, Nasiruddin Haidar became King, Agha Mir continued to be a Minister. Agha Mir joined the ranks of the meanest and most selfish of nobles when, at the time of Nasiruddin Haidar's accession, he advised the British Resident to extract some advantages from the King by making a reference to the kindness and graciousness of his predecessors and at the same time telling the King to turn down any such demand for concessions from the British. When, accordingly, the Resident demanded concessions, the King refused to yield anything, saying that "his predecessors were obliged to them [i.e. the British], for they succeeded with their help, but in his case they had done nothing so far". The British made no further move in the matter but were annoyed with the firmness of the King.⁷³

When the new Resident, Maddock, arrived in Lucknow in 1830, he sought the King's permission to call the Minister. The

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Ibid., pp. 200-1.

⁷³Ibid., pp. 212-13. See, also, *Journal of Indian History* (Trivandrum), vol. 45, pt 2, August 1967, p. 683.

King refused as he was aware of the wily nature of the Minister. Thereupon the Resident called the Minister directly. The Minister went to see him without the permission and against the wishes of the King. Upon this the King, already suspicious of the character of the Minister, became very angry. However, he did not take any action against him for fear of what the British might do by way of retaliation.⁷⁴

Nasiruddin Haidar entertained a deep dislike for the British and was contemplating a scheme by which he might cleanse the administration by dismissing all pro-British nobles. He wanted to replace Agha Mir with Hakim Mahdi Ali Khan, an experienced and competent official whom Ghaziuddin Haidar had dismissed for his opposition to the Resident. Mahdi Ali had managed the affairs of the State with remarkable efficiency and competence. He was the only noble never to have flattered the Resident. He always met him on equal terms. He even used to smoke before the Resident. The Resident resented this very much and considered it an act of misbehaviour insulting to his position. He hated him and never missed an opportunity to advise the King to dismiss him. The King, however, had great love and reverence for Mahdi Ali Khan and appointed him as his Minister in the place of Agha Mir.⁷⁵ The British succeeded in getting him dismissed eventually, in 1832.⁷⁶ Mohammad Husain Khan Raushanud-daulah alias Mirza Nathu, a pro-British man and a relation of Agha Mir's, was then appointed as Minister. He was overzealous about pleasing the British and never paid any serious attention to the administration. He introduced many ill-conceived schemes, and conditions in the State steadily deteriorated. All his actions proved to be detrimental to the progress and interests of the King and the State. He finally allowed British officials to inspect the King's troops and dismiss a large part of them for the sake of economy. As a result many sepoys lost their jobs.⁷⁷

Hakim Mahdi Ali Khan got another term as Minister during the time of Mohammad Ali Shah. Ever true and faithful to his master, he was a boon to the State. He managed the affairs of the State so well that the Governor-General, William Bentinck,

⁷⁴Ghani, n. 62, pp. 244-5.

⁷⁵Ibid., pp. 252-3; and Kamaluddin Haidar, n. 65, p. 294.

⁷⁶Ghani, n. 62, p. 380.

⁷⁷Ibid., pp. 380-1.

showered much praise upon him for his wisdom and competence.⁷⁸ Of all the nobles of Oudh he was the only loyal, sincere, and competent man, one who did not flatter the British from selfish motives but who paid his utmost attention to his duties. He was a man of conviction, and he held that the Resident should not and need not interfere in the internal affairs of the State. Such interference, according to him, was against the spirit of the previous treaties and engagements.⁷⁹ He was not against friendly relations with the British as such. Indeed the records show that he had many English friends. One of these, a retired Chief Justice, had pleaded with the King for his appointment as Minister in 1830.⁸⁰ Mahdi Ali Khan gained the confidence of Governor-General William Bentinck by dint of hard work and competent management of affairs. He was fortunate to have a good friend in Mahdi Quli Khan, who supported him in times of crisis.

Mahdi Ali Khan Aminuddaulah became Minister during the time of Amjad Ali Shah. The deplorable conditions of the State at the time would show that neither the Minister nor the King paid any attention to the administration. However, they succeeded in maintaining good relations with the British.⁸¹ When Wajid Ali Shah succeeded, the Minister asked to retire, saying that he was too old for the job. In fact he knew that Wajid Ali Shah did not like him and might dismiss him at any time. For the time being both the Resident and the King consoled him, and said that as the times were bad, they needed his services more than ever before. Subsequently, however, owing to his pro-British leanings the King dismissed him and appointed Mir Mahdi Meeran Amiruddaulah in his place.⁸² When the latter started acting against the interests of the King, he too was dismissed, and Ali Naqi Khan was appointed Minister in July 1847.⁸³

Ali Naqi Khan gave an oral assurance to the King and the British that he would improve the administration but failed to

⁷⁸Ghani, n. 62, p. 252.

⁷⁹Ibid., pp. 258-66.

⁸⁰Ibid., pp. 252-5. See, also, *Friends of India* (Serampore), 18 January 1838.

⁸¹Ghani, n. 62, pt 5, pp. 118 and 120.

⁸²Ibid., p. 129.

⁸³Ibid., p. 131.

act up to it. The British appointed an inquiry commission to report on conditions in the State. Sleeman and Outram, both Residents one after the other, sent adverse reports; the latter even recommended annexation of the Kingdom. About all these proceedings the Minister kept the King totally in the dark.⁸⁴

Ali Naqi Khan himself was surprised when one day the Resident handed him a document on the annexation of Oudh and the arrangements being made for the maintenance of the King and his household. The Resident told him to obtain the King's signature on the document, and said that he would grant him in return for that service the *jāgīr* of Machhrahta, which fetched an annual income of over a lac of rupees. He threatened him at the same time, saying that if he failed to obtain the King's signature, he would incur the deep displeasure of the British Government. In the event both the Resident and the Minister jointly met the King and informed him of the annexation decision. The King was rudely shocked by the disloyalty of the Minister, and the people of Oudh too denounced the Minister for his treachery and disloyalty.⁸⁵

The only anti-British noble of any importance in Oudh was Mulla Mohammad, who helped Wazir Ali in his hostile activities against the British. He corresponded with Zaman Shah of Afghanistan and invited him to India to crush the British. After his deposition in 1798 Wazir Ali deputed Mulla Mohammad to the court of Zaman Khan with presents of considerable value with a view to soliciting his aid in regaining the throne of Oudh. In return for this aid he offered to recognize Zaman Shah as his sovereign and to pay him an annual tribute. He was also willing to give Zaman Shah the sum of three crores of rupees that Shujaudaulah had undertaken to pay the British every year. The journey of the envoy, however, was ill fated. After he left Bikaner and covered some distance, he was captured and his head cut off under the orders of the Maharajah of Bikaner.⁸⁶

⁸⁴Ibid., pp. 146-7, 239, and 253.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 256.

⁸⁶Indian Historical Records Commission, *Proceedings of Meetings*, vol. 23, December 1946, pp. 45-46. See, also, Hit Prasad, *Tavārikh-i Avadh*, 1860. MS available in the Raza Library, (Rampur), p. 50; and *Bengal Past and Present*, January-March 1937, p. 32.

Response of Oudh Society to Western Culture

As regards the attitudes of Wajid Ali Shah, his predecessors, and the people of Oudh in general towards Western education and culture, it is not surprising that they were by no means well disposed towards it. As a matter of fact, conditions in Oudh were not propitious for the reception of Western civilization. Political uncertainty and distrust, economic deprivation, and the love of the people for their own language and culture worked together against Westernization. The British had pursued policies which had crushed all initiative and killed the interest of the people in creative thinking and which had indeed eaten into the very vitals of the freedom of thinking and expression, which is always so essential for any progress in the intellectual field.

However, the most important barrier to the progress of Western education and culture in Lucknow as well as in Delhi was the emergence of a new, beautiful language, viz Urdu. Urdu was essentially a product of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Though it had started developing long before, it acquired astonishing refinement during this time. It was in this period that renowned poets like Mir, Sauda, Dard, Momin, Zauq, Ghalib, Dagh, Anis, Dabir, *et al.* flourished in Delhi as well as in Lucknow. New forms and styles in Urdu prose and poetry were either being invented or imitated under the generous patronage of the rulers and the nobles. During the nineteenth century Urdu was not just a means of communication. It represented an entire culture. The rulers of Oudh excelled the Mughal Emperors in patronizing poets and artists. Lucknow, though powerless, was still prosperous. Indeed it was no less distinguished as a centre of culture than Baghdad, Bukhara, Nishapur, or Paris. According to Sharar, no language in the world could vie with Urdu in sophistication and delicacy—as, for example, the word “*āp*”, which affords a sophisticated way of addressing elders. Similarly there is the use of sophisticated titles while addressing letters to others. No other language has anything to approach the refinement and sense of culture that this practice embodies.⁸⁷ In fact Urdu represents a synthesis of the virtues and subtleties of all the important languages of India, especially North India. And it leaves the door open for the assimilation of

⁸⁷A. Sharar, *Guzishtā Laknav*, Shamim Anhonvi, ed. (Kanpur, n.d.), pp. 119, 305, 318, and 323-4.

good points from the languages of other countries too. It was, and still is, a symbol of Hindu-Muslim unity and a product of Hindu-Muslim cultural assimilation, and hence it is rightly beloved of all Indians. With such a language being wielded by poets of such fine sensibility as Mir and Ghalib, how could a foreign language hope to make headway? Like the French, the Indians in general, and the people of Lucknow in particular, were people with an artistic temperament and abhorred crudeness in all its forms. However, Delhi had made some progress towards Western education because of the obvious all-round frustration of the people, but Lucknow was not impressed by the embellishments and trappings of Western culture. It preferred instead the sweet taste of its own culture. Some of the rulers and nobles were of course fond of some Western things in matters such as dress, furniture, etc. We also find some impact of the European opera on the drama developed in Lucknow.⁸⁸ This cannot, however, be taken for any real appreciation of Western culture and sciences.

This deep attachment of the people of Lucknow to their own language and culture, however, proved to be costly in that it made the people unduly complacent and insulated them from thoughts and ideas and movements other than their own. It thus denied them the opportunity of enriching themselves through profitable intercourse with them and contributed to their intellectual and cultural stagnation, a fact not properly realized before 1857. Although Oudh was politically an appendage of the British possessions in India and there was little religious opposition there to Western culture, yet it proved to be most inhospitable to Western culture.

⁸⁸Sir Abdul Qadir, "Urdu", *Modern India and the West*, O'Malley, ed. (London, 1941), pp. 523-33.

Struggle for an Islamic State

Struggle for a better world

Chapter 4

DELHI SCHOOL OF ORTHODOXY

To understand the attitude of the Muslim religious class towards British rule and Western culture, the religious movements that arose in Delhi and Bengal during the first half of the nineteenth century need to be considered. Delhi, a centre of religious and secular learning, saw the birth of an all-India movement under the leadership of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi. The movement spread to such distant centres as Hyderabad, Patna, Bengal, Tonk, Oudh, etc. Bengal gave rise to many local movements like those led by Shariatullah, Titu Mir, and Karamat Ali. These movements, though they differed in their vision and in their approaches to the question of Muslim life in British India, were one in seeking resolutely to purify Islam in India. They also aimed at re-establishing Muslim rule. This implied the launching of a consistent struggle against all non-Muslim rulers. In Bengal the non-Muslim rulers were definitely the British. In India as a whole also the British power was now the paramount Power. Even those Indian States which were not directly under the administration of the English East India Company were under the influence of the British by virtue of the Subsidiary Alliances. Hence any move to overthrow even the British-protected non-Muslim Provincial Governments was in effect a move against the British themselves. The religious reformers of Bengal directly confronted the British, but the leaders of the movement in Delhi aimed first at establishing their rule in the vulnerable Provinces and then at undertaking the task of establishing an Islamic Government in the whole of India. Shaikh Karamat Ali in Bengal did not participate in any *jihād*. He devoted himself exclusively to religious reform. Other religious leaders of Bengal, however, made no secret of their bitter feelings against, and enmity with, the British Government. They pronounced India under British rule a *dār-al harb*. This entailed migration to a Muslim country and declaration of *jihād* against British rule and Western culture. The religious leaders of Bengal never slackened in their struggle : they fought on till the end.

The religious leaders of Delhi adopted an ambivalent attitude.¹ They too regarded India under British rule as a *dār-al harb*. This is apparent from their statements and activities. Even then they issued no explicit declaration to that effect. They even allowed congregational prayers on such occasions as *Jumāh* and *Īd*. At the same time, during the struggle, they migrated to a Muslim country for waging a *jihād*. This showed that they considered India a *dār-al harb*. They hated Western education, and they hated to see Muslims accepting service under the British. And yet they allowed Muslims to learn English and accept service under the British, not for the purpose of earning money, but for the purpose of learning the secrets of the British and utilizing them for achieving their own goals. They aimed at establishing an Islamic State in India, and yet, for quite some time, they avoided a confrontation with the British. The liberal approach of some of the leaders of the Delhi school was misunderstood. Indeed it was widely believed that they were friendly to the British. This impression of them was sought to be reinforced by certain interested parties for their own purposes after 1857. The following discussion would, however, prove that they definitely aimed at establishing an Islamic Government; that, for that purpose, they planned a final confrontation with the British; and that they did fight the British in 1857-58.

Although the movements failed to achieve their political objective and were crushed by 1857, the anti-British sentiment that actuated them and their opposition to British rule continued to inspire the Muslims even after 1857. A close study of the role of the *ulamā* in the national movement of the subsequent years would make this clear.

A close examination of the working of the minds of the orthodox *ulamā* of the school of Shah Waliullah would make it abundantly clear that the restraint which they exercised in pronouncing India under British rule a *dār-al harb* and their proclaimed liberalism in allowing the Muslims to take to Western learning, as also their slow but relentless march towards the annihilation of all non-Muslim Governments, reflected only a diplomatic ambivalence which they considered necessary for their cause. Indeed it may be said that they were the last among the

¹Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan* (London, 1967), p. 20.

Muslims to reconcile themselves to British rule and Western culture. A historical analysis of their long struggle proves that they aimed, firstly, at the social and religious purification of Muslim society and, eventually, at the re-establishment of an Islamic Government by accomplishing, necessarily, the annihilation of the British.

The genesis of the movement Tariqah-i Muhammadiyah, generally known as the Wahhabi movement of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi, may be traced back to the reform movement led by Shah Waliullah of Delhi. The basic aim of the movement was to establish an Islamic State with an Islamic social order in India, with the *Khilāfat-i Rāshidā* as the only basis.² The Islamic State represented a unified and compact social, religious, and political approach to life. Islamic polity could not, therefore, be treated as a separate institution. The followers of Shah Waliullah and Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi would reject even a Muslim political order if it was not in harmony with the injunctions to be found in the *Qurān* and the *Hadīth*. Shah Waliullah criticized even the Mughal Government as it was not based on Islamic principles. Throughout his life he endeavoured to bring about religious, social, and political reform of Muslim society. He showed his utmost concern for the improvement of the Mughal administration on the basis of Islamic ideals. He even intended to use the sword for the purpose, but he was basically a man born to wield the pen rather than the sword.³ The one

²Titus T. Murray, *The Religious Quest of India* (London, 1963), pp. 178-9; and Saiyyad Mohammad Mian, *Ulamā-i Hind kā Shān-dār Māzi* (Delhi, 1957), vol. 2, pp. 6-8 and 30-35.

The movement of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi had no connexion with the Wahhabi movement of Arabia. In fact it was a continuation of Shah Waliullah's movement of Faku kull-i nizāmin, also known as Targhib-i Muhammadiyah and Tariqah-i Muhammadiyah.

According to Siddik Hasan, Fazal Rasul of Badaun was the first man to describe the Muslim followers of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi as Wahhabis. See his book *An Interpreter of Wahabiism*, Sayyid Akbar Ali, trans. and ed. (Bhopal, 1884), p. 75.

³Shah Waliullah, *Hujjat-al lahil Balighā*, Abdul Rahim, trans. (Lahore, 1962), pt 1, pp. 91 and 111-12.

Shah Waliullah aimed at establishing an Islamic State on the model of that of *Khilāfat-i Rāshidā*. In this context he used the phrase "*Khilāfat-Ala Minhāj-il Nabuwwah*".

See, also, Ameer Ali, *The Spirit of Islam* (Delhi, reprinted 1978), pp. 124-5.

outstanding fact about the approach of Shah Waliullah—a fact that we must specifically note here—is that he was the first religious reformer to display a measure of flexibility in his methods and approach by introducing the principle of *ijtihād*.⁴ And subsequently the use of *ijtihād* became a common feature of the movement under his successors. The use of the principle of *ijtihād* perhaps helped in enlisting the support of kings and of the Hindus for the effort to achieve the final goal. During Shah Waliullah's time, what caused acute concern to him and his followers was the weakness of the Mughal polity and internal revolts rather than the ascendancy of the British. These continued to cause concern to his son and successor Shah Abdul Aziz as well. Indeed Shah Abdul Aziz was called upon to play a much more difficult role, and he responded to the call with great prudence and patience.

Shah Abdul Aziz was born in 1746 and died in 1823. He, therefore, witnessed the imperceptible extinction of the Mughal Empire and at the same time the consolidation of British rule in India. The change in the status of the Muslims automatically brought into play a new set of obligations on their part, and the first of these obligations was to expel the foreigners; for the *Qurān* is based upon the conception of the Muslims as a conquering, and not as a conquered, people. Shah Abdul Aziz maintained that according to the apostolic tradition, Christian rule was to be at the last stage. He expressed his conviction that the Christians referred to were the British rulers of India and that their rule would be supplanted by that of the promised Mahdi.⁵

Ameer Ali observes: "For the existence of Islam, therefore, there must be a Caliph, an actual and direct representative of the master. The Imamate is the spiritual leadership; but the two dignities are inseparable."

⁴K.A. Nizami, "Shah Waliullah and Indian Politics in the 18th Century", *Islamic Culture* (Hyderabad), vol. 25, Jubilee number, 1951; and Irfan Habib, "The Political Role of Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi and Shah Waliullah", *Enquiry* (Delhi), December 1961, pp. 50-55.

Irfan Habib observes that Shah Waliullah distinguished himself from other jurists by emphasizing *ijtihād*. However, his scheme of establishing an Islamic society was not based on equality as is believed. The masses and the Hindus were excluded on the ground that they belonged to a lower category.

⁵Shah Abdul Aziz, *Malfuzāt*, Intezamullah Shahabi, trans. (Karachi, 1960), pp. 24-25. See, also, Z. Siddiqui, "Shah Abdul Aziz and Contemporary British Authorities" (paper presented at the conference of the Indian Institute of Historical Studies held in Goa, 1975). Siddiqui, however, does

Shah Abdul Aziz, however, confined his campaign to preaching and to organizational work. His *fatvās* on the question of position of the Muslims *vis-à-vis* the British Government were often vague and self-contradictory. It is clear that he was deliberately seeking to avoid an open pronouncement at this time. He did not pronounce India under British rule a *dār-al harb* in so many words, but what he said could easily be interpreted that way. He did not say that the learning of English was against the *Shari'ah*, but he did say that English should not be learnt for deriving any pecuniary benefit or for obtaining employment under the British.

Shah Abdul Aziz advised the Muslims to adopt an attitude of compromise for some time in certain matters. He realized that a certain degree of co-operation with the British was advisable for the Muslims to survive in the situation then obtaining. He envisaged for the Muslims a policy of "no war and no peace". He issued a *fatvā*, saying that a Muslim could accept employment under the British Government if he felt that he would not find himself in a situation where he would have to commit the *masiyat-i kabirā* of fighting against his co-religionists and to serve or consume alcoholic beverages and pork. This clause of the *fatvā* virtually forbade the Muslims to look for employment in the armed forces of the British Government, which were still fighting a number of Muslim princes. The second part of Shah Abdul Aziz's *fatvā* implicitly allowed the Muslims to seek employment in any civilian department or organ of government such as courts of law, the police force, etc.⁶

not find any political overtones in the *fatvās* of Shah Aziz. S.G. Wilson observes: "Saiyyad Ahmad Bareilvi claimed himself as Mahdi." See his *Modern Movements among Muslims* (London, 1916), p. 56.

See, also, T.H. Khalid, "The Reaction of Muslim India to Western Culture", in Abdullah Butt, *Aspects of Shah Ismail Shahid* (Lahore, 1943), p. 75; Hafeez Malik, *Moslem Nationalism in India and Pakistan* (Washington, D.C., 1963), pp. 151-2; and M. Mujib, *Indian Muslims* (London, 1967), p. 390.

⁶See the *Qurān*, sura lx. Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *Glorious Qurān* (Cairo, 1938), pp. 1530-1.

Here is a summary of the text: "The enemies of your Faith, who would exterminate you and your faith, are not fit objects of love. Follow Abraham's example: but with those unbelievers who show no rancour, you should deal with kindness and justice." See, also, Malik, n. 5, pp. 151-2.

Shah Abdul Aziz was not opposed to the new learning, but he was afraid lest too intimate a contact with Western culture should ruin the very basis of Islam. Of course, he allowed the Muslims to learn English, but he also prescribed the purposes for which they might learn English. One of his *fatvās* says :

Learning English for the purpose of reading, writing letters, and knowing the secret meanings of words is permitted. But if any man learns English in order to unite himself with the English, he sins and transgresses the law, as in the case of a weapon. When it is made to drive away thieves or to arrest them, the making of it is a pious act ; but if it is made to help or defend the thieves, then the making of it is sinful.⁷

A subsequent *fatvā* issued by Shah Abdul Aziz in the early years of the nineteenth century gives a clear picture of the working of the orthodox mind. We reproduce a part of the *fatvā* here by way of illustration :

... In this city [of Delhi] the *Imām-ul Muslimin* wields no authority, while the decrees of the Christian leaders are obeyed without fear [of the consequences]. Promulgation of the commands of *Kufr* means that in the matter of administration and the control of the people, the levy of land tax, tribute tolls, and customs, in the punishment of thieves and robbers, in the settlement of disputes, in the punishment of offences, the *kāfirs* act according to their discretion. There are, indeed, certain Islamic rituals—as, e.g., Friday and *Īd* prayers, *adhān*, and cow slaughter—with which they do not interfere. But that is of no account. The basic principles of these rituals are of no value to them, for they demolish mosques without the least hesitation, and no Muslim or *dhimmi* can enter the city or its suburbs except with their permission. It is for their own good that they do not object to people going in and out, to travellers and traders visiting

⁷Shah Abdul Aziz, *Fatāvā-i Azīzī* (Delhi, 1904), vol. 1, pp. 91-92 and 114. Quoted in Butt, n. 5.

the city. [On the other hand] distinguished persons like Shuja-ul Mulk and Wilayati Begam cannot visit the city without their permission. From here to Calcutta the Christians are in complete control. There is no doubt that to the right and to the left there are Muslim principalities like Hyderabad, Rampur, Lucknow, etc., but they do not govern directly as a matter of policy and the possessors of these territories have become subject to them⁸

Being too old to take part actively in a religious war, Shah Abdul Aziz devoted his energies to organizational work. He established two Boards of Directors, one to look after military matters and the other to serve as a surveillance committee for the maintenance of the ideological and doctrinal purity of the movement. The Board set up to look after military matters consisted of Maulana Abdul Haq, Maulana Ismail, and Saiyyad Ahmad Bareilvi. Saiyyad Ahmad Bareilvi was Chairman of the Board. The Board concerned with the maintenance of the ideological purity of the movement was directed by Maulana Muhammad Ishaq and his brother Maulana Muhammad Yaqoob. Shah Aziz let it be understood that the unanimous decisions of the two Boards would be tantamount to his own judgement.⁹ He trained a group of *ulamā* to undertake the programme. He also chose Saiyyad Ahmad Bareilvi as his successor.

Saiyyad Ahmad Bareilvi (1786-1831) belonged to a Rai Bareilvi family. Shah Aziz acknowledged him at his very first meeting as the right man because of his simple Islamic ways and character. After completion of his training and education Saiyyad Ahmad Bareilvi returned to his home, got married, and led a peaceful family life for some time. His mind, however, was looking for some mission. At first, in 1810, with the permission of Shah Abdul Aziz, he joined the service of Amir Khan of Tonk. In a letter written by him about this time he refers to his joining the army of Amir Khan, and says that it was ordained by God. According to Mehr, it was in keeping with Saiyyad Ahmad

⁸Aziz, n. 7, p. 17. Quoted in Mujib, n. 5, p. 390.

⁹Malik, n. 5, p. 152.

Mian confirms the formation of Boards or Committees by Shah Abdul Aziz. See Mian, n. 2, pp. 96-97.

Barelvi's plans. He joined the service of the Nawab of Tonk because he was the only Muslim ruler who was independent of British influence. As soon as Amir Khan made an alliance with the British, Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi resigned his post there. This is clear evidence that he was outwardly and inwardly hostile to British rule in India. He had even fought a battle against the British while in the army of Amir Khan and had compelled the British to accept his terms.¹⁰

A militant propaganda was set on foot by Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi who spoke and wrote as though he considered India a *dār-al harb* so long as it was under a non-Muslim Power.¹¹ Of course it is not universally accepted that he actually declared India a *dār-al harb*. A study of his writings would reveal that he never explicitly pronounced India a *dār-al harb*, but he knew, and so did all the adherents of the movement, that for all practical purposes India had ceased to be a Muslim State. According to him, so long as India continued to be under a non-Muslim Power, it was a zone of war. The Christians had snatched the power of the Muslims, and it was a historical fact that they had struck at the very root of Muslim rule. Hence a *jihād* against the unbelievers was in order. Together with Mohammad Ismail, Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi initiated action, not against British India, where there was religious tolerance, but against the then non-British Punjab, where the Sikhs were oppressing and persecuting the Muslims. The *mujāhidīn* made the Swat Valley their base, and there, from 1816 to 1831, they kept up a militant campaign against the Sikhs, capturing Peshawar itself in 1830. However, they fell fighting in the battle of Balakot in 1831.¹²

¹⁰Jafar Thanewari, *Svaneh Ahmadi: Tavārikh-i Ajibā* (Delhi, 1894), pp. 16-19; Ghulam Rasul Mehr, *Saiyyad Ahmad Shahīd* (Lahore, 1952), pp. 52-54, 73, 76-77, and 82; and Qeyamuddin Ahmad, *Wahabi Movement in India* (Calcutta, 1969), p. 26.

¹¹A. Yusuf Ali, "Muslim Culture and Religious Thought", in L.S.S.O' Malley, ed., *Modern India and the West* (London, 1941), vol. 1, p. 394; and Mujib, n. 5, p. 391.

¹²Mohammad Abdullah, *Makhzan-al Fatvā* (Calcutta, 1911), p. 61; W.F.G. Bourne, *Hindustani Musalmans and Musalmans of Eastern Punjab* (Calcutta, 1914), p. 8; O'Malley, n. 11, pp. 393-4; and Ahmad, n. 10, pp. 43, 63, and 85.

Qurān, sura, lx. See, Yusuf Ali, n. 6, pp. 1530-1.

Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi's abrupt end leaves us in a great confusion. It was not clear whether he had planned to extend his struggle from the Punjab to the whole of the motherland. There is, however, considerable evidence to prove that he meant his campaign in the Punjab to represent only the first phase of his struggle and that he intended to wage war against the British at the right time.

To the Muslims there are four forms of *jihād*: *jihād* through the purification of conscience; *jihād* through speech; *jihād* through the use of the pen; *jihād* through the use of the sword.¹³ The movement had already taken the first three forms and was assuming the fourth, a form which could be stretched to any length of time according to need without any fear but with all due care. A *jihād* was allowed to be waged against the unbelievers who had appropriated land by force of arms. This implied that Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi and his followers were also contemplating a war against the British after the annihilation of the Sikhs. Consequently the successors of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi, following in his footsteps, initiated their long tussle with the British.¹⁴

As a matter of fact, the Muslims in India under British rule enjoyed religious freedom. Hence India under British rule could not technically be declared a *dār-al harb*. The Muslims, however, feared that a powerful Government of non-believers could do anything against the interests of the Muslims at an appropriate opportunity. It was not beyond the non-believers to interfere even in the religious life of the Muslims as a number of subsequent events proved. The Muslim States were already being harassed constantly. The Muslims, therefore, thought that they were justified in waging war against the the British for the re-establishment of Muslim rule. The *fatvās* only indicated either the procedure of, or the legal hitches to be overcome in, waging war against the British. The *fatvās* of the different jurists of this period were so ambiguous that they seemed to endorse and support both viewpoints. However, the spirit of their writings, including the

¹³These four are known as *jihād bil Qalb*; *jihād bil lisān*; *jihād bil yadā*; and *jihād bil saif* respectively.

¹⁴Majeed Khadduri, *Islām aur Qānūn-i Jang-o Suleh*, Ghulam Rasul Mehr, trans. (Lahore, 1959), pp. 93-95; Wilson, n. 5, p. 56; and Mushir-ul-Haq, "Unnīsvīn Sadī ke Hindostān kī Haiyyat-ī Sharey", *Burhān* (Delhi), vol. 63, no. 4, October 1969, p. 238.

fatvās, letters, and other literature, is definitely one of antagonism to British rule and Western culture. They never reconciled themselves to British rule. They were always aiming at establishing an Islamic Government. Besides, Saiyyad Ahmed Barelvi was not carrying on any new movement. His movement was only a continuation of Shah Waliullah's *fakku kull-i nizāmin*.¹⁵

W.W. Hunter, S.G. Wilson, and others who have written on the Wahhabis in India opine that the movement led by Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi was, from the very beginning, directed against the British. Maulana Karamat Ali, Mohammad Husain Batalavi, Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan, and Maulana Jafar Thaneswari denied the charge that the Wahhabi movement was directed against the British. They even sought to prove, especially after 1857, that Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi was friendly to the British. In fact they distorted facts so as to disabuse the British of the impression that there was any feeling of antagonism against them. They even allowed themselves to be deluded by some of the diplomatic pronouncements of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi's. For instance, they made good use of the statement: "We do not want to fight any Muslim chief. . . nor have we any quarrel with the English Government." Jafar Thaneswari even changed the original text of the letters of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi. In his book *Tavārikh-i Ajibā* he replaced the words "*nasārā nikohidā*", which mean "the damned Christian", with "*sikhān-i nikohidā*", which mean "the damned Sikh", so as to convince the British that the Wahhabis were not against the British Government.¹⁶ However, the fact was that Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi had no firm ground to declare war against the British as long as he found conditions in India appropriate for Muslim life in accordance with Islamic law. Perhaps he had intended to wait till all the legal hitches were resolved.

¹⁵Mian, n. 2, pp. 173, 237, and 272-3.

¹⁶Mohammad Abdul Bari, "The Politics of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi", *Islamic Culture*, vol. 31, January 1957, pp. 160-1; Thaneswari, n. 10, p. 150; Mehr, n. 10, pp. 254-60; and Wilson, n. 5, p. 56.

N. Chopra quotes a Persian verse that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, free India's first Minister for Education, came across while going through a manuscript in the India Office Library. The meaning of the verse is roughly as follows: "Our quarrel is with the *feringhis* or the White men, not with those who wear their hair long [i.e. the Sikhs]." P.N. Chopra, "Character of the Wahabi Movement", in Indian Historical Records Commission, *Proceedings* (New Delhi), vol. 35, pt 2, February 1960, p. 67.

Once, in one of his letters to Shah Sulaiman Jah, the ruler of Chitral, Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi expressed his shock at the lot of the Muslims under Christian rule in India in the following words:

During the last few years fate has been so unkind to the Government and the administration in this country that the Christians and the polytheists have established their ascendancy over the greater part of the country and have started oppressing people. . . . My heart is filled with the single thought of *jihād*. . . .¹⁷

However, purely practical considerations seem to have determined the policy of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi in choosing the Sikhs rather than the British for immediate action. He wanted to deal with one enemy at a time. Besides, the Sikhs were less powerful, and the Muslim (Pathan) States of the frontier could be depended upon to help. The British too were likely to support in order to cut the Sikhs to size. And once the choice was made, Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi scrupulously avoided giving any offence to the British. He used the territories under British rule as a base for the supply of men and money.¹⁸

Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi wrote letters to the Hindu rajas as well, expressing his shock at the capture of power by the British in India. The *ulamā* were ready for co-operation with the Hindus in order to drive the aliens out of India. He wrote to Raja Hindu Rao, vizier of Gwalior:

. . . strangers from across the ocean have become the rulers of India; the mere mercantilists have laid the foundations of an empire; the masonic lodgings of the wealthy and the estates of the rich no longer exist, and their honour and repose has been snatched away. Masters of domain and realm have retired into the limbo of oblivion. At last a few among the saints and the hermits have girded up their loins. These faithful men raised their standard of revolt in the cause of God's

¹⁷Malik, n. 5, p. 170. See, also, Bari, n. 16, p. 161; and Aziz-ur-Rahman Mallick, *British Policy and the Muslims in Bengal, 1757-1856* (Dacca, 1961), p. 11.

¹⁸Bari, n. 16, p. 162.

own faith. They desire neither worldly joys nor power; when India is freed from aliens and enemies, the ambitions of the faithful are fulfilled. The high ranks of the State and politics will be assigned to those who covet them.¹⁹

This letter also makes it clear that Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi was not interested in obtaining power for himself. He intended to hand over the command of free India to a deserving person who could establish the long-cherished Islamic State. He even rejected an offer from Maharaja Ranjit Singh of an independent principality in some trans-Satluj area. He restored Peshawar to the vanquished ruler Sultan Muhammad. He confined himself only to the appointment of the *qādi* and the censor of public morals to ensure that the Muslims conformed to the Islamic code of public behaviour. The followers of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi such as Saiyyad Qutab Ali Naqvi, his son Jafar Ali Naqvi, and Shaikh Ghulam Ali testify that Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi's *jihād* was aimed not merely against the Sikhs, but also against the British. One Mason, an English traveller, observed that Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi aimed at the annihilation of the Sikhs first and at the conquest of India and China afterwards. Wadud observes that the religious leaders were fighting for the political and economic rights and privileges of the Muslims which had been lost as a result of British encroachment upon Muslim India.²⁰ H.W. Bellew, in his report on the Yusufzais, writes as follows about Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi:

This was no other than Mir Syed Ahmad of Bareley [*sic*], better known in these parts as Syed Badshah, . . . who, for a brief

¹⁹Mehr, n. 10, pp. 256-7. See, also, Mehr's *Jamāt-i Mujāhidīn* (Lahore, 1955), pp. 13-14; Ahmad, n. 10, p. 327; and Ibadat Barelvi, *Momin aur Mutāliā-i Momin* (Karachi, 1961), pp. 241-2.

See the *Qurān*, sura lx, in Yusuf Ali, n. 6, pp. 1530-1.

²⁰Mehr, n. 10, pp. 256-8; Mian, n. 2, p. 217; and Atul Chandra Gupta, *Studies in the Bengal Renaissance* (Calcutta, 1958), pp. 465-7.

Kazi Abdul Wadud wrongly connects the movement of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi with the Wahhabi movement of Arabia. However, he too concludes that to those religious leaders India under the British had become a *dār-al harb*. According to him, not only were they interested in religious purification, but they fought for the political and economic rights and privileges which the Muslims had lost as a result of the British occupation of India.

Kazi Abdul Wadud, *Creative Bengal* (Calcutta, 1933), pp. 51-53.

period, enjoyed a very successful career while stirring up the kings and peoples of the different adjacent Sunni Muhammadan Governments to flock to his standard, which was unfurled to re-establish the Empire of Islam and to rid the Indian peninsula of its infidel people, the British, and the Sikhs.²¹

Once Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi wrote to Nizam Sikandar Jah, inviting him to join his *jihād*: "My real object is the establishment of Jihad [*sic*] and carrying the war into Hindostan and not to stay on [*sic*] in the lands of Khorasan."²² He chose a frontier State as technically he could wage a *jihād* only from a Muslim State. For him India had become for all practical purposes a *dār-al harb*. And a war from a non-Muslim State could be construed as a revolt.

Another letter by Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi shows his concern not only for the Muslims of the Punjab but for the whole of India.²³

Among the followers of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi, Shah Ismail and Maulana Abdul Hai made especially notable contributions to the movement, each in his own way. Shah Ismail was a nephew of Shah Abdul Aziz's. He accepted Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi as *Imām-ul Muslimin*. He actively participated in the military campaigns of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi against the Sikhs and died a martyr with him in the battle of Balakot in 1831. He fully supported the movement, and his attitude to the British cannot, therefore, be considered to be different from that of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi himself.

Shah Ismail wrote a book entitled *Mansab-i Imāmat* to provide an ideological basis to the movement led by Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi. The book also reflected the thinking of Shah Ismail on the political issues of the Muslims in India. The book nowhere calls India explicitly a *dār-al harb*. And yet a careful study of the text would show that for the followers of this school India under Christian rule was enemy country. There is in the work

²¹Quoted in Ahmad, n. 10, p. 331.

²²Ibid., p. 326.

²³Jafar Thanewari, *Tārīkh-i Ajīb: Kālā Pānī*, Mirza Sakhawat, trans. (Karachi, 1969), p. 55.

This letter seems to be addressed to the son of the Amir of the Yusufzai tribe of the North-West Frontier.

an unspoken desire to wage war against the Christian rulers and to make India an Islamic State. The following extract from the book not only gives a clue as to the attitude of Shah Ismail to the political system then obtaining, but also provides a justification for raising Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi to *Mansab-i Imāmat*:

Sultans who are Muslim in name but in fact had become utter *kāfirs* bent on disgracing Islam through every word and deed . . . are type of arrogant *kāfirs*, *zindiqs*, and apostates. It is a basic doctrine of Islam to carry on a *jihād* against them, and to insult them is to honour and praise the Prophet. Their Government absolutely cannot be considered any kind of *Imāmat*.²⁴

Both Shah Ismail and Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi thought it necessary to find a territory that could be called a *dār-al amn* so that, directing their operations from there, they might make their *jihād* legal and legitimate. They chose the North-West Frontier as a base from which to wage a *jihād* against the Sikhs, who had been oppressing the Muslims and interfering in the religious affairs of the Muslims in the Punjab. A complete success against the Sikhs would have strengthened their confidence and served as a morale-booster. And their next target would definitely have been the British. But a partial success disturbed their plans.

Shah Ismail, like Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi, was very cautious in making his hostility to the British plain. Hence he too in his writings avoided pronouncing India under the British a *dār-al harb*. In fact the teaching of Muhammad Ismail recommending a loyal *modus vivendi* with the British as long as they did not interfere with the religious freedom of the Muslims stood in sharp contrast with his earliest rulings.²⁵ At the same time, however, it implied that in the event of the British interfering, which was likely and expected, the Muslims had to wage a *jihād* against them too. This interference started just after the battle of Balakot, when William Bentinck and his colleagues took up the task of imparting cultural and religious training to the "backward" Indians. The process gained momentum about 1857,

²⁴Mujib, n. 5, pp. 394-5. Mujib quotes Shah Ismail Shahid's *Mansab-i Imāmat* (Lahore, n.d.).

²⁵Aziz, n. 1, p. 20; and Mujib, n. 5, pp. 394-95.

especially from the time of Lord Dalhousie onwards. Shah Ismail abhorred monarchy and intended to establish an Islamic republic. This, obviously, implied an open and final clash with the British at some future date. He equated Christian rule with the rule of the infidels, and hence a *jihād* against Christian rule was inevitable even as it was inevitable against the rule of the infidels.²⁶

It was true that the Christians were a people mentioned in the book and could not be equated with *kāfirs*. And yet, inasmuch as they had departed from their proper beliefs and practices, Shah Ismail considered them to be no better than *kāfirs*. He was not a man to wage a *jihād* against one *kāfir* and spare another. If the Sikhs were chosen first for attack, it was due entirely to expediency.

Similarly Maulana Abdul Hai, son-in-law of Shah Abdul Aziz, also accepted Saiyyad Ahmad Bareilvi as *Imām-ul Muslimin* at the instance of his father-in-law and served him as his main adviser. He was an eminent jurist and was offered the position of *muftī* in Meerut by the British Government. He accepted it at first but resigned it within three years when he found that it was incompatible with his political ideas.²⁷

When faced with the burning question of the day, viz the position of India under the British, Abdul Hai too adopted a scrupulously moderate attitude. When asked if the Muslims should learn English, he declared, as his father-in-law had done, that they might do so but only to gain useful knowledge and not to advance themselves.²⁸

He also gave his verdict in clear language on the most vexing question of the period. Asked whether India, under British rule, was a *dār-al harb* or a *dār-al Islām*, he replied that India was not a *dār-al harb* but a *dār-al Islām*. At the same time he regarded Calcutta and its dependencies as a *dār-al harb*. A country becomes

²⁶S.M. Mian, "I-lamī Hurriat kā Alam-bardār", in Butt, n. 5, pp. 85-86; Malik, n. 5, pp. 158-9; and Aziz, n. 1, p. 39.

²⁷Mehr, *Jamāt-i Mujāhidīn*, n. 19, p. 111; and Malik n. 5, p. 157.

²⁸Maulana Abdul Hai, *Majmuāt-al Fatāvāh* (Calcutta, n.d.), vol. 1, p. 109. A reprint of this work was issued in Lucknow in 1889. Such *fatvās* of Shah Abdul Aziz and Maulana Abdul Hai were based on one of the *hadīths* of the Prophet as narrated by Hazrat Abu Huraira. See Noor Muhammad's collection of the traditions in *Mishkāt Sharīf* (Karachi, n.d.), p. 98.

dār-al harb only when the rule of the infidel is openly exercised, or when it is contiguous to a *dār-al harb* and there is no *dār-al Islām* in the neighbourhood to provide relief to the Muslims there, or when neither the Muslims nor the *dhimmi*s enjoyed religious freedom. In like manner he also justified congregational prayers on such occasions as *Jumāh* and *Īd* as the non-Muslim rulers did not interfere in religious affairs. Secondly, according to him, by choosing Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi as their *Imām*, the Muslims had fulfilled the condition of reading *khutbā* in the name of the *Imām* instead of the Sultan.²⁹ Such *fatvās*, however, were not inconsistent with the ultimate aim of establishing an Islamic State. They were needed only when everything was at stake.

Maulana Abdul Hai provided legal guidance to Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi. However, the fact that he fully supported Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi's movement and that he resigned from service under the British prove that he too was essentially anti-British and was in favour of establishing an Islamic State in India after ousting the British from India. He, however, died on 24 February 1828, i.e. even before the completion of the first phase of the long struggle.³⁰

The British continued to adhere to the policy of non-interference in religious and social affairs of the people of India till the arrival of William Bentinck. Hence, under the conditions that obtained during the first three decades of the nineteenth century, none of the *ulamā* of Delhi could explicitly pronounce India a *dār-al harb*. Indeed the *ulamā* avoided direct clash with the British. In the years that followed the British started interfering in the religious and cultural affairs of the people. As a result the *fatvās* of the *ulamā* of those years explicitly mentioned India as a *dār-al harb*, and the successors of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi had no hesitation about clashing directly with the British.

²⁹Ibid., p. 124. See, also, Aziz, n. 1, p. 19.

During the period of Maulana Abdul Hai (d. 1828) the British rulers were, from the legal point of view, merely the vassals of the Mughals. Besides, they did not threaten the religious freedom of the Muslims. Legally too India, excepting Bengal, was still headed by a Muslim. The English East India Company served only as the vicegerent of the Mughal Emperor until 1857.

³⁰Mehr, *Jamāt-i Mujāhidīn*, n. 19, p. 115.

After the death of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi in 1831 in the battle of Balakot, his followers were divided into two groups. One group, known as the Sadiqquri group, was headed by two brothers Wilayat Ali and Inayat Ali. This group believed that Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi had just disappeared and that, therefore, there was no need for a new *Imām* to be elected. The other group was led by Maulvi Nasiruddin. It was convinced that Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi had died a martyr in the battle of Balakot. Accordingly it elected Maulvi Nasiruddin as the new leader. However, the struggle was carried on by both groups.³¹

Maulvi Saiyyad Nasiruddin, son of Saiyyad Naasiruddin Thaneswari, was related to Shah Waliullah's family on his mother's side. He was the son-in-law of Shah Muhammad Ishaq. He received religious education and training under his father-in-law in Delhi and subsequently joined the movement of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi. He worked so sincerely that after the death of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi he was chosen leader of the movement.³²

Choosing Sind as the most suitable place for the struggle, Saiyyad Nasiruddin migrated there along with his followers in 1835. He reorganized the followers of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi. Important followers of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi like Saiyyad Mohammad Ali Rampuri and Maulana Wilayat Ali extended full co-operation to Maulvi Nasiruddin in his *jihād*. At first he fought a battle in support of the Mazaris of Rajau against the Sikhs. The Mazaris, helped by the *mujāhidīn*, almost won the battle and regained their political freedom and recovered their State. In the process, however, they found it expedient to accept the nominal suzerainty of the Sikhs. The alliance between the Mazaris and the Sikhs made it necessary for Nasiruddin to move out of Rajau.³³

It appears that in the early part of 1835 the *mujāhidīn* caused some disturbance by attacking Rajau on the right bank of the Indus between Amarkot and Shikarpur and by establishing themselves subsequently at Bunch. After they were expelled from Bunch by the Nawab of Bahawalpur, a British ally, they settled

³¹Malik, n. 5, pp. 185-6,

³²Shaikh Ikram, *Mauj-i Kausar* (Lahore, 1968), p. 41.

³³Mehr, *Jamāt-i Mujāhidīn*, n. 19, pp. 148-9 and 200.

The Mazaris were a clan of Rajau, which is situated on the right bank of the Indus, between Amarkot and Shikarpur. See Mallick, n. 17, p. 118.

at Shikarpur at the instance of Mir Rustam Khan. The British objected to the presence of these "fanatics" at such a place, saying that it was prejudicial to the interests of their Government. They informed the Nawab that any action on the part of the *mujāhidin* that might interfere with the navigation of the Indus was likely "to cause great offence to the British Government". The *mujāhidin* do not seem to have done anything further to cause a rupture in the Mir's relations with the British Government. Maulvi Nasiruddin remained at Shikarpur till Auckland's war with the Afghans.³⁴

In 1839 Lord Auckland took up the cause of the unpopular and exiled Afghan monarch Shah Shuja, marched at the head of an armed force into Afghanistan, deposed Dost Muhammad, and put Shah Shuja in his place. Dost Muhammad started hostilities against the British and invited Maulvi Nasiruddin to participate in the struggle. The avowed purpose of the Afghan War was, according to the *mujāhidin*, the destruction of a Muslim kingdom. And so when Dost Muhammad declared a religious war against the British and invited the *mujāhidin* to join him, they did so willingly. They were convinced that as Muslims they had a duty to assist their brethren in defending themselves from what appeared to them to be an unprovoked attack by a Christian Power. Saiyyad Nasiruddin with his followers marched on Kabul and, encamping near Dadur, advanced to support Dost Muhammad. However, in the defence of Ghazni on 21 July 1839 the combined forces of Maulvi Nasiruddin and Dost Muhammad were completely destroyed. The British captured Kabul soon after, leaving the forces of Maulvi Nasiruddin in total disarray.³⁵

After the defeat of Dost Muhammad, Maulvi Nasiruddin moved to Amb at the invitation of Pauda Khan. Soon he fell ill. Moving on to Sittana, he passed away there in 1840.³⁶

In a poem Maulvi Nasiruddin defines his religious and political aims as the purification of religion and the establishment of an Islamic State. These were the aims which had animated the

³⁴Mallick, n. 17, p. 118.

³⁵*Calcutta Review*, vol. 14 (1870-71), October 1870, p. 356; Malik, n. 5, p. 186; and Mallick, n. 17, p. 118. See, also, Mehr, *Jamāt-i Mujāhidin*, n. 19, p. 204.

³⁶Mehr, *Jamāt-i Mujāhidin*, n. 19, pp. 200-10.

movement led by Shah Waliullah. Nasiruddin too struggled to accomplish the annihilation of the Sikhs and the British.³⁷

The history of the Wahhabi movement, at least from 1831 to 1858, is to a great extent the history of the activities of Wilayat Ali and Inayat Ali of the Sadiqpur family of Patna. William Hunter has rightly observed:

Indefatigable as missionaries, careless of themselves, blameless in their lives, supremely devoted to the overthrow of the English infidels, [and] admirably skilful in organizing a permanent system for supplying money and recruits, the Patna caliphs stand forth as the types and examples of the sect.³⁸

Maulana Wilayat Ali (1790-1852) of Azimabad, Patna, was brought up under prosperous conditions. He was still a student at Lucknow when he got the opportunity to meet Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi, who, with some of his followers, had gone there to seek employment. It is said that Wilayat Ali was so impressed by the piety of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi that he left his education incomplete and renounced all worldly comforts to join his circle in Delhi. Wilayat Ali persuaded his relatives, especially his younger brother Inayat Ali, to join the movement. When Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi migrated to the Frontier for the purpose of waging a *jihād*, both brothers joined him.³⁹ In 1829-30 Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi sent Maulana Wilayat Ali and Saiyyad Mohammad Ali Rampuri to Hyderabad (Deccan) for the propagation of his teaching. Nawab Mubarizuddaulah, brother of Nawab Nasiruddaullah, offered *bai'ah* to Maulana Wilayat Ali. Hardly had the reform movement gained a foothold in Hyderabad when the unfortunate events of Balakot forced the Maulana to return to Azimabad in 1831.

As soon as Maulana Wilayat Ali assumed the leadership of the movement in his region, he sent Maulana Inayat Ali to Bengal to gain adherents for the movement. After two years he himself went to Bengal. Eventually he proceeded to Mecca for *hajj*.⁴⁰

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸W.W. Hunter, *The Indian Musalmans* (Calcutta, 1945), pp. 47-48. See, also, Ahmad, n. 10, p. 99.

³⁹Abdul Rahim, *Tazkirā-i Sādqā* (n. p., 1901), p. 92. See, also, Mehr, *Jamāt-i Mujāhidīn*, n. 19, pp. 226-7; and Mian, n. 2, vol. 3, pp. 8-9.

⁴⁰Rahim, n. 39, pp. 97-98.

On his return from Mecca Maulana Wilayat Ali recalled Maulana Inayat Ali to Azimabad and directed him to proceed to Balakot to help the *mujāhidin* in waging war against Raja Gulab Singh of the Punjab. It was probably after the defeat of Dost Muhammad and Maulana Nasiruddin that Inayat Ali was asked to rush to the Frontier. About three years later he himself moved towards Afghanistan and took over from his brother the reins of the campaign against Gulab Singh. It is believed that he succeeded in occupying the Hazara District.⁴¹ However, the First Anglo-Sikh War and the annexation of the Punjab by the British on 10 February 1846 necessitated a review of the struggle. There is little doubt that after the liquidation of the Sikh State in the Punjab the British inherited from it the problem of the persistent hostility of the *mujāhidin*. The *mujāhidin* found themselves in direct confrontation with the British. Gulab Singh, who had entered into an alliance with the British, demanded British protection. In response to his request the British Government wrote to Maulana Wilayat Ali, asking him to stop hostilities against Gulab Singh as the latter was under their protection.⁴² It also warned him that any continuance of the hostilities against Gulab Singh would be treated as an offence against the British. At the same time it sent two military officers with their forces to help Gulab Singh. These officers first avoided provoking a military conflict. As usual they tried diplomatically to create division within the ranks of the *mujāhidin*. They succeeded in winning Saiyyad Zaman Shah of Balakot over to their side. And finally, in 1847, a battle was fought at Dub. In this battle Maulana Wilayat Ali was defeated. This proves that the Maulana had not taken cognizance of the warnings of the British Government and had continued his struggle against the British.

After his defeat Maulana Wilayat Ali reportedly proceeded to the Swat State of Saiyyad Akbar Shah.⁴⁴ However, as there

⁴¹Ibid., p. 99.

⁴²Ibid., pp. 99-100; Mian, n. 2, vol. 3, pp. 54-58; Aziz, n. 1, p. 20; and Chopra, n. 16, pp. 66-67. The last pitched battle between the Sikhs and the British took place on 10 February 1846. A peace treaty was signed in March 1846. See P.E. Robert, *History of British India* (London, 1947), pp. 337-8.

⁴³Rahim, n. 39, pp. 99-100.

⁴⁴Ibid. See, also, Mian, n. 2, vol. 3, pp. 54-58.

were some British-controlled territories on the way, he sought permission from the British officers in charge to pass through them. The permission was granted. On their way to Swat, however, he and his followers were abruptly arrested, on the ground that the officers had no right to grant permission without consulting the Government. This annoyed the *mujāhidin*, but they exercised restraint on the advice of Maulana Wilayat Ali. They were then taken to Lahore and produced before John Lawrence, then Chief Commissioner of the Punjab. Lawrence received the Maulana with due honour. Under an accord which was reached amicably the Maulana agreed to go back to Azimabad along with his followers. On their arrival at Patna, they were asked by the Commissioner of Patna at the instance of the British Government to furnish two sureties on behalf of two of their followers, Hashmat Dad Khan and Dilawar Khan, for their conduct and stay at Azimabad for two years.⁴⁵

Maulana Mehr, however, refutes this whole story of arrest, accord, and sureties put out by Jafar Thaneswari. According to him, within three months of their arrival in the Punjab, Maulana Wilayat Ali and his *mujāhidin* were defeated by Gulab Singh in the battle of Dub. After that they reached Azimabad through Lahore. It is wrong to say that they intended to go to Swat at the invitation of Akbar Shah as the latter had not yet become the ruler of the State. Also Hazara and other territories had not yet been annexed by the British Government.⁴⁶

However it might have been, Maulana Wilayat Ali and his followers again left for Bengal in 1849-50. From Bengal they proceeded to the Frontier in 1851. Maulana Wilayat Ali now thought that the time was ripe for the execution of his plans. He had found out that the British were planning to send the 4th Native Infantry stationed at Rawalpindi. He started extensive correspondence with the Muslim soldiers of the 4th Native Infantry, and the latter agreed that the regiment would revolt rather than crush the *mujāhidin*. A regular organization was established for the purpose of transporting men and arms from Bengal to the Frontier. In Patna the entire Muslim population

⁴⁵Rahim, n. 39, pp. 100-1; Thaneswari, n. 23, p. 215; and Mian, n. 2, vol. 3, pp. 59-60.

⁴⁶Mehr, *Jamāt-i Mujāhidin*, n. 19, pp. 265-6.

was supporting the liberation movement. Even the police were in league with the *mujāhidin*. In Patna, Maulana Ahmadullah successfully resisted the search of his premises, where seven hundred of his followers had assembled to repulse the British authorities by the use of arms. The British Government was alarmed, especially when their secret services seized the Maulana's correspondence with the 4th Native Infantry. The movement suffered an irreparable loss when Maulana Wilayat Ali suddenly passed away in October 1852. "The British smashed their plans and convicted several of the Muslim soldiers of the 4th Native Infantry for having collaborated with the *mujāhidin*."⁴⁷

After the death of Maulana Wilayat Ali, his younger brother Inayat Ali took charge of the movement. He was much different from his brother. Very zealous and very impatient, he was in favour of waging a *jihād* against the Christians without waiting for the return of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi.⁴⁸ He had already parted with his brother in 1851-52. Wilayat Ali was deeply religious and sincere in his convictions, but his enthusiasm for the faith was not of that wild nature and frantic kind which loses all control and looks upon expediency as a religious weakness.⁴⁹ Inayat Ali in contrast was blind to all that was necessary for success. In this attitude he seems to have been guided by the example of the Prophet's conquest of Mecca with an inferior army.⁵⁰

It was at this stage that the anti-British activities of the followers of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi came prominently to the notice of the British Government by the accidental disclosure of a plot against the Government through an anonymous letter. To Inayat Ali, a sincere faith in the mission of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi, that great spiritual leader, was all that the *mujāhidin* required for achieving victory over the infidels. He had already gained fame in the battle of Balakot, which was fought for Zaman Shah.⁵¹

⁴⁷Malik, n. 5, pp. 187-8 ; Hunter, n. 38, p. 22 ; and Mian, n. 2, vol. 3, p. 75.

⁴⁸Mallick, n. 17, p. 127. See, also, Mian, n. 2, vol. 3, p. 71.

⁴⁹Mian, n. 2, vol. 3, p. 71.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Mehr, *Jamāt-i Mujāhidin*, n. 19, pp. 276-7. See, also, *Calcutta Review*, vol. 14 (1870-71), October 1870, p. 342.

O'Kinealy stresses a very important aspect of the teachings of the Wahhabi missionaries sent to the villages of Bengal by Inayat Ali. According to him, those who were not in a position to abandon the country and join the *jihād* were asked to resist passively and abstain from all dealings with their *kāfir* rulers and to form, as it were, a power within the Government. They were also enjoined not to seek for help from the infidels and not to go to the courts of the infidels for any kind of redress. Instead, they were to seek settlement of all their disputes amicably by referring them to local leaders.⁵²

Soon after taking charge, Inayat Ali proceeded to settle scores with the Amir of Amb, in whose territories the *mujāhidin* had been plundered on their way to Sittana in 1852.⁵³ Jahan Dad Khan, the Amir of Amb, was an ally of the British and naturally sought help from the British. The British sent their forces under one Aibat to help the Amir. These forces marched towards Ashra Koila, cutting the line of supply of the *mujāhidin*. The *mujāhidin*, who were hardly three hundred in number, abandoned the fort in self-defence in view of the impossibility of taking on the huge combined forces. More than thirty *mujāhidin* were killed in the clash. Inayat Ali left for Sittana with the survivors. There he made an alliance with Saiyyad Abbas, Amir of Mangal Thana, to prepare for a *jihād* against the British.⁵⁴ The Maulana made elaborate preparations. In 1853 the British Government sent an ultimatum to the Maulana requiring him to surrender within a month and proposed a settlement. However, the *mujāhidin* refused to accept the humiliating peace terms. Consequently, there occurred another clash between the *mujāhidin* and the British Government at Narinji. In this battle too the *mujāhidin* were defeated. In the first attack the British armies repulsed the *mujāhidin* but failed to arrest Inayat Ali. In 1857 there was another battle at Narinji. The *mujāhidin* offered tough resistance, but the British armies succeeded in occupying a part of Narinji. Inayat Ali again managed to escape to Chinglai,-outside

⁵²Hunter, n. 38, pp. 49-55. See, also, Ahmad, n. 10, p. 105 ; and Chopra, n. 16, p. 68.

⁵³*Calcutta Review*, vol. 14 (1870-71), October 1870, p. 342 ; and Mian, n. 2, vol. 3, p. 73.

⁵⁴Mehr, *Jamāt-i Mujāhidin*, n. 19, p. 286.

British-Controlled territories.⁵⁵ In May 1857 he found himself resourceless as no men and money were forthcoming from India. The British Government had arrested leaders like Maulana Ahmad-ullah, Muhammad Husain, and Maulvi Waiz Ali of the Sadiqpur centre, who used to send money to him.⁵⁶ Inayat Ali thus failed to reorganize the *mujāhidin* after this reverse. He is, however, said to have carried on correspondence with the Muslim soldiers of the British forces to make them rally to his banner. He never returned to India, which he regarded as a *dār-al harb*, and died at Chinglai itself on 23 March 1858.⁵⁷

Thus the movement of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi, popularly known as the Wahhabi movement, was one of the earliest, the most consistent and protracted, and the most relentlessly anti-British movement in the political history of India in the first half of the nineteenth century. Originally socio-religious in character, the Wahhabi movement gained a political orientation, particularly during the period of leadership of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi and the Ali brothers and after. Their struggle continued till long after the Sikhs had ceased to exist as a political force. It is true, however, that during the life time of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi the North-West Frontier area was the base of operations for the movement and that the first round began with a struggle against the Sikhs. The movement did not, however, come to an end with the downfall of the Sikhs. It survived up to 1857.⁵⁸

There was yet another Muslim religious centre in India, the one in Delhi, which was led by Fazle Imam Khairabadi. Khairabadi's attitude towards British rule and Western culture is noteworthy. A comparative study of the different religious centres would reveal that they did not react in the same manner. There were differences in their thinking and approaches. The ultimate goal of all was identical, viz to rejuvenate Muslim society and to re-establish Muslim rule in India. Khairabadi *ulamā* at first adopted a mild and moderate approach and tried to adjust themselves to the changed conditions as best they could. Subse-

⁵⁵*Calcutta Review*, vol. 14 (1870-71), October 1870, pp. 395-6.

⁵⁶Hunter, n. 38, pp. 55-59 ; Ahmad, n. 10, p. 124 ; and Mian, n. 2, vol. 3, p. 75.

⁵⁷Mian, n. 2, vol. 3, p. 75; and Ahmad, n. 10, p. 124.

⁵⁸Ahmad, n. 10, pp. xi and 324.

quently, however, their bitter experiences turned them against the British.

When the school of Shah Abdul Aziz was engaged in teaching and propagating Islamic ideals, reforming society, and making preparations for a *jihād*, the Khairabadi school devoted itself exclusively to imparting secular education in logic and philosophy. The former school with its broad-based objectives aimed at establishing a purely Islamic State ; the latter avoided politics and co-operated with the British Government. Maulana Fazle Imam even agreed to serve as *sadr-al sudūr* under the British. So did his disciple Sadruddin Azurda. Fazle Imam's son Fazle Haq Khairabadi first received education under the care and supervision of his father and subsequently in the school of Shah Abdul Aziz. He too followed in the footsteps of his father and joined service under the British as *sarishtdār* about 1825.⁵⁹

Fazle Haq Khairabadi informs us that on the British occupation of Delhi in 1803, a group of *ulamā* decided not to co-operate with the British administration. Very soon, however, this attitude of non-co-operation was given up, and a number of eminent Muslims of Delhi took up service under the British. Those who consistently opposed the idea of Muslims serving under the British were reduced to a small minority.⁶⁰

On their arrival in Delhi the British adopted a policy of appointing Muslims of aristocratic families to higher posts so as to win them over to their side. Fazle Haq Khairabadi says that the last obstacle was removed when Shah Abdul Aziz allowed Maulvi Abdul Hai to serve as *sadr-al sudūr* in Meerut. However, by and large, the *ulamā* continued to resist the temptation of taking up service under the British; for they had some reservations on religious grounds.⁶¹ Fazle Haq Khairabadi himself resigned from British service as soon as he understood the duplicity and the ulterior intentions of the British Government. He was filled with dismay at the sagging prestige of the last two Emperors, the crucial defeat of the Muslims at Balakot in 1831,

⁵⁹See Mohammad Abdul Shahid Sherwani's translation of Fazle Haq Khairabadi's *Al Surat-al Hindiyāh*, entitled *Bāghī Hindostān* (Bijnor, 1947), p. 29.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹"The *ulamā* did not accept any *nazrānā* or present from the servants of the British Government." Ibid., p. 39.

and the tragic deposition of the King of Oudh in 1856. He appeared to be very much perplexed and disgusted, moving from one place to another in search of peace. Gradually there came about a radical change in his mind and attitude. He got the feeling that the British were responsible for the total destruction of the Muslims and their culture in India. This turned him into a great opponent of British rule. As soon as he heard the news of the Uprising in 1857, he joined it. He negotiated with many rajas and *zamindārs*—including, especially, Ahmadullah Shah—in connexion with the Uprising.⁶²

Rebels like Mirza Ilahi Bakhsh, Mir Sayeed Ali Khan, Hakim Abdul Haq, and General Bakht Khan approached him for his opinion on the propriety of declaring a *jihād* against the British. Thereupon Fazle Haq Khairabadi issued a *fatvā* approving of a *jihād* against the British. The other *ulamā* who signed the *fatvā* were Mufti Sadruddin Khan Azurdah (who was *sadr-al sudūr* of Delhi), Maulvi Abdul Qadir, Qadi Faizullah of Delhi, Maulana Faiz Ahmad Badauni, Maulvi Wazir Khan Akbarabadi, and Saiyyad Mubarak Shah Rampuri.⁶³

The *fatvā* roused the enthusiasm of the people.⁶⁴ However, disputes and differences within the Royal family led to the defeat of the rebels. British forces finally recaptured Delhi on 19 September 1857. The Maulana and others escaped. The Maulana was, however, arrested later, in 1859, and tried on the charge of rebellion against British rule.⁶⁵ It is believed that the judge himself was interested in the release of the Maulana as he had once been a student of his. The Maulana argued his own case, but admitted that some of the charges levelled against him were true. All that the judge could do was to save him from death. He awarded him a life sentence.⁶⁶

Mehr observes that in his early life the Maulana paid no attention to political matters and was interested in remunerative jobs for leading a respectable and comfortable life. Service under the British provided good opportunities for a prosperous career

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Ibid., pp. 154-5.

⁶⁵Intezamullah Shahabi, *Ghadar ke Chand Ulamā* (Delhi, n.d.), pp. 41-42.

⁶⁶Ibid.

so he joined it. However, in his later life he was an entirely changed man. His own personal experiences of British rule appear to have been the cause of the change. He was convinced that after having gained political mastery over India, the British were now bent upon replacing the native religions with their own. They had reduced the peasantry and the masses to utter poverty by taking full control of the economic resources of India, especially in the fields of agriculture, commerce, and industry.⁶⁷ Aziz agrees that the Maulana accused the British of a policy aimed at eradicating Islamic scholarship and reducing the Muslims to stark poverty. The Maulana interpreted it all as a typical manifestation of Christian hostility to Islam. He accused the British administration of an agricultural policy that had impoverished the peasants and reduced them to the status of serfs. The Muslims resented official interference in their religious and educational institutions more bitterly than the Hindus did because religious beliefs in Islam had a revelatory significance.⁶⁸ This was why the Maulana ultimately joined the revolutionaries and declared a *jihād*. As ill luck would have it, this attempt too failed. The reasons for the failure were obvious to the Maulana. He never trusted the capacities of the Royal family. The Emperor Bahadur Shah was under the influence of his consort Zeenat Mahal and Hakim Ahsanullah Khan, who were both friendly to the British.⁶⁹

Maulana Fazle Haq Khairabadi developed great hatred for the British while in jail and ridiculed them for injustice and dishonesty.⁷⁰

⁶⁷*Bāghī Hindostān*, n. 57, p. 185. See, also, G.R. Mehr, *Athārāh Sau Sattāvān ke Mujāhidīn* (Lahore, 1960), pp. 203-24.

⁶⁸Aziz, n. 1, p. 29.

⁶⁹*Athārāh Sau Sattāvān ke Mujāhidīn*, n. 62, pp. 205-8; and Aziz, n. 1, p. 29.

⁷⁰*Bāghī Hindostān*, n. 57, pp. 353-5.

Chapter 5

BENGAL SCHOOL OF ORTHODOXY

A study of the attitudes of the religious reformers of Bengal would reveal that except Shaikh Karamat Ali, who devoted himself exclusively to reform, they were all actively engaged in anti-British activity aimed at annihilating the British and establishing an Islamic State. Shariatullah, Dudu Miyan, and Titu Mir made no attempt to conceal their hostility to the British. Shariatullah pronounced Bengal under British rule a *dār-al harb*. Dudu Miyan and Titu Mir openly declared war against the British. Movements for religious reform in Bengal were inspired either by the Wahhabi movement of Najd or by the reform movement of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi. From the political point of view, however, it would appear that none of them had a direct connexion with either the Wahhabis or the adherents of the reform movement led by Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi. There is hardly any evidence that may prove that they were the offshoots of either of the two.¹ The political activities and goals of the movements initiated by the orthodox in Bengal derived from local conditions. However, broadly viewed, the movements exhibited remarkable similarities. It is unfortunate that in spite of such similarities they failed to unite on a common platform and devise a common approach to destroy the common enemy. They basically differed on the propriety of holding congregational prayers on such occasions as *Jumāh* and *Īd*.

The followers of Haji Shariatullah were known as Faraidis on account of their emphasis on the observance of *farāid*. As a group of *ulāmā* of the Hanafi school they represented the Muslims of East Bengal. The majority of the Muslims of East Bengal were converts from the lower Hindu castes, especially of rural areas, engaged in the various local occupations. Although centuries had passed since they embraced Islam, they still observed

¹Pakistan Historical Conference, *Proceedings* (Karachi), 1955, p. 197.

certain Hindu rites and customs. They even worshipped the goddess Durga.²

During the period under discussion the British, who had then been in Bengal for quite some time, were directly or indirectly oppressing the peasantry of Bengal. This led to the emergence of Shariatullah, his son Dudu Miyan, and Titu Mir as leaders of the Muslims in Bengal. They tirelessly worked for the reform of the Muslims on the one hand and for the release of the Muslim peasants from their Hindu and British oppressors on the other.³ The movements initiated by them, therefore, sought in the beginning to revive the pristine purity of Islam and emphasized the obligatory duties prescribed by Islam. However, politics in Islam is not something separate from religion, and that is how religious reform in Bengal went hand in hand with the political regeneration of the Muslims.⁴

The new exploiters, viz the *zamindārs* and the indigo planters patronized by the Government, were sucking the blood of the peasants. They had no sympathy for the peasants: they were only interested in their profits. The Muslim religious leaders, therefore, declared that Bengal under British rule was a *dār-al harb*. Initially they scrupulously avoided direct clash with the British, but eventually they found that there was no alternative to a head-on collision. A study of the life and career of the religious reformers would show how they clashed with the British and with what aims. The British historians deliberately highlighted the clashes between the Bengal reformers and the Hindu *zamindārs*.⁵ They sought thereby to achieve a double purpose, viz to create the impression that the British Government was very popular and had no conflict with the champions of reform, and to sow the seeds of communal hatred between the

²Ibid., p. 206. See, also, H. Beveridge, *The District of Bakarganj: Its History and Statistics* (London, 1876), p. 246; Muinuddin Ahmad Khan, *The Faraidi Movement* (Karachi, 1965), pp. xxv, xxvi, and xxxii-xxxv; and Stephen Fuchs, *Rebellious Prophets* (n.p. or d.), pp. 117 and 118.

³*Hindu Intelligencer* (Calcutta), 14 August 1854.

See, also, Aziz-ur-Rahman Mallick, *British Policy and the Muslims in Bengal, 1757-1856* (Dacca, 1961), pp. 77-78; and Khan, n. 2, pp. xxxii and xxxv.

⁴Pakistan Historical Conference, *Proceedings*, 1955, pp. 175-7.

⁵Beveridge, n. 2, p. 255.

two major communities which had lived peacefully side by side for centuries together. This bade fair to serve their ends by prolonging their rule. The struggle waged by the Muslim leaders was, however, against a system, an organization, or a particular section of the exploiters which owed its existence to the British Government. It was not against the Hindus as such but against a class of new *zamindārs* which consisted, only incidentally, of a large number of Hindus. The reformers also clashed with the indigo planters who were almost exclusively European and who were as exploitative as, if not more exploitative than, the *zamindārs*.⁶

In the religious field, the aim of the reformers was to eradicate all un-Islamic influences. These included, *inter alia*, the influence of the Hindu religion, at least in Bengal. It is, however, difficult to tell whether the Faraidis entertained any friendly feelings for the Hindus generally, but they were certainly bitter enemies of the British and of those who helped the British in their oppression, Hindu or Muslim. Perhaps they could make some adjustment with the Hindus and could unite with them on a cultural level, but there was hardly anything common between them and the British to warrant their uniting with the British.⁷

Haji Shariatullah (1781-1840), the founder of Faraidi movement, was the son of a petty *tālukdār* named Abdul Jalil of the village of Shamail in the Faridpur District. At the age of twenty he went to Calcutta, where he completed his religious education. When his teacher Basharat Ali migrated to Mecca in 1799 out of disgust for the British regime in India, Shariatullah also went with him. In Mecca he learnt Arabic, Persian, and Islamic jurisprudence from Maulana Murad and Tahir Sombal (Abu Hanifa Junior). He also studied mysticism and sufism and was formally initiated into the Qadiriya order. He then went to Cairo for an advanced study of Islamic theology at Jamiah-al Azhar. He returned to Bengal in 1818 with a view to propagating the pure doctrines of Islam. However, he soon became disillusioned with the response to his mission and returned to Mecca (between 1818 and 1820). This time he was able to familiarize himself with the Wahhabi movement in Arabia. Upon his return, with the permission and blessing of his spiritual preceptor, he

⁶Mallick, n. 3, pp. 77-79.

⁷Ibid.

started his movement again with great vigour. He succeeded in abolishing many customs repugnant to Islam and in persuading large numbers of Muslims of the need to observe *farāid*.⁸

The new creed united the Muslim peasantry as never before. The *zamindārs* naturally felt alarmed. They had imposed a number of restrictions on the Muslim peasantry such as prohibition of the slaughter of cows. They had also levied idolatrous taxes [such as a tax for the communal worship of the goddess Durga].⁹ Owing to the widespread resentment which these had fostered among the peasants, the Faraidi movement soon became popular among the lower classes of Muslims.¹⁰ It flourished by and large in the un-enlightened rural society of the Muslims of East Bengal. At first it came into conflict with the conservative Muslim society and then with the *zamindārs* of Dacca. From 1838 onwards it came into violent conflict with the Hindu *zamindārs* and the European indigo planters on account of its policy of upholding the rights of the Muslim peasants.¹¹

Shariatullah was primarily a religious reformer. He scrupulously avoided issues that might involve him in politics. However, the declaration he made is of great political significance. He declared that as long as his country was under non-Muslim rule, it was to be considered a *dār-al harb* and that the congregational prayers such as those offered on the occasion of *Jumāh* and *Īd* were accordingly prohibited there. He thus sowed the seed of political regeneration of his countrymen.¹² He implicitly called upon the Muslims to participate in a *jihād* when he said that congregational prayers could be held only after India (Bengal) had been converted into a *dār-al Islām*.

In response the Muslims boycotted British courts.¹³ They boycotted English schools as well lest the British should seek to

⁸Khan, n. 2, pp. 1-12.

⁹Khan, n. 2, pp. ix and 7-12. See, also, *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan* (Dacca), vol. 4 (1959), p. 53. See, also, Fuchs, n. 2, p. 116, for a reference to the Muslims observing Durga Puja.

¹⁰Khan, n. 2, pp. civ-cxv. See, also, *Hindu Intelligencer*, 14 August 1854 and 25 May 1857.

¹¹Khan, n. 2, p. xvii.

¹²Pakistan Historical Conference, *Proceedings*, 1955, pp. 175-7. See, also, Titus T. Murray, *The Religious Quest of India* (London, 1963), p. 179; Fuchs, n. 2, pp. 117-18; and Khan, n. 2, p. 67.

¹³A. Yusuf Ali, "Muslim Culture and Religious Thought", in L.S.S. O'Malley, ed., *Modern India and the West* (London, 1941), p. 395.

transplant their own religion and culture to Bengal. This was confirmed by Beveridge, especially when he ruled out the possibility of Christianization in the Muslim-dominated districts of Bengal.¹⁴ According to Muinuddin Khan, the Faraidis did not lay as much emphasis on the question of political status of India as a whole as they did on the question of political status of their particular region, viz Bengal. The argument of the Faraidis centred on the definition of *Misr-al Jami*. According to them, it signified the place of residence of the *Amir* and the *Qādi*, or else of the *Hakim*, in whom the function of the *Amir* and the *Qādi* were combined. As neither the villages nor the towns of Bengal during British rule fulfilled these requirements in a technical sense, i.e. through delegation of authority by a lawful Muslim ruler, the Faraidis saw no justification for holding congregational prayers under British rule.¹⁵ In contrast Maulvi Karamat Ali tried to play safe by giving it as his opinion that the *Jumāh* and *Zuhar* prayers could be offered together.¹⁶ This only highlighted the uprightness and straightforwardness of the Faraidis.

Shariatullah, however, did not preach *jihād* or sedition openly or directly against the British although some of the doctrines he taught led people to infer that he wanted them either to proclaim a *jihād* or to migrate to a Muslim country. However, more than once he was detained by the police for inciting his disciples to withhold payment of revenue.

From the above it can be asserted that the Faraidi doctrine of non-permissibility of congregational prayers was not just a doctrine for doctrine's sake. It was in fact a protest against the administrative changes brought about by the British to the detriment of Muslim society and in utter disregard of Muslim sentiment. After his death in 1840 Shariatullah's mission was taken to its logical end by his son and successor Dudu Miyan.

Muhsin Al Din Ahmad alias Dudu Miyan (1819-62), son and successor of Haji Shariatullah, is regarded as a co-founder of the Faraidi movement. He was a man of ordinary abilities, but exerted an influence far surpassing that of his father. He excelled his

¹⁴Beveridge, n. 2, pp. 255-8 and 382.

¹⁵Khan, n. 2, pp. 67-73 and 74.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 76. See, also, Pakistan Historical Conference, *Proceedings*, 1955, p. 180.

father in organizing the Faraidi brotherhood into a well-knit and powerful society. Dudu Miyan completed his education under the care and supervision of his father. Then he went to Mecca, where he stayed for about five years. On his return he was trained for the mission by his father. When Shariatullah died in 1840, the Faraidis met together and elected Dudu Miyan as their *Ustād*.¹⁷ The indomitable energies of Dudu Miyan, which had so long been held in check by his prudent father, now burst into activity. He started an active campaign against the extortions of the *zamindārs* and the European indigo planters. The peasantry demanded quick and firm action.¹⁸ Murder, arson, dacoity, plunder, and kidnapping were some of the means by which the peasantry had been forced to take to the cultivation of indigo. It was said that not a chest of indigo reached England without being stained by human blood.¹⁹ The most remarkable achievement of Dudu Miyan's is that he united the Faraidis into a compact hierarchical organization or system known as the *Khilāfat* system. He divided East Bengal into a number of circles and appointed an agent in each. The duties of an agent were: to hold the sect together, to organize proselytization, and to collect contributions.²⁰ The British, Hindu, and Muslim landlords dreaded Dudu Miyan and his followers. Dudu Miyan made his most determined stand against the levying of illegal taxes by landlords. He proclaimed that the earth belonged to God and that no one had a right to inherit any part of it. He exhorted the Muslim peasants to settle on *khās mahāl* land managed directly by the Government, so that they might escape all taxes except, of course, the revenue due to the State. His policy was to create a State within the State. The peasants were well protected by their boycott of British courts: the absence of witnesses made legal processes inoperative.²¹

In 1841 and 1842 Dudu Miyan led two campaigns, one against the *zamindārs* of Kanaipur, known as *shikdārs*, and the other

¹⁷Sharif al-Mujahid, "19th Century Bengali Mujahideen", *Pakistan Quarterly* (Karachi), vol. 7 (1957), no. 2, p. 20. See, also, James Taylor, *Faraizees* (Calcutta, 1972), p. 250; and Khan, n. 2, pp. 23-26 and 79.

¹⁸Khan, n. 2, pp. 23-25; and Hafeez Malik, *Moslem Nationalism in India and Pakistan* (Washington, D.C., 1963), p. 202.

¹⁹Murray, n. 12, p. 180; and Malik, n. 18, p. 202. See, also, Pakistan Historical Conference, *Proceedings*, 1955, p. 178.

²⁰Malik, n. 18, p. 202,

²¹*Ibid.* See, also, al-Mujahid, n. 17, p. 20; and O'Malley, n. 13, p. 395.

against the *zamindārs* of Faridpur, known as *Ghoshes*. The objective was to persuade the *zamindārs* to accept a reasonable relationship with the Faraidi peasantry. These campaigns proved a success. With this success Dudu Miyan found himself at the head of some eighty thousand followers from among the masses. The *zamindārs* felt grave apprehension at the growing power of the Faraidi movement.²² In an effort to protect themselves they fanned the suspicions of the British administrators and indigo planters. At their instigation an Englishman called Andrew Anderson Dunlop, an influential indigo planter who had a factory at Madaripur, swore to destroy Dudu Miyan. Dudu Miyan and his movement were so powerful at this time that the *zamindārs* were afraid of disturbing the peace of the Faraidis by any direct violent means. Kali Prasad Kanjhi Lal, a *brāhmana* who was *gumāshā* in the employment of Dunlop, was in charge of Dunlop's indigo factory of Panchchar within the jurisdiction of the police station at Mulfatganj. This *gumāshā* was dead opposed to Dudu Miyan; and, under the protection of his English master, he sought to oppress the Faraidis wherever possible. On 5 December 1846 a large body of Faraidis attacked the factory at Panchchar and razed it to the ground. They also pillaged the adjoining village. As they departed, they took with them the Brahmin *gumāshā* and later murdered him in the Bakarganj District. According to Jameswise, this attack was motivated by Dudu Miyan's desire to take revenge upon Dunlop. By way of retaliation Dunlop's agents looted the Faraidis at Bahadurpur. The British magistracy, unwilling to let down Dunlop, denied justice to the Faraidis. Dudu Miyan and sixty-three of his followers were later tried in the court of the Session Judge at Faridpur and were convicted in 1847. However, on an appeal to the Nizamat Adalat of Calcutta they were all eventually acquitted. Dudu Miyan and his followers hailed the acquittal. It was another victory for the Faraidi peasantry against the *zamindārs* and indigo planters. Even Europeans like Edward de Latour criticized Dunlop and the British magistracy for what they called their corruption. Dudu Miyan enjoyed thereafter a whole decade of peace.²³

At the outbreak of the country-wide Uprising of 1857, how-

²²Khan, n. 2, pp. 26-30.

²³Pakistan Historical Conference, *Proceedings*, 1955, p. 178. See, also, Khan, n. 2, pp. 32-42.

ever, Dudu Miyan was arrested by the British Government and removed to Calcutta. No specific charge was brought against him. Jameswise simply says that he would have been released if he had not boasted before the court that fifty thousand men would answer his summons and march wheresoever he ordered them. He was released in 1859 after the danger to the British Empire had blown over. As soon as he reached home, Dudu Miyan was again arrested and placed under detention at Faridpur.²⁴

According to Dampier, the Commissioner of the Bengal Police, the real objective of the Faraidis was the "expulsion of the foreign rulers and the restoration of the Mohamman power". Mallick, however, contradicts this view. He says: "Nowhere do we come across any intention expressed by him [viz by Dudu Miyan] that he wanted or ever aimed at the establishment of political power by the Muslims in place of the British."²⁵ This difference in the two assessments derives basically from the difference between the theory of the Faraidis and their practice. Dampier went by their doctrines, which implicitly sought to re-establish Muslim rule. Their activities were in fact a beginning towards that goal. Mallick on the other hand focussed on their activities, especially those of Dudu Miyan, which bypassed the *fatvā* of Shariatullah, the founder of the Faraidi movement, pronouncing Bengal a *dār-al harb* so long as it continued to be under British rule. Shariatullah himself had not made any significant effort to convert the *dār-al harb* that was Bengal into a *dār-al Islām*, but he had definitely suggested alternative courses for future leaders. Hence the Faraidi movement, if viewed in its totality, would make it clear that whereas Shariatullah provided a theory, a philosophy, for starting an anti-British movement, Dudu Miyan went a step further and sought vigorously through his movement to achieve the immediate objective of humbling the *zamindārs* and the indigo planters. If Dudu Miyan had succeeded in achieving this immediate objective, he would have taken the next step towards the final goal of converting the *dār-al harb* that was Bengal into a *dār-al Islām*. As a matter of fact it was then beyond the power of the Faraidis to achieve the final

²⁴Pakistan Historical Conference, *Proceedings*, 1955, pp. 178 and 205; and Khan, n. 2, pp. 42-43.

²⁵Khan, n. 2, pp. 43-44; Mallick, n. 3, pp. 14-17; and Pakistan Historical Conference, *Proceedings*, 1955, p. 205.

goal in view of their meagre strength as against the formidable British power. Also, they never went beyond the regional limits. Their influence was limited to the lower-class Muslims of the rural areas of Bengal. They failed to make common cause with the followers of Saiyyad Ahmad Bareilvi, who were operating in Bengal, also for a similar goal. The silence of Dudu Miyan from 1847 to 1857 also created misgiving. Of course his repeated arrests, first in 1857 and again in 1859, show that he was a much-feared man. Dudu Miyan fearlessly threatened the British with dire consequences for summoning him to the court in 1857. It would, therefore, be wrong to say, as Beveridge does, that the Faraidis did not appear to share the "dangerous" political views of the Wahhabis or that their revolutionary views did not extend beyond quarrelling with their landlords over payment of rent.²⁶ Indeed the Faraidis were more revolutionary than the followers of Saiyyad Ahmad Bareilvi, in the sense that they did not conceal their feelings by making vague statements. They declared right at the start that Bengal was a *dār-al harb* so long as the British continued to rule it.

Mir Nisar Ali alias Titu Mir of the Chandpur Village, Barasat District, was a wrestler and a desperate character. He met Saiyyad Ahmad Bareilvi in Mecca in 1827 and became a disciple and devoted himself to his mission. Within a short time he succeeded in winning three to four hundred followers in Bengal.²⁷ His political activities, however, owe much to the conditions that obtained at that time. Like Shariatullah he also felt aggrieved over the oppression and exploitation of the Muslim peasantry by the Hindu *zamindārs* although it was the British Government which was ultimately responsible for it. This realization led him to launch an anti-British campaign.

Although the Muslim peasants were being continuously oppressed by the Hindu *zamindārs* the British Government had turned a deaf ear to the complaints of the peasants. This led Titu Mir to take up the cause of the peasants. He sent his lieutenant, Ghulam Masum, to Calcutta to represent the case of the oppressed peasantry. The mission failed. As he felt that it was impossible

²⁶Beveridge, n. 2, p. 255.

²⁷Mallick, n. 3, pp. 76-77; and Khan, n. 2, pp. cxvi and 52. See, also, Benoy Gopal Ray, *Religious Movements in Modern Bengal* (Viswa Bharati, 1965), pp. 178-9.

to secure redress of the grievances by legal means, he decided eventually to call upon his followers to take the law into their own hands and seek revenge by force of arms.²⁸

On 23 October 1831 Titu Mir's men created a tumult at Purnia by killing cows and insulting Hindus. They committed no plunder beyond appropriating to themselves the goods which were lying in the shops before them, but they wounded a *brāhmana* and maltreated an assistant in a local indigo factory. Emboldened by their success, they proclaimed themselves masters of the country. They declared: "The period of British rule has expired and... the Mohammadans have usurped it [power]" Ghulam Masum, who was appointed at this time to lead the insurgents, tried to introduce something like martial order in their ranks.²⁹

The insurgents attacked Lawghatta on 13 November 1831. The proprietors of some of the factories in the area addressed a letter to the Government on the subject. On the following afternoon, Alexander, Joint Magistrate in Barasat, moved out to apprehend the rioters.³⁰ The detachment led by him consisted, *inter alia*, of a regiment of Native Infantry. Some bodyguards under Major Scot joined him in Barasat.³¹ A skirmish followed, and one of the European troopers was killed. The action was then put off till 19 November, when the infantry arrived. The insurgents drew up in battle array with the mangled body of a European killed on the previous day exposed in front of the line. After a few rounds of fire they dispersed. The flag, the symbol of sovereignty, was seized. About fifty were killed, including Titu Mir. Some 350 men were arrested. The court sentenced Ghulam Masum, Titu Mir's lieutenant, to death.³²

Some forty years later, this attitude of the Government was severely criticized by an anonymous writer in the *Calcutta Review*. The writer expressed his astonishment at the apathy displayed by the Government for a movement which, according to him, had aimed at political power and, as such, deserved serious notice at the hands of the British authorities. The sect, he further argued, had "openly proclaimed the extinction of the Company's rule

²⁸ Mallick, n. 3, pp. 76-81.

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 80-83.

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 85-86; and Ray, n. 27, p. 179.

³¹ Ibid., pp. 85-86; and Ray, n. 27, p. 179.

³² Mallick, n. 3, p. 86; and Ray, n. 27, p. 179.

and claimed the sovereign power as the hereditary right of Mohammedans which had been unjustly usurped by the Europeans".³³

An Inquiry Committee headed by John Russell held an inquiry into Titu Mir's insurrection. It found that the oppression and exploitation of the Muslim peasantry by the Hindu *zamindārs* was not the only reason behind the political activities of Titu Mir. It was convinced that Titu Mir had definite designs to annihilate the British. One of the members of the Inquiry Committee commented: "Is there any need of evidence against men who formed themselves into a party and came out to fight against the troops of government and many of whom were in prison?" He added: "We confidently assert that if, after this inquiry, the Moosalmans [*sic*] who have been guilty, are set at liberty, or punishment be inflicted upon those who have not been apprehended, then hundreds of those Teetoos will again be seen."³⁴

It is clear from the foregoing study that despite local variations and individual differences these movements for socio-religious reform aimed at annihilating British rule and preventing Westernization. Their final goal was to establish a purely Islamic State in India.

³³Mallick, n. 3, p. 87.

³⁴*John Bull* (Calcutta), 23 January 1832. See, also, Ray, n. 27, p. 179.

Chapter 6

LAST RESISTANCE, 1857

Since the time it erupted, all historians have been engaged in the futile exercise of labelling the Uprising of 1857 with some descriptive word or other—such as “mutiny”, “revolt”, “revolution”, “national war”, etc. Anyone starting with a preconceived notion is likely to fall into confusion, and even those who try to be most objective and start, as it were, with a blank sheet are not immune from confusion owing to the elusive nature of the Uprising. Nearly everyone of them is partly right as long as he deals with a particular aspect of the events of 1857 in a particular time or region ; but they all go wrong when they begin to generalize. In fact, seen from a particular angle, it was indeed, as the British called it, a mutiny of the sepoys, but when it spread among civilians involving different sections, it assumed the character of a civil rebellion or revolt. And since the aim of the revolt was to overthrow alien rule, we discern in it an unconscious and sudden manifestation of national feeling or sentiment.¹ If we regard communal harmony as the essential condition of a national uprising, we could, ignoring other conditions, justly regard 1857 as the year of the *first spontaneous national uprising* in India.

In India the concept of nationalism evolved gradually and passed through various phases. We may, therefore, say that 1857 was the first phase, a beginning, however frail, of nationa-

¹S.B. Chaudhuri, *Civil Rebellion in the Indian Mutinies* (Calcutta, 1957), p. 298. Chaudhuri finds in the Uprising of 1857 a “consistency” and “elements of a national resistance movement against an alien imperial domination”. See, also, Surendra Nath Sen, *Eighteen Fifty Seven* (Calcutta, 1958, p. 411. Sen observes : “So long as a substantial majority sympathizes with the main object of a movement, it can claim a national status though universal active support may be wanting.” He adds : “Outside Oudh and Shahbad there are no evidences of that general sympathy which would invest the Mutiny with the dignity of a national war.” R.C. Majumdar observes : “It cannot be regarded as a national rising, far less a war of independence, which it never professed to be.” *The Sepoy Mutiny and the Revolt of 1857* (Calcutta, 1963), p. 471.

lism. Strictly it would not be right to think in terms of the European concept of nationalism in the Indian situation. The criterion by which we may judge the nationalist content of any movement is whether it fulfils the basic prerequisite of people fighting an alien Government with unity. This essential in varying degrees was present in 1857 as well as in the subsequent freedom struggle. The only difference is that whereas the Uprising of 1857 was a spontaneous movement which emerged, as it were, from the heart, the freedom struggle was a well-planned though evolutionary movement which emerged from the mind. Both aimed at the annihilation of alien rule although they might have used different tools. Sen observes that the Uprising was "inevitable" and that "no dependent nation can forever reconcile to foreign domination".² John Harris also sees in 1857 "the first stirrings of the independence movement."³

There were certain political and economic factors in 1857 which were sufficient in themselves to bring about a country-wide upheaval, but it was the socio-religious causes which played a decisive role in the events of that year ; so much so that Sen has no hesitation in agreeing with L.E.R. Rees, who had described the Uprising "as a war of fanatic religionists against Christians". Sen says : "Christians have won but not Christianity. The Hindus and the Muslims were worsted but not their respective faiths."⁴ He, further, observes : "Religion is the most potent force in the absence of territorial patriotism, and in 1857 men from all walks of life joined hands with the sepoys in the defence of religion."⁵ Orthodoxy squarely confronted modernism. It had either to crumble before the onslaught of Western culture which was spreading effeminacy under the garb of democracy and liberalism, or to hold its own by consolidating

²Surendra Nath Sen, "The Inevitability of the Mutiny", in Ainslee T. Embree, ed., *1857 in India* (Boston, Mass., 1963), pp. 80-82. See, also, Sen, n. 1, p. 417.

³John Harris, *The Indian Mutiny* (London, 1973), pp. 7 and 98.

⁴Sen, n. 1, p. 413. Also *ibid.*, pp. 8-11 and 23 ; and Sen, n. 2, p. 82.

⁵Sen, n. 1, p. 412. Begam Hazrat Mahal, in her counter-proclamation issued to refute a number of statements and claims made on behalf of British rule in India in Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858, asserted that the chief cause of the Uprising was religion. See Michael Edwardes, *The Orchid House : Splendours and Miseries of the Kingdom of Oudh, 1827-1857* (London, 1960), pp. 200-1.

its position and taking strength from the scriptures and the ancient traditions. The Uprising was the last attempt made by the *brāhmanas* and the *maulvis*, who had the support of the masses, to put up a last-ditch fight to save India from the clutches of the foreigners.⁶ The people found in Western culture not only a challenge to their natural conditions of life but also a danger that threatened their homes and hearths. They suspected that the new wave would convert everybody into a *sāhib*. This fear was supported by the fact that many of the misguided youths became uncritical upholders of Western values and ideas and blind imitators of Western manners and etiquette, dress, food, and habits.⁷ Sir John Kaye observed :

It was clear that a very serious peril was beginning to threaten the ascendancy of the priesthood. Once commenced, it would work its way in time through all strata of society. They saw that as new provinces were one after another brought under British rule, the new light must diffuse itself more and more, until there would scarcely be a place for Hindooism [*sic*] to lurk unmolested. And some at least, confounding cause and effect, began to argue that all this annexation and absorption was brought about for the express purpose of overthrowing the ancient faith of the country and establishing a new religion in its place.⁸

Lord Canning, Viceroy and Governor-General of India, who witnessed the Uprising with his own eyes, admitted that it was something more than a military revolt and was fast growing into a widespread and implacable feud between the agricultural classes and their rulers and indeed into a vast upsurge of the people.⁹ Disraeli and John Layard held political oppression,

⁶Khushhalilal Srivastava, *The Revolt of 1857 in Central India-Malwa* (Bombay, 1966), pp. 56-74.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Sir John Kaye, "The War as a Brahmanical Protest", in Embree, n. 2, pp. xi and 27-28. See, also, G.B. Malleson, ed., *Kaye's and Malleson's History of the Indian Mutiny* (Bombay, 1897), vol. 6, pp. 140-1.

⁹S.B. Chaudhuri, *Theories of the Indian Mutiny* (Calcutta, 1965), p. 1. See, also, Sen, n. 1, p. viii. Lord Salisbury did not accept that such a widespread movement could take place on an issue like the greased cartridges.

religious and cultural interference, ill treatment, and torture as the main causes of the Uprising.¹⁰

An English official who was an eyewitness to the Uprising rejects the view generally held by British historians that it was but a mutiny by the sepoys and no more. Charles Ball, one of the earliest authorities on the subject, asserts in no uncertain terms that the Meerut sepoys appealed to the men of the 45th Regiment posted in Delhi "to join the movement that was intended to put an end to the 'Raj of the Firangee' and to restore to India the independent rule of its native princes".¹¹ Colonel Malleon, another important historian on the subject, is also forced to admit: "The war was the result of a premeditated conspiracy which had its ramifications all over India and which had among its prime movers the Maulavis [*sic*]."¹² Metcalfe observes: "There has been a growing disaffection towards the [*sic*] British rule. . . . Every class found itself curbed and subjected to law with curtailed privileges."¹³ J.B. Norton warns his countrymen not to commit "the fatal mistake in our diagnosis of fancying that this outbreak is merely the local exhibition of discontent on the part of a few disaffected regiments. It will be found to extend from one end of Bengal to the other and probably to embrace all classes, civil as well as military."¹⁴ He further notes: "It is impossible to limit the causes of the outbreak to the offended religious feelings of any particular caste [The reference is clearly to the greased cartridges.] The rebellion is widespread and contagious. It shows signs of combination. It draws all religions to a common centre."¹⁵

The Uprising of 1857 appears to S.B. Chaudhuri to be the first combined attempt of many classes of people to challenge a foreign Power. He sees in it a continuity and a consistency which

¹⁰*Bengal Harkaru* (Calcutta), 3 June 1858.

¹¹Quoted in Moinul Haq, *The Great Revolution* (Karachi, 1968), p. 80.

¹²G.B. Malleon, *The Indian Mutiny of 1857* (Delhi, 1977), pp. v-viii and 19. This book was first published in London in 1891. Quoted in Haq, n. 11, p. 80.

¹³Charles Theophilus Metcalfe, *Two Native Narratives of the Mutiny in Delhi* (Westminster, 1898), p. 16.

¹⁴John Bruce Norton, *The Rebellion in India* (London, 1957), p. 18.

¹⁵*Ibid.*

makes him feel justified in calling it a national resistance movement against alien domination. The alliance between the military and civil elements, which was forged by the experience of alien rule, hardened into a purpose and a plan and laid the foundations of a genuine popular movement. The cohesiveness of the Uprising, which spread like a fire, shook the foundations of British rule in India and generated vague and floating ideas of free and independent rule in the minds of the country chiefs, who missed no chance of setting up a Government at their own will, whereas the racial and religious feelings which roused the masses imparted a kind of malignancy to a war of extermination.¹⁶ Some observations in the contemporary Press too make it appear that in large measure the outbreak was the result of patriotic feeling.¹⁷

Similarly S. Moinul Haq concludes: "It was the first major attempt of an eastern people to throw off the domination of a western power." He says that the manner in which, and the scale on which, the movement was organized leaves one in no doubt as to its aim, viz to liberate the people from the shackles of British imperialism.¹⁸ He, therefore, prefers to call it, as V.D. Savarkar and S.B. Chaudhuri have done, a national revolution organized by patriotic leaders to liberate the subcontinent from the shackles of foreign rule.

To the Muslims the Uprising was the logical culmination of their vigorous resistance to alien rule. Though wanting in the modern means and techniques of warfare and handicapped by the absence of co-ordination between the various groups, it was based on definite ideals and objectives which converged towards a single purpose, viz to re-establish Muslim rule in India. However, the concept of Muslim Government differed from section to section. For example, the religious class generally aimed at establishing a government on the model of *Khilāfat-i Rāshidā*. The Muslim masses on the other hand just wanted Muslim rule, the Mughal Government being their ideal. Apparently the sepoys fought from caste considerations and to secure redress of promotional grievances; the chiefs fought to

¹⁶See Chaudhuri, n. 9, p. 1. See, also, his article "The Union of the Civil and Military Rebellions", in Embree, n.2, p. 67. See, further, Metcalfe, n. 13, p. 9.

¹⁷*Friends of India* (Serampore), 18 March 1858.

¹⁸Haq, n. 11, pp. 80-84.

regain their kingdoms; the landlords fought to get back their estates; the masses fought from a fear of conversion; and the Muslims fought especially for the re-establishment of their old sway. The fact is that they all fought, each in his own way, against the common enemy, viz the British. And this gave a national colouring to the events of 1857.¹⁹

It is a significant fact, says R.C. Majumdar, "that the contemporary Englishmen generally viewed the outbreak mainly as the handiwork of the Muslims. They were the most bloodthirsty when the Mutiny did break out." Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan too indirectly admits the fact. He says: "The Muslims were in every respect more dissatisfied than the Hindus, and hence in most districts they were comparatively more [*sic*] rebellious than the Hindus though the latter were not wanting in this."²⁰ Alexander Duff observes: "Every disclosure. . . which. . . has been made. . . goes to demonstrate that it has been the result of a long-concocted Mohammanan [*sic*] conspiracy against the supremacy and rule of Great Britain in India."²¹ This testifies at least to the scale of the role of the Muslims in 1857 although it created confusion regarding the true nature of the events. In fact "the Mohammanans [*sic*] were daily praying for the restoration of their rule".²² As a matter of fact the movement was mainly organized by the Muslims. Of course some Hindu leaders and a large number of Hindu sepoys, notably Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi, Nana Sabib, and Madho Bani joined them.²³ In the struggle of the Hindus too the Muslims played an important role. This unity among the Hindu and Muslim rulers against British rule and the assumption of leadership by the Muslim minority made R.C. Majumdar conclude that the "miseries and bloodshed of 1857 were not the birth pangs of a freedom movement but the dying groans of [an] obsolete autocracy".²⁴ They might well have been the dying groans of an old

¹⁹Chaudhuri, n. 1, p. xv.

²⁰See Majumdar's article in Embree, n. 2, p. 86. See, also, a recent edition of Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan's, *Asbāb-i Baghāwat-i Hind* (De'hi, 1971), p. 112.

²¹Alexander Duff, "Indian Hostility to British Rule", in Embree, n. 2, p. 13.

²²Metcalf, n. 13, pp. 5-6.

²³Harprasad Chattopadhyaya, *The Sepoy Mutiny, 1857* (Calcutta, 1957), pp. 100-1; and Haq, n. 11, p. 555.

²⁴Majumdar, n. 1, pp. 241 and 451-2; and Chaudhuri, n. 1, pp. 294-5.

system, but they were equally the birth pangs of a new India inasmuch as they resulted from attempts to overthrow British Imperial rule. The Hindu and Muslim rulers co-operated with each other in the Uprising at least to stabilize the positions which they had held before the establishment of British supremacy. As a gesture of goodwill to the Hindus, the rebel Government in Delhi under General Bakht Khan banned the slaughter of cows, and the Hindu leaders returned the compliment by maintaining all the State symbols of the Mughal Government.²⁵ In fact all the sections of the Muslim community participated whole-heartedly except for a microscopic group of nobles and the *élite*. Some few belonging to the latter group even extended help to the British, but a large number of them observed complete neutrality. Duff observes:

During the first half of the 19th century Indians as a whole were consciously preparing for a country-wide movement of resistance against the British rulers. The only notable exceptions were the class of landholders and the Anglicized intelligentsia of the Presidency towns who owed their acquired wealth and social positions to the British and somehow felt that their fortunes were linked up with them.²⁶

Holmes too says that "those natives who had been taught English were generally and those who had been converted to Christianity were invariably loyal".²⁷ The educated Indian, according to Sen, "had no faith in armed rebellion. He placed his hope in British liberalism."²⁸

Of the various sections of the Muslim community the *ulamā* played a significant role in the Uprising. They provided a basis, a philosophy, for the struggle. The courage and the determination of those who took part in the movement were beyond question,

²⁵K.M. Ashraf, "Muslim Revivalists and the Revolt of 1857", in P.C. Joshi, ed., *Rebellion of 1857: A Symposium* (New Delhi, 1957), pp. 83-84. See, also, Sen, n. 1, pp. xvii and 23. According to Maulana Azad, "The Hindu-Muslim problem never existed before the arrival of the British. However, since it had arisen, the British had not discouraged it for obvious reasons of their imperial motives and interests."

²⁶Quoted in Ashraf, n. 25, p. 63.

²⁷T.R.E. Holmes, *The History of the Indian Mutiny* (London, 1888), p. 140.

²⁸Sen, n. 1, p. 418. See, also, Embree, n. 2, p. 83.

and on a number of occasions their performance, particularly that of the *ghāzis*, was remarkable. They were animated by the spirit of martyrdom and were always ready to sacrifice their lives for the sacred cause. They were more determined in their opposition to the British than even the sepoys. Besides issuing *fatvās* calling upon the Muslims to join the *jihād*, they actively participated in the war. They carried the masses with them.²⁹

Alexander Duff admits that there was no affection or loyal attachment in any true sense of the term on the part of the people towards the British Government. The Muslim masses attached the highest importance to their religion although they were also firmly loyal to their rulers and the country. However, they felt no attraction towards the native rulers owing to the apathy and political incompetence of the latter. Hence the appeal of these rulers did not move them in the same way as that of the religious leaders.³⁰

By the end of the first half of the nineteenth century the activities of the missionaries and the socio-religious policies of the British Government aimed at asserting the superiority of Western culture had, further, antagonized the orthodox sections of all the religions of India, especially Islam. The Muslims started feeling that their religion was in danger. To quote an English writer: "We have made a great mistake in India. The religious policy pursued by the Government of the country made us, as one of its own servants declared 'cowards in the eyes of men and traitors in the eyes of God'."³¹ The religious appeal was so strong that even the military leaders found it expedient to seek the help of the religious leaders. Professor M. Mujib rightly says: "The movement started by Saiyyad Ahmad Shahid was like smouldering fire for a number of years and contributed to the outburst, which unexpectedly took the form of the upheaval of 1857."³²

In fact it is never fully appreciated that the revivalist trend was the decisive factor in the political orientation of the Muslims. The Wahhabis were the only people to come armed with a con-

²⁹Embree, n. 2, p. 65.

³⁰Quoted in Haq, n. 11, p. 551; and Chattopadhyaya, n. 23, p. 100.

³¹*Friends of India*, 25 February 1858.

³²M. Mujib, *Indian Muslims* (London, 1967), p. 425.

sistent anti-British ideology. They had also the backing of a network of organized centres spread all over North India. They had important contacts in the South as well. Thus they wielded moral influence on the Muslim intelligentsia throughout the country. In a sense the Wahhabi outlook on politics and religious life embodied the centuries-old hostility of the Muslim ruling classes to the growing encroachment of the British, as also the urge of the working masses for better and happier conditions of life. It is not, therefore, surprising that the Wahhabi leaders of the day displayed "both the vigour and tenacity of the working people and the confusion of a decadent ruling class".³³

The *ulamā* not only inspired and gave moral support to the Uprising of 1857 but also joined it actively. The direct descendants of the movement of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi were represented by a dynamic personality, Maulana Qasim Nanotawi. They fought and succeeded in driving the British out of the small township of Thana Bhawan, where they established a miniature theocracy. The British, however, took it again after a counter-attack. The *ulamā* settled later at Deoband to preserve and propagate Islamic principles peacefully through the educational institution which they set up there.³⁴ They co-operated with the Hindus in the freedom struggle against the British. Chattopadhyaya's observations in this connexion are worthy of note. He observes: "The principles of Wahhabism and the lead given by the Wahhabis also went a long way to foment Muslim opposition to government during the Mutiny."³⁵

Qeyamuddin Ahmad refutes the assertion of Sen, R.C. Majumdar, Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan, and others that the Wahhabis as a group did not identify themselves with the Uprising of 1857. He concedes that the Wahhabis did not join hands with the leaders of the movement, but insists that their frontier party under Inayat Ali constantly fought against the British during the period. The Wahhabis with their compact organization and their secret cells scattered over the whole of North India and contacts in

³³Ashraf, n. 25, pp. 71-72 and 81-83.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Chattopadhyaya, n. 23, p. 103.

See, also, Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan* (London, 1967), p. 28.

the various princely States such as Tonk and Hyderabad provided a solid organizational base for the part they played in the Uprising of 1857. The leaders of the movement were definitely inspired by a religious spirit and were committed to the achievement of goals similar to those entertained by the followers of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi.³⁶ According to Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan, the religious activities of the Christian missionaries and the policies of the Government were the main factors which led to the Uprising.³⁷

Even a brief survey of the participation of the Muslim leaders would show the predominance of socio-religious and cultural factors in the Uprising of 1857. The Muslims definitely aimed at establishing a disciplined Government after overthrowing foreign rule.

Bakht Khan, a military man, finally emerged in Delhi as the real leader of the movement with the formal backing and support of the Emperor and the *ulamā*.³⁸ A descendant of the Mughal Royal family, Bakht Khan was serving in the British Army as Artillery *Subahdār* at the time of the Uprising. He had fought in the First Anglo-Afghan War and had served subsequently at Neemuch. He was posted at Bareilly when the sepoys in Meerut rose in mutiny. It was he who organized the movement in Rohilkhand. From Rohilkhand he proceeded to Delhi with his brigade and joined the sepoys on 2 July 1857.³⁹ Before this he had never displayed any anti-British sentiment. This sudden change in his attitude is attributed to the influence of his spiritual preceptor, Maulvi Sarfaraz Ali. Zakaullah confirms that there was a meeting of the leaders of the movement and that it was attended by Bakht Khan, Ghaus Mohammad Khan, Maulvi Imam Khan, Maulvi Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Maulvi Sarfaraz Ali, and the followers of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi. Maulvi Sarfaraz Ali was chosen *Amir-at Mujāhidīn*; Bakht Khan was named his Assistant. Bakht Khan, along with his brigade, went to see the Emperor

³⁶Qeyamuddin Ahmad, *The Wahabi Movement* (Calcutta, 1966), pp. 227-30. See, also, Hafeez Malik, *Moslem Nationalism in India and Pakistan* (Washington, D.C., 1963), p. 188.

³⁷Khan, n. 20, pp. 102-3 and 157. See, also, Aziz, n. 35, p. 25.

³⁸Ghulam Rasul Mehr, *1857 ke Mujāhidīn* (Lahore, 1960), pp. 163-6.

³⁹Metcalf, n. 13, pp. 133-4.

Bahadur Shah II and requested him to issue orders for the deployment of the army. The Emperor replied that no one would pay any heed to his orders and that there was none to implement them. Bakht Khan then offered him his services and requested him to appoint him as Commander-in-Chief. He also undertook to ensure that discipline would be maintained to his satisfaction. Bahadur Shah II accordingly appointed him Commandar-in-Chief with the designation of General. All the officers of the army hailed the appointment and took the oath of loyalty to the General and to the cause. Bakht Khan vowed to drive the British out of India and started making the necessary preparations to that end. At first he consulted Maulana Fazle Haq Khairabadi and other religious leaders about the propriety of declaring a *jihād* against the British. Consequently a *fatvā* proclaiming a *jihād* was issued over the signatures of Mufti Sadruddin, Maulana Fazle Haq Khairabadi, Maulvi Abdul Qadir, Qadi Hayatullah, Maulana Faiz Ahmad (Badauni), Wazir Khan, Mohammad Sayidullah, and Saiyyad Mubarak Shah.⁴⁰

General Bakht Khan was able to foil the attempts of the British to enter into the walled city of Delhi till 19 September 1857. When the British forces succeeded in recapturing Delhi on the aforesaid date, Bakht Khan escaped to Lucknow via Badaun and Farrukhabad to continue his struggle from outside Delhi. He requested the Emperor to accompany him, arguing that the loss of Delhi was not the end of the struggle. But the old and peace-loving Emperor preferred to stay on in Delhi. The General fought a few battles at Lucknow and Shahjahanpur, along with Ahmadullah Shah. Finally, in view of the failure of the movement in all these important centres, he is said to have escaped to Nepal.⁴¹

Although the Emperor never believed that the sepoys would rally round one so poor and frail and infirm as himself, he was convinced that in the event of the overthrow of the British Government a new dominant Power would emerge and that it would treat him more considerately if not more respectfully than the British Government had done.⁴²

In fact, until his final overthrow, the Mughal Emperor conti-

⁴⁰Mehr, n. 38, pp. 166-7, 169, and 173-83.

⁴¹Ibid. See, also, Metcalfe, n. 13, p. 70.

⁴²Holmes, n. 27, p. 90.

nued to be the legal suzerain in spite of his wielding virtually no power. The people were still loyal to him and felt a great attachment for him. When the British tried to wrest even this nominal suzerainty from him, they felt outraged. Buckler suggests the theory of continuity of the Mughal Empire till the time of deposition of Bahadur Shah II in 1858 as an effective source of political authority. He observes:

As the suzerain *de jure* of the East India Company in the capacity of Diwan of Bengal, the Governor-General . . . assumed an attitude . . . which could appear in no other light than that of high treason, and [the] culmination was reached when Dalhousie and Canning attempted to tamper with the succession. From that time it was clear that the overpowerful vassal must be reduced Hence, if in 1857 there was any mutineer, it was the East India Company.⁴³

In the Agra region a group of *ulamā* was dead opposed to British rule. These *ulamā* largely succeeded with their arguments in contradicting the Christian preachers who were trying to prove the superiority of Christianity to Islam. They also participated in the Uprising of 1857. Wazir Khan and Maulvi Rahmatullah were foremost among those who fought with their deep knowledge and tremendous courage both on the academic front and in the battlefield.⁴⁴

Wazir Khan was a son of Mohammad Nazir Khan of Bihar, a *zamindār*. After receiving his medical education, he went to London, where he became an Assistant Surgeon. He also studied the Bible and the Torah. On his return to India, he was appointed as a doctor in a Calcutta hospital. Later he was transferred to Agra, where he settled down permanently. Those days a number of Christian priests had made it their business to criticize Islam. They seemed to be bent upon replacing Islam with Christianity. One of them, a priest named Finder, challenged the *ulamā* for a discussion on Islam and Christianity with a view to proving the superiority of Christianity to Islam. Maulvi Rahma-

⁴³See F.W. Buckler, "The Political Theory of Indian Mutiny", in Embree n. 2, pp. xii and 47.

⁴⁴Mehr, n. 38, pp. 239-47

tullah of Kerana and Wazir Khan, who had studied Christianity, accepted the challenge. They were helped by Maulana Faiz Ahmad Badauni. The discussion took place on 9 April 1854 in Agra. FINDER was defeated in the discussion.⁴⁵

When the fires of the Uprising of 1857 reached the towns of Thana Bhawan, Kerana, Shamli, and Barhana, the *ulamā* of Agra joined the movement. Maulvi Rahmatullah was the chief leader of the *mujāhidin*. He received valuable support from Chaudhary Azimuddin. He was, however, defeated by the British after a resistance which lasted four months. His companion, Wazir Khan, left with Maulvi Faiz Ahmad Badauni to join the movement in Delhi. Later, when Delhi too fell to the British, Wazir Khan fled to Lucknow along with Bakht Khan. Finally, totally frustrated, he left Lucknow for Hijaz.⁴⁶

Waheed-uz Zaman was Deputy Collector and Deputy Magistrate at Hameerpur. He had been a loyal servant of the British Government. When a number of officials of the British Government were murdered, the Government of Agra sent him orders asking him to take charge as Magistrate at Hameerpur. He, however, went over to Nana Sahib and became his *nāzim*. This resulted in his dismissal, and Raja Chirkaree was asked to take charge.⁴⁷

The second big Muslim centre to offer tough resistance was Oudh. The resistance movement here began on 30 May 1857. It was led by Hazrat Mahal, one of the wives of Wajid Ali Shah who had not accompanied the deposed King to Calcutta in February 1856. As soon as the news of the Meerut mutiny reached Lucknow, Hazrat Mahal started organizing the resistance movement. For the first time a politically aggrieved Shia kingdom declared a *jihād* against the British. Fazle Haq served as counsellor to Begam Hazrat Mahal.⁴⁸ On 2 July 1857 the *jihādīs* surrounded the Residency and killed Henry Lawrence, the Resident. Hazrat Mahal took the courageous decision to proclaim Brijis Qadar as King of Oudh. As Brijis Qadar was a

⁴⁵Ibid. See, also, Haq, n. 11, pp. 45-46 and 389.

⁴⁶Mehr, n. 38, pp. 243-7.

⁴⁷*Bengal Harkaru*, 6 August 1858.

⁴⁸Haq, n. 11, pp. 76 and 81-82. Haq quotes *Zafarnāmāh: Vaqāi Ghadar* to show that the Shias led by Hazrat Mahal joined the Sunnis in declaring a *jihād* against the British.

10 year-old minor at the time of his accession on 5 July 1857, she handled the administration on behalf of the King. At the same time she foiled the attempts of the British to recapture Lucknow till 16 March 1858. She was a modest lady who strictly observed the *pardāh*. She was, however, able to discharge her duties with the help of certain loyal nobles, especially Nawab Ali Mohammad Khan alias Mammu Khan. When need arose, she even appeared on the battlefield, albeit still under the veil. However, in spite of her great efforts there was a thorough lack of discipline in the ranks of the army owing to the incompetence of, and mutual rivalries within, the nobility. She was helped by zealous men like Maulvi Ahmadullah Shah, Prince Feroz Shah, Mohammad Ali alias Jaimi Green, and Fazle Haq Khairabadi. Ahmadullah Shah, however, left on account of differences with Mammu Khan, who had become jealous of him for his increasing influence. Hazrat Mahal was also supported by the Hindu *tālukdār* of Shahganj called Raja Man Singh, who provided nine thousand soldiers. The British sent her several peace proposals. They also assured her of her safety. She rejected them all and continued the struggle.⁴⁹

When all the efforts made by her to repulse the British forces failed, Hazrat Mahal escaped unnoticed from Qaisar Bagh on 14 March 1858. She reached Bareilly via Bhairon, Mahmudabad, and Khairabad, where the resistance movement was still in full swing. In Shahjahanpur she helped Maulana Ahmadullah Shah. However, her failure to repulse the British eventually forced her to go to Nayakot in Nepal, where she was received honourably and looked after by Rana Jang Bahadur till her death in 1874.⁵⁰

W.H. Russell, correspondent of the *London Times*, applauded the efforts of Hazrat Mahal, and said that she had every reason to declare war against the British Government. She worked tirelessly and succeeded in winning over the nobles and the people. Holmes too paid a high compliment to the leadership of Hazrat Mahal. He said: "In spirit and ability she was the rival of the Rani of Jhansi."⁵¹

Russell condemned the British for ill-treating the rulers of

⁴⁹Mehr, n. 38, pp. 15-16, 20-27, and 31-32.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Holmes, n. 275, p. 505. See also, Henry Beveridge, *A Comprehensive History of India* (London, 1874), vol. 3, pp. 697-8.

Oudh, who had always been helpful to them and had even granted them loans whenever they were in desperate straits.⁵²

Sen, who hardly finds any evidence of nationalist sentiment in the events of 1857, is forced to conclude: "In Oudh, however, the revolt assumed a national dimension."⁵³ This shows how whole-heartedly Hindus of all castes and sects supported the Muslim kingdom. This was indeed a feature common to all centres.

Ahmadullah Shah deserves special attention as he was easily the most prominent leader of the resistance movement in Oudh. In fact, in the final phase of the Uprising, he became one of the all-India leaders of the movement. He was one of the ablest men to be thrown up by the struggle and excelled all other leaders in independence of spirit. He had hardly any rival as a tactician. This is acknowledged even by the British. That a man from South India, with few memories of British high-handedness, should have been drawn into a fierce and all-out anti-British struggle in North India speaks for the climate created in the North by the earlier anti-British movement.⁵⁴

Ahmadullah Shah Madrasi alias Danka Shah (1789-1858), a descendant of the Qutub Shahi family of the Deccan, was in Faizabad when the sepoys mutinied in Meerut. He threw himself into the movement then and there. This was why he also came to be known as Ahmadullah Shah Faizabadi. The remar-

In the wake of the Queen's proclamation, attempts were made to induce Begam Hazrat Mahal of Oudh to return to India. She, however, refused, issuing a counter-proclamation under her son's seal. This counter-proclamation is a significant document. It criticized Queen Victoria's text point by point. It especially discounted the Queen's pledge not to interfere in religious matters. According to the Begam, religious interference on the part of the British was the chief cause of the Uprising of 1857. And she expressed her apprehension that the same policy would again be adopted in future. She referred to the Queen's assertion of the superiority of Christianity, and said that this would never be acceptable to either Muslims or Hindus or any other religious community of India.

For a lively discussion on the Begam's counter-proclamation, see Edwardes, n. 5, pp. 200-1.

⁵²Mehr, n. 38, pp. 15-16, 20-27, and 31-32.

⁵³Sen, n. 1, p. 411. See, also, the article by Sen, n. 2, pp. 80 and 82.

⁵⁴Intezamullah Shahabi, *Ist Indiyā Kampanī aur Bāghī Ulamā* (Delhi, n.d.), p. 15. See, also, Mehr, n. 38, p. 101.

kable courage shown by Tipu Sultan in his anti-British struggle was still fresh in his memory. It served as an unfailing source of inspiration for him.⁵⁵

In his early career, however, Ahmadullah Shah does not seem to have been hostile to the British. He even visited England at the instance of the British Government. The only notable incident of this visit as related by his biographers is that he expressed a desire to exhibit his skill in the use of arms and was allowed to do so. On his way back he performed *hajj*. Thereafter he became a religious man and spent nearly twelve years in search of truth. At Sambhar he received some lessons under Furqan Ali. Furqan Ali advised him to go to Tonk, where, he said, there was the right religious atmosphere for his spiritual quest. Tonk was then under the rule of Waziruddin Khan, son of the illustrious Amir Khan, the last crusader. The State had emerged as a religious centre owing to the association of the rulers with Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi. Waziruddin Khan was also much inclined to matters religious. After a short sojourn in Tonk, Ahmadullah Shah went to Gwalior, where he met Mahrab Shah Qalandar, a *sūfi*. As soon as he reached there, he was welcomed by the *sūfi* as if the two had known each other earlier. The *sūfi* in fact told him that he had been waiting for him for a long time. (The meeting has a great similarity to the first meeting of Swami Vivekananda and Ramakrishna Paramahansa.) When Ahmadullah Shah asked whether he could render any service, the *sūfi* replied that he had to fulfil the very difficult and hazardous mission of waging a *jihād*. Ahmadullah Shah at once offered to sacrifice even his life for such a mission. This was the turning-point in his life. Thereafter he never looked back. At first he undertook a long all-India tour, went to Delhi, met the *ulamā* there, and discussed his mission with them. Greatly disheartened by the cold response of the *ulamā*, he decided to leave Delhi. Sadruddin Azurdah advised him to go to Agra and meet Mufti Inamullah Khan for the purpose of organizing a *jihād*. Ahmadullah Shah then reached Agra and stayed with Mufti Inamullah. A number of *ulamā* used to assemble there for discussions. Ahmadullah Shah organized the Muslims there, trained them, and told them of the merit of participation in a *jihād*. His oratory impressed not only the Muslims but the Hindus as well. When the British learnt of

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 105.

his growing popularity and seditious speeches, they ordered his arrest, but the policemen refused to obey orders. Unfortunately Ahmadullah Shah's great popularity made some of the *ulamā* jealous of him, and this forced him to leave Agra. He is then said to have reached Gwalior first. From Gwalior he went on to Lucknow and finally settled at Faizabad, where he organized the Muslims for a *jihād*. Maulana Sikandar Shah Faizabadi gave him a good deal of help in his movement. Disturbed by what they learnt of the preparations of the Muslims of Faizabad for a *jihād*, the British sought to crush the movement. They warned Ahmadullah Shah of the grave consequences of his anti-British activities. Shah's defiance led to a scuffle between his followers and the forces of the British Government. A British officer was killed, and Shah himself was injured and arrested.⁵⁶ The British, however, failed to estimate correctly the potential of the man; they were too complacent. Ahmadullah Shah was in jail when the news of the Meerut Mutiny reached Faizabad. The rebels attacked the jail and helped him escape. Shah at once joined Hazrat Mahal in her resistance movement and became her chief adviser. However, owing to a rift within the ranks of the nobility of Oudh, he had to leave Lucknow for Shahjahanpur, where also he organized a resistance movement. He even succeeded in establishing an Islamic Government in Muhammadi. Forced to leave Muhammadi, he returned to Oudh, but was assassinated by the Raja of Pawai, whom he had approached for help against the British.⁵⁷

R.C. Majumdar says: "Ahmadullah Shah was one of the few who were sincerely attached to the cause of resistance."⁵⁸

Holmes praised the valour displayed by Ahmadullah Shah in repulsing the attacks of Colonel Colin. He alleged that Shah had, during the last days of the Uprising, "arrogated to himself the title of King of Hindostan".⁵⁹ Perhaps it was the word "Shah" in

⁵⁶Intezamullah Shahabi, "Athārah Sau Sattāvan kī Jang-i Āzādī", in Pakistan Historical Conference, *Proceedings*, vol. 5 (1955), p. 160. See, also, his book *Ist Indiyā Kampanī aur Bāghī Ulamā*, n. 54, pp. 14-19. See, further, his *Ghadar ke Chand Ulamā* (Delhi, n.d.), pp. 29-30; Mehr, n. 38, pp. 105-7 and 108-12; and Haq, n. 11, pp. 60-63.

⁵⁷Holmes, n. 27, p. 71. See, also, Mehr, n. 38, pp. 121-8. See, further, Shahabi, n. 56, pp. 37-38.

⁵⁸Majumdar, n. 1, p. 102.

⁵⁹Holmes, n. 27, p. 512.

the name of the Maulvi which led Holmes to reach such an erroneous conclusion. He failed to realize that the word "Shah" only showed the Maulvi's religious and mystic links and had nothing to do with his political ambitions. Of course no one can deny that the Maulvi had assumed the leadership of the movement. And it must be admitted, as Holmes too believed, that he had a greater right to the title of king than any of his fellow rebels.⁶⁰

The Governor-General too paid the Maulvi an indirect compliment by offering a reward of fifty thousand rupees for his arrest. Ahmadullah Shah, however, was too clever to be apprehended. During the month of May 1858 he struck terror in all the centres of resistance in Oudh and Rohilkhand. The British were utterly baffled by his shrewd guerrilla tactics. They considered him their most bitter enemy and made numerous attempts to capture him but in vain. Ultimately he was killed by one of his own countrymen.⁶¹ The news of his death made the British heave a sigh of relief; for their most formidable enemy in North India had been eliminated.⁶² Thomas Seaton, who had the opportunity of watching Ahmadullah Shah closely, considered him "a man of great abilities, of undaunted courage, of stern determination, and the best soldier among the rebels".⁶³ Holmes's remarks about the Maulvi are also interesting: "The Maulvi, who, though not the equal of Hyder and Shivaji, was probably the most determined of the men who fought against us in the Indian mutiny."⁶⁴ Unfortunately, however, in spite of such great leaders, the movement failed in Oudh as it did in the rest of India.

Since the time of Shivaji there had been serious rivalry between the Mughals and the Marathas. The Marathas were considered to be strong contenders for the throne. During the last decades of the eighteenth century, however, they assumed the role of guardian of the Mughal Empire. They were also bitter enemies of the British. Despite being *de facto* rulers during this period, legally the Marathas always remained subordinate to

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹V.D. Savarkar, *The Indian War of Independence* (Bombay, 1947), pp. 444-5.

⁶²Holmes, n. 27, p. 513; and Savarkar, n. 61, p. 556.

⁶³Malleson, n. 12, p. 17.

⁶⁴Holmes, n. 27, p. 505.

the Mughal Empire. They preferred subordination to the Mughals rather than to the British. In no other period were there such sincere friendliness and mutual co-operation between the Mughals and the Marathas as in 1857. Thus Peshwa Nana Sahib, while leading the resistance movement in Kanpur, declared himself independent of British imperialism and at the same time showed full regard and acknowledged his allegiance to the Mughal Emperor. He scrupulously maintained all symbols of subordination. The same pattern was followed in all other centres and districts. The Muslims too helped the Hindu chiefs whole-heartedly in all the centres. Take, for example, Azimullah Khan in Kanpur and Prince Feroz Shah in Central India.

Among the anti-British nobles the name of Azimullah Khan stands out. He was well educated and was a master of Western learning, and yet in 1857 he led a vigorous resistance movement in Kanpur as a Minister of Nana Sahib. He had begun his career as a teacher in a school in Kanpur and served for some time in a small post under the British too. He had impressed the British by his charming personality and pleasing manners. He had learnt French and English, and it was on the recommendation of an Englishman that he joined the court of Nana Sahib. Nana Sahib was so impressed by him that he sent him in 1853 to London as the leader of a delegation to plead before the British Government for the resumption of payment of his pension. As usual, by his eloquence and his charming personality Azimullah Khan impressed all the Europeans whom he met, especially the European ladies. He was also fascinated by English society but did not allow himself to be swept off his feet by the glamour of Western culture.

The failure of his mission made Azimullah Khan anti-British. Indeed it was during his stay in England that he became a revolutionary *par excellence*, and upon his return he organized

⁶⁵Intezamullah Shahabi, *Hayāt Azīmullāh Khān Kānpurī* (Karachi, n.d.), pp. 9-10. Azimullah Khan's mission to England in 1853 to get Nana's pension restored to him failed. On his way back to India in 1855 via Constantinople, along with the other members of the delegation, he witnessed the Crimean War. There, according to Shahabi, a Russian officer tried to instigate him to organize a revolt in India against the British. He also assured him of Russian help. That completely changed Azimullah Khan.

an anti-British movement.⁶⁵ He persuaded his master too to join the movement. He then undertook tours. He went to Ambala and Lucknow. He also established contacts in Egypt and Russia.⁶⁶ According to Russell, it was after his return from London that Azimullah Khan became interested in politics. From his letters one gets the impression that Azimullah Khan felt much concerned about Indian affairs. In him one can perceive an inveterate hatred of the British.

On 4 June 1857, along with Nana Sahib, Azimullah Khan launched his resistance movement in Kanpur. He undertook a tour of the chief towns of North India to forge the necessary unity among those engaged in the struggle. When Nana Sahib formed a Government, he at first recognized the suzerainty of the Mughal Emperor by firing 101 guns in his honour. When the sepoys invited Nana Sahib to Delhi, Azimullah Khan advised him not to go. He said that it would be best for Nana Sahib to confine his operations to Kanpur and finish the British in Kanpur and its surroundings. Both fought the British together up to 21 June 1857. At that stage some serious differences arose between the two, and these led to a parting of the ways. An incident involving a massacre of some of the British residents in Kanpur is said to have been the cause of the differences. Thereafter Azimullah Khan is said to have joined Ahmadullah Shah, at first in Lucknow and then in Shahjahanpur. However, he again joined Nana Sahib when the latter reached Lucknow. Besides the practical steps which he took against the British, Azimullah Khan also ran a weekly journal. His active association with Nana Sahib is a shining example of Hindu-Muslim co-operation during the Uprising. It also shows how even those who had received Western education and manifested a pro-British inclination and risen with British help in their careers finally turned hostile to British rule.⁶⁷ Fazle Haq Khairabadi was another such man.

Savarkar praises Azimullah Khan's boldness. In one of his conversations with an English officer, Azimullah Khan in his sweet voice asked him: "Well, Sahib, what are you going to call this new building which you are constructing here?" The officer replied: "Really I have not yet thought about it." The smart

⁶⁶Ibid. See, also, Malleson, n. 12, p. 30; and Mehr, n. 38, pp. 76-85 and 90. See, further, Haq, n. 11, p. 402.

⁶⁷Shahabi, n. 65, pp. 11-13 and 27-28.

Azimullah Khan, with a wink of his eyes, returned : "Well, you could just call it the Castle of Despair!"⁶⁸

A number of other well-known Muslims of the city too extended their co-operation to Nana Sahib. The house of the sepoy leader Shamsuddin Khan was a meeting-place for secret organizations. A prominent citizen known as Mulla was entrusted with the most important job of supplying provisions to the forces. Mohammad Ali was another trusted adherent of Nana Sahib's.⁶⁹

In the Rohilkhand region both the Hindus and the Muslims acknowledged Khan Bahadur Khan, a retired chief justice, as their leader in 1857. Khan Bahadur Khan was a grandson of Hafiz Rahmat Khan Rohilla's and was a very competent and experienced man. Here the *mujāhidin* began their resistance movement on 31 May 1857. Very soon the British Government was overthrown in Shahjahanpur, Badaun, and Muradabad. With the loss of Muradabad the downfall of the British in Rohilkhand was complete. At that time General Bakht Khan was in Bareilly. Along with other influential men he approached Khan Bahadur Khan and pleaded with him to lead the movement. Khan Bahadur Khan agreed and was consequently proclaimed Nawab of Rohilkhand with the approval of the Emperor Bahadur Shah II. The Emperor also bestowed on Khan Bahadur Khan the title of Intizamuddaulah. Khan Bahadur Khan ruled for about a year during which he fought relentlessly against the British. Eventually the British succeeded in defeating him. From Bareilly Khan Bahadur Khan went to Pilibhit, where Nizam Ali Khan, Nawab Tafazzul Husain, and others had assembled to take revenge upon the Raja of Pawai, who had treacherously murdered Ahmadullah Shah and betrayed the resistance movement. Nawab Khan Bahadur joined them, but unfortunately he fell off his horse while fighting near the Nepal hills. He was injured, arrested, and put on trial by the British. He argued his case himself. He boldly declared at his trial that the country belonged to him and that the people were fed up with British rule and oppression. He was then hanged. Sen confirms that both the Hindus and the Muslims were happy under his rule.⁷⁰

⁶⁸Savarkar, n. 61, pp. 60 and 217-18.

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰Sen, n. 1, pp. 173, 349, and 406; and Shahabi, "Athārah Sau Sattāvan

The *jihād* idea became very popular, so much so that none of the various religious communities of India cared to enter any theological argument against it from the point of view of their respective religions. Hence the *jihād* became synonymous with national war against alien rule. The call for a *jihād* issued by the *ulamā* thus overcame all religious barriers during 1857. From the religious point of view it was not binding upon the Hindus or the Shias to join the *jihād* proclaimed by the Sunni Muslims, but their cultural and national affiliations were so strong that they responded to the call whole-heartedly. The Hindus even called it *svadharma*. The Hindus and the Muslims had been living together for centuries, and this had developed in them a cultural affinity although each subscribed to a large number of beliefs diametrically opposed to those of the other. Besides Kanpur and Oudh, Allahabad presented a bright example of close Hindu-Muslim co-operation. At Allahabad the Muslims took a prominent part in organizing a secret society. The Hindus and the Muslims waged such a determined struggle together for the freedom of their common motherland that even the judges and *munsifs* of the Government felt themselves persuaded to join the secret society. Most of the *tālukdārs* in the Allahabad Province were Muslim, and their tenants were Hindu. The British had never thought that these two would ever unite and that the whole mass of the people would rise against them. However, contrary to their expectations, the Hindus and the Muslims together chose Maulvi Liaqat Ali, a preacher, as their leader. The Hindus led by Ramchand joined Maulvi Liaqat Ali in the resistance movement. The Maulvi was proclaimed and recognized as the Viceroy of Allahabad. He established his headquarters in a fortified garden called Khusru Bagh. From there he issued directions for the work of organizing the movement in the Province. He planned as a first step to capture the fort of Allahabad, but unfortunately some traitors reportedly spread the rumour that the "English are going to blow up the whole town". The people of the town panicked and left in large numbers in spite of assurances. Meanwhile the British forces attacked Khusru Bagh. The Maulvi offered tough resistance, but decided eventually to leave Allaha-

kī Jang-i Āzādī", n. 56, pp. 136-8. See, also, Holmes, n. 27, pp. 134-5. See, further, Mehr, n. 38, pp. 269-72 and 276.

bad for Kanpur.⁷¹

The rebel regiments in Fatehgarh chose Nawab Tafazzul Husain Khan as their leader. He was a descendant of Mohammad Khan Bangash, founder of the Farrukhabad State. The State had been annexed by the British in 1801, and the descendants were getting stipends from the British Government.⁷²

Nawab Ali Bahadur II tried to pacify the rebel soldiers in Banda but in vain. He, however, succeeded in saving the lives of the European women and children there. When the British forces reached Banda in March 1858 to suppress the resistance movement, the Nawab fled to join Rao Sahib, the Rani of Jhansi, and Tantia Tope in Kalpi, where they were fighting against the British. When the British defeated the Indian forces, he went to Gwalior along with his followers. Saiyyad Gulzar Ali of Amroha, *mukhtār* at the Muradabad court, organized a resistance movement in Amroha and assured the Emperor Bahadur Shah II of help whenever needed. Nawab Walidad Khan of Bulandshahar, Inayat Ali of Kakori, a chief *munsif*, the *rayis* of Chandpur in the Bijnor District (including Mir Sadiq, Mir Rustam Ali, and Mahmud Khan), all joined and organized resistance movements in their respective places. The Mewatis led by Lal Bahadur Khan and Dulah Shah gave resistance to the British in Fatehpur. Nawab Mohammad Hasan Khan and Nawab Abdul Samad Khan, father-in-law of the Nawab of Jhajjar, joined the movement in Delhi. Bedar Bakht, grandson of the Emperor Bahadur Shah II, disseminated national ideas through his organ *Payām-i Āzādī*.⁷³

Central India mainly comprised Maratha States. There were a few Muslim States too. The chiefs of these States, except Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi, were generally loyal to the British. Here Prince Feroz Shah and Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi emerged as powerful leaders of the resistance movement. Prince Feroz Shah even succeeded in establishing a Government of his own in Mundaisur. Here too we find religio-cultural factors playing a significant role in the united efforts of the Hindus and the Muslims to put an end to alien rule. Henry Beveridge observes:

⁷¹Savarkar, n. 61, pp. 193 and 201.

⁷²Mehr, n. 38, pp. 258-65 and 313-25.

⁷³Ibid.

One of the formidable obstacles in the way was the antipathy between the Hindus and the Muslims. The effect of this antipathy was to keep them apart. The British Government, aware of this security against a united revolt, appear not to have underrated it; and yet from a strange fatality they, without intending it, destroyed this security and enabled Hindus and Muslims to enter into a mutual league for the complete and final overthrow of our Indian Empire.⁷⁴

Prince Feroz Shah was a scion of the Mughal Imperial family but had a religious bent of mind. He went to Arabia for *hajj* in 1856 and came back to India in August 1857. By then the Uprising of 1857 was already in progress. He first went to Indore and apprehending arrest there, left for Gwalior. The rebel soldiers captured Mundaisur, and gradually the Uprising spread like a wild fire in eastern Malwa. Armies from different parts of the country, converging there, chose Prince Feroz Shah as their commander-in-chief. Feroz Shah issued a proclamation appealing to both Hindus and Muslims to overthrow the British. The Raja of Dhar, his vizier, mother, and uncle were all putting up resistance against the British. Learning that members of the Imperial family were leading the movement, large numbers of people, both Hindus and Muslims, joined the movement with great enthusiasm. Feroz Shah was joined by the Mewatis, the Makranis, and the Afghans. According to Kaye and Malleon, the number of rebels under the Prince shot up in September 1857 to fifteen thousand. It exceeded twenty thousand men by November. The rebels surrounded the ruler of Mundaisur and injured him and his vizier. They also killed an officer. They then looted the treasury and burnt down the records maintained there. People now spoke of Feroz Shah as their ruler, and of Mirza Ji, a rich man of Mundaisur, as the vizier. They organized the movement in such an efficient manner that they cut off all the British lines of communication from the South. From Gwalior Feroz Shah reached Delhi via Dholpur, Agra, and Farrukhabad. When, however, he found that the *mujāhidin* were coming out of the City of Delhi, he took them to Mathura and reached Lucknow in November 1857 via Rohilkhand, where he joined Hazrat

⁷⁴Beveridge, n. 51, vol. 3, pp. 555-6. See, also, Srivastava, n. 6, pp. 78-79.

Mahal. When the British occupied Lucknow in March 1858, he fled to Shahjahanpur, where he joined Ahmadullah Shah. Upon his defeat he joined Tantia Tope and kept up the fight against the British. From there he left for Karbala in Iraq.⁷⁵

In Jhansi too the Muslims did not lag behind the others. Prominent Muslims of the town extended help to the Rani of Jhansi on 7 June 1857. *Risāldār* Kale Khan and *Tahsildār* Mohammad Husain of Jhansi led the attack, and the flag of the State was hoisted on the fort of Jhansi to signify its defiance of the British power. Hakim Sualeh Mohammad, a prominent citizen of Jhansi, promised to spare the lives of the English if they surrendered unconditionally. The English laid down their arms, and the doors of the fort were opened to them. They could not, however, be saved as some of the overzealous soldiers swooped on them and killed them.⁷⁶

Waris Mohammad Khan, Adil Mohammad Khan, Sarfaraz Khan, and Fazal Mohammad Khan led the revolution in Bhopal. Adil Mohammad Khan once wrote to Sikandar Begam, the Regent, who opposed the *mujāhidin*: "Having waged religious war we have turned out the infidel Christians from Rahatgarh, and we have embraced the cause of religion."⁷⁷ Shaikh Ibrahim, a sepoy of the 5th Company Jangi Battalion, Bhopal, wrote to his uncle in Hyderabad thus in a letter: "Listen all ye Mohammadans: It is forbidden that you should eat your food with the accursed Christians in your bosom. You will never get such an opportunity again. Send them all to hell."⁷⁸

However, the Begam tactfully handled the situation. Although the situation became critical at times, no open revolt occurred in Bhopal.

On 6 August 1857 the Begam issued a proclamation to all the contingent personnel. She stated in it, *inter alia*,

... that she is their true well-wisher [and] that notwithstanding her being a ruler in her own right her State is not a creation of the English. She, like other chiefs, has been

⁷⁵Quoted in Srivastava, n. 6, p. 142. See, also, Holmes, n. 27, p. 469. See, further, Mehr, n. 38, pp. 187-95.

⁷⁶Savarkar, n. 61, p. 240.

⁷⁷Srivastava, n. 6, p. 76.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 77.

respecting the paramountcy of the English, but in the event of their [i.e. the English] leaving the country she, along with other rulers, would acknowledge the authority of the King of Delhi she does want to maintain law and order in the State. Hence her appeal to all to stand by her.

This proclamation worked.⁷⁹

Maulvi Nurul Huda, who lived in Poona Chhauni at the time of 1857, corresponded with the Muslim leaders of Hyderabad with a view to organizing a resistance movement. However, it was Maulvi Alauddin who was the chief organizer of the resistance movement in Hyderabad. Hearing the news of the Meerut mutiny the *mujāhidīn* in Hyderabad propagated the cause of the movement. They posted pamphlets on the walls of the Makka Masjid and Char Minar. These contained an appeal to the Muslims to wage a *jihād* against the Christians. Thereupon, in June 1857, the Muslims assembled in large numbers in the Makka Masjid in the presence of Rashiduddin Khan and Maulvi Alauddin. They chalked out a scheme of struggle for 16 July 1857. The *mujāhidīn* led by Maulvi Alauddin attacked the Residency. Turra Baz Khan, a Rohilla *jamādār*, joined the attack along with his men. After a short fight they were martyred.⁸⁰

The British Government was in complete control of the situation in Bengal in 1857. Mutinies by the sepoys in the various army camps such as Barrackpore and Berhampur in February 1857 had already been suppressed. The movements for religious reform in Bengal had already died out. It would not, however, be correct to say that the Muslims of Bengal were altogether unaffected by the feelings and sentiments which swept the whole country during 1857. A letter in the *Bengal Harkaru* of 17 August 1858 reveals the thinking of the Bengali Muslims. A communication from Faridpur dated 24 July 1858 informed all true Muslims that "their fondest hope" was about to be realized, viz the return of Prophet Muhammad. "Seeing them hard pressed by the firangis, an insignificant race", it alerted

⁷⁹K.D. Bhargava, "Introduction" to *Descriptive List of Mutiny Papers*, vol. 2, National Archives of India, New Delhi.

⁸⁰Mehr, n. 38, pp. 322-3. See, also, Hastings Fraser, *Our Faithful Ally: The Nizam* (London, 1865), p.v.

the Muslims and exhorted them to exterminate the "firangis".⁸¹

A letter dated 18 August 1858 in the same paper shows that the British Government apprehended violence and took a good deal of precaution at the time of the festival of Muharram lest the Muslims of Bengal should rise against the British on some pretext.⁸²

Maulvi Ali Karim organized the resistance movement in Patna. Maulvi Pir Ali of Lucknow, a bookseller, also played a very significant role in organizing the resistance movement there. On 3 July 1857 Pir Ali led two hundred Muslims under the green banner and formally launched the resistance movement. However, after some resistance he was arrested and tried. More than anybody else it was he who was responsible for stirring up popular feeling against British rule. The British put the *ulamā* of Sadiqpur, who were followers of Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi, under house arrest.⁸³

In 1857, when the finale of the fierce encounter between the orthodox resisters and the British rulers was being enacted, a group of Muslims known to be pro-British behaved differently. The reasons for such a behaviour on their part were varied. For one thing they felt that it would be wiser to trust to British liberalism to do the right thing than to wage war.⁸⁴ Others did not like the lines on which the resistance movement was being carried on. Yet others observed neutrality; for they had no idea as to the ultimate outcome of the movement. There were also some Muslims who blindly supported the British for the sake of personal gains.

The rich Muslims of West Bengal as opposed to the poor Muslims of East Bengal had received English education and had imbibed Western values and ideas. The Calcutta Madrasah of the Muslims had made some progress towards Westernization. The educated Muslims had witnessed the results of the new administration and had developed some admiration for the British. They had even formed an association of Muslims in favour of Westernization which rejected the call for a *jihād* against British rule. They were of course a small minority and

⁸¹*Bengal Harkaru*, 17 August 1858.

⁸²*Ibid.*, 18 August 1858.

⁸³Mehr, n. 38, pp. 297 and 303.

⁸⁴Sen, n. 1, pp. 29 and 418; and Holmes, n. 27, p. 140.

could hardly claim to represent the majority of the Muslims of Bengal.

Such groups existed in all parts of the country. Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan and Mirza Ghalib with their followers represented this group in Delhi; Shamsuddaulah and Salar Jang represented it in Hyderabad. This proves that the Muslims of India in every part of the country reacted in two ways, i.e. both for and against British rule and Western culture. However, the anti-British elements predominated in the first half of the nineteenth century in terms of numerical strength and intensity of feeling. Thus the *fatvā* issued by the Muhammadan Association of Bengal in favour of the British was by no means the voice of the majority of the Muslims of Bengal and, least of all, of the Muslims of India as a whole.⁸⁵

In North India a handful of Muslims remained friendly with the British. Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan saved the British from the protagonists of the resistance movement in Bijnor. He belonged to the nobility, and he had chosen to serve under the British owing entirely to his own personal circumstances. He had witnessed history in the making and had studied its trends. He knew the weaknesses of the Indian rulers; he also knew how mighty the British rulers were with their modern techniques. No one can deny that he felt as acutely as anybody else the humiliation and fall of the Indians in general and of the Muslims in particular. That was why he decided to stand by the British in 1857. He did not believe in waging war without adequate preparation. He was convinced that a violent revolution would not succeed and that its failure would lead the people to disaster.⁸⁶

Similarly Mirza Ghalib, a poet of repute, was notable for his pro-British leanings. He observed strict neutrality in 1857. He did not join the resistance movement because he was, first of all, a poet and not a leader of men. Secondly he too, like Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan, did not appreciate the manner of resistance. He criticized those who conducted the movement.⁸⁷

⁸⁵W.W. Hunter, *The Indian Mussalmans* (Calcutta, 1945), p. 77.

⁸⁶Altaf Husain Hali, *Hayāt-i Jāved* (Aligarh, 1922), pp. 49-50. See, also, Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan, *Sarkashi-i Zilā Bijnor* (Karachi, 1962), p. 21; and G.F.I. Graham, *The Life and Work of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan* (London, 1909), pp. 16-18.

⁸⁷Asadullah Khan Ghalib, *Dastambū*, Ghulam Rasul Mehr, trans., in *Tahrīk* (Delhi), 1969, pp. 33-34.

He appreciated many things in Western culture,⁸⁸ but it cannot be said that he would have felt unhappy if a Muslim Government had superseded the British. In personal affairs too he was not happy with the British Government. He would have been a most happy man if a disciplined and powerful Muslim Government had established itself. He was unhappy with the conditions of the Muslim society of his time.

When the resistance movement began in Oudh, the pro-British nobles did, or could do, very little to support the British. However, in Rohilkhand, the Nawab of Rampur remained loyal to the British. The reason was that the State was a by-product of the British alliance with Oudh. The ruler belonged to the Mughal nobility who had serious rivals among the native rulers. His predecessors had suffered at the hands of those rivals in the preceding century. Hence he was happy to rule in peace under the British. The British connexion assured his survival. He was also interested in modernization.

In Hyderabad Sir Salar Jang, a noble belonging to a Shia family with historical links with the British, saved the British. With the death of Sikandar Jah there was hardly any resistance to British rule. The death of Nasiruddaulah about 1857 marked the end of the influence of anti-British elements. Nasiruddaulah instructed his young son Afzaluddaulah to remain loyal to the British, saying that it was the only way to survive.⁸⁹ Salar Jang, who had been educated on modern lines, sincerely believed that the safety and welfare of the State lay in remaining loyal to the British Government. He, therefore, forcefully and successfully suppressed the movement in Hyderabad and thereby saved the whole of the South for the British.⁹⁰

These people were not influenced by religious zeal. They had been educated on comparatively secular lines, and they understood well the political implications of opposing British rule. They adopted a pro-British attitude on rational grounds. Hence in no way could they be described as betrayers of their country. They thought differently, and they sought with the best of inten-

⁸⁸Yusuf Husain Khan, *Ghālib aur Āhang-i Ghālib* (New Delhi, 1968), p. 19.

⁸⁹Syed Murad Ali Talai, *Āfzāluddaulāh Asaf Jāh V* (Hyderabad, 1943), p. 21.

⁹⁰Fraser, n. 80, p. 286.

tions to improve and rehabilitate Muslim and Indian society with different tools.

Everywhere, in all big movements, one finds a few mean, senseless, and selfish men. And so in India too in 1857 some persons crossed all decent limits in helping the British. They served as British spies. They betrayed their country and their brethren. Fortunately they were very few and hence could not be held responsible for the failure of the movement. These men included Rajab Ali Khan, Ilahi Bakhsh (who was a near relation of the Emperor Bahadur Shah II), and Hakim Ahsanullah Khan, who enjoyed the confidence of the Emperor.⁹¹

The main reasons for the failure of the movement, however, were inferior artillery, inadequacy of provisions and equipment, lack of organization, and absence of cohesiveness, unity, and co-ordination. Besides, the religious section, which spearheaded the movement, was a small, microscopic group in relation to the total Indian population. The royalty was weak and demoralized; the nobility was divided; the *élite* did not support the cause; and the Hindus and other communities of India, though they did join the movement, did so either half-heartedly or too late and on too small a scale.

⁹¹Haq, n. 11, p. 554.

Origins of Muslim Modernization

Origins of Muslim

Chapter 7

POETS OF THE TWILIGHT OF THE MUSLIM POWER

As we have noted already, the general assumption is that the Muslim community reacted in hostile fashion to British rule in India in the early years. This, however, is too sweeping a generalization; for the reaction of the Muslims even during the first half of the nineteenth century does not admit of any monolithic categorization. There were significant variations in the Muslim reaction. Our purpose here is to test the validity of the assumption regarding the nature of the Muslim reaction to British rule by taking up for consideration the attitude of a group of the Muslim *élite*.

A group within the Muslim community, albeit in a minority, showed itself to be susceptible to the changing values and situations from the very inception of British rule. It felt even in the transitional period that the country was on the doorstep of a new age. Members of this group looked forward to the birth of a new culture, a cross-breed of the Western with the Eastern. Hence, with some exceptions and reservations, they responded favourably, though imperceptibly, to British rule, especially to Western culture.

As a rule poets are very sensitive to the conditions of their age. Their compositions are based on their own feelings and experiences. The realities of life are coloured by an intense imagination and are sometimes presented in exaggerated form. Much caution is, therefore, necessary in using their compositions for historical purposes. We cannot at the same time dismiss their compositions as of no account because these constitute a record of the intense feelings of a most sensitive and creative section of society and can, therefore, afford us invaluable help in our assessment of the period concerned.

The period extending from Mir Taqi Mir to Altaf Husain Hali is remarkable for the galaxy of great poets that it produced. All these poets were affected by the twilight of the Muslim power

in one way or another. The reaction of some of the Muslim poets to the decline of Muslim rule and to the ascendancy of the British power in India is clearly reflected in their compositions. At first these poets were much shocked at the political, social, and economic degeneration of Muslim society. However, they soon realized that the degeneration was the outcome of certain moral weaknesses in their own people. They found it hard to reconcile themselves to the establishment of British rule on the debris of the Muslim empire. Poets like Mir Taqi Mir and Hakim Momin even charged the Christians with being rebels and infidels who had usurped the Muslim power. They even fondly hoped for a miraculous revival of Muslim rule. And yet, instead of turning openly hostile to British rule, they adopted an attitude of compromise.

There were also poets who sought to escape from the realities of life by their romanticism. Their compositions were notable for their literary flourishes and preciousness of style rather than for their content or social purposiveness. Their modes of expression were the *ghazal*, the *qasidā*, and the *marsiya*. Some of them were extraordinary craftsmen in their line, but they hardly cared or managed to go beyond the narrow peripheries of romanticism. The steep decline of the Muslim power, the emergence of British rule, and the impact of Western culture on society went almost unperceived by them. Their poetry betrayed little influence of the virtues that came with the English language. Thus, observes Sadiq: "Before its modern development, our poetry had been largely confined to themes erotic, and its capacity for themes other than amatory was seriously restricted."¹

Let us now discuss the more important among the poets of the period individually. Mir Taqi Mir (1722-1810), the father of Urdu poetry, reacted sharply to the rise of the British power and lamented the painful phenomenon of decline of Muslim rule and the ascendancy of the British. Mir's abhorrence of the British is reflected in his charging the Christians with being *namak harām*. He recalled the generous patronage that the Christians had enjoyed under the Mughal emperors, and said that the Christians had shown rank ingratitude by looting their Muslim patrons in various battles.² At the same time he also blamed the Muslim

¹Mohammad Sadiq, *A History of Urdu Literature* (London, 1964), p. 154.

²Mir Mohammad Taqi Mir, *Mir ki Āp Bīti*, Nisar Ahmad Faruqi, ed.

rulers and nobles for hastening their own fall by provoking the British in unwise disregard of the enormous growth in their power. Even after the decisive victory in 1764 the British had made friendly treaties with Shah Alam and Shujauddaulah. Of course, as victors they had sought to gain certain advantages. Even then, in view of their policy of non-expansion, they had avoided annexation of the territories under Muslim rule even though they were easily in a position to do so. They had thus managed to gain an edge over the greatest Muslim rulers of the country. With the occupation of Delhi in 1803 even the semblance of Mughal sovereignty vanished.

Mir migrated from Delhi to Lucknow in 1782. He flourished in Lucknow during the reign of Asafuddaulah. After the death of Asafuddaulah in 1797 conditions in Oudh further deteriorated. The Subsidiary Alliance rendered the Nawab Vizier not only powerless but also careless. Mir did not escape the consequences of the chaotic situation in the State. For instance, his stipend remained suspended for about four years.³ Naturally the poets and writers who had flourished under the patronage of the Muslim rulers felt insecure as even their means of subsistence were now placed in jeopardy; so much so that, early in the nineteenth century, they were left with no alternative but to aspire for the patronage of the British Government. Hence, whenever an opportunity arose, they tried to avail themselves of it despite their innate hostility to British rule.

Saksena quotes Lutf to show that in his last days Mir also appeared as a candidate in an interview held by Colonel Scott for selecting some learned scholar of Arabic and Persian for the Fort William College. He was, however, not selected owing to his advanced years.⁴ On the other hand, Safdar Aah denies that Mir ever appeared for an interview. According to him, Mir's name was proposed by his well-wishers, but Mir himself declined

(Delhi, 1957), pp. 149-51; and idem, *Zikr-i Mir*, Abdul Haq, ed. (Aurangabad, 1928), pp. 104-6 and 148. See, also, the introduction to his *Kulliyāt-i Mir*, pt 2, Masih-ul-Zaman, ed. (Allahabad, 1972). See, further, Sanaul Haq, *Mir Saudā kā Daur* (Karachi, 1965), pp. 309-11.

³*Zikr-i Mir*, n. 2, p. 309.

⁴Ram Babu Saksena, *A History of Urdu Literature* (Allahabad, 1927), p. 71. Saksena's observations are based on Mirza Lutf's *Tazkirā Gulshan-i Hind*, published with an introduction by Maulvi Abdul Haq.

the offer of appointment owing to his old age and also, possibly, his egoistic nature. In view of the nature and attitude of Mir, Saksena's version appears to be an oversimplification; for there is hardly any authentic evidence of any sign of indignation or dejection on the part of Mir over his alleged rejection. However, it can be said that Mir would have accepted any post in the Fort William College if it had been offered to him in honourable fashion. In any case he agreed to publish the first edition of his *Kulliyāt* under the auspices of the Fort William College.⁵

There is, however, hardly anything in the writings of Mir that might be regarded as representing a complete picture of his attitude towards British rule and Western culture. In fact the great personalities of the eighteenth century who were still living in the early decades of the nineteenth century were, so to speak, caught unawares and hence became conspicuous for their ambivalence. It was a period full of uncertainties. However, it is quite clear that Mir had lost all hope of any patronage from the then Muslim rulers. His attitude to British rule was, therefore, one of accommodation to, and adjustment with, the new situation.

Hakim Momin Khan Momin (1801-51), a renowned poet of Delhi, was more vehement than Mir and clearer in expressing his reaction to British rule. Delhi was now virtually under the British, and the rule of the Mughal Emperor was confined within the walls of the Red Fort. The change affected the position of the people as well. Momin too was affected like others. He had succeeded to the position of his father, Hakim Ghulam Nabi Khan, as physician at the Mughal court, but without the old honour and glamour; for the estate of Narnol, which the family had received from the Mughal rulers in lieu of services, had lapsed to the British. Momin was given a pension to compensate him for the loss of his estate. He also received twenty-five rupees a month by way of a stipend from the British. He did not care to develop his relations with the British beyond that, whether for the purpose of ensuring continued British patronage or as a matter of expediency. On the contrary, he appears to have

⁵Safdar Aab, *Mir aur Miryāt* (Bombay, 1972), p. 132. See, also, Sadiq, n. 1, p. 95.

been opposed to British rule.⁶ In fact his attitude and ideas were very much affected by religious ideas, especially those of the school of Shah Abdul Aziz.

Momin received his early education and training under the care of Shah Abdul Aziz.⁷ He acquired mastery in Arabic and Persian. He also studied *tibb*. Like his father he adopted *tibb* as his profession. He was also interested in music and poetry. Although he became a very famous poet, one whose genius was recognized even by a man of the calibre of Mirza Ghalib, he never adopted poetry as a means of livelihood like other poets of his age. This is evident from the fact that, unlike other poets, he never wrote any *qasidā* to please the rulers or to make money.⁸ He was a very romantic man, but in his beliefs he was orthodox. The school of Shah Abdul Aziz left a great imprint upon his mind. He was least interested in politics, although he was much fascinated by the movement of Saiyyad Ahmad Bareilvi and extended indirect support to the movement by writing a *mathnavi* on *jihād*.⁹ It can be asserted that he was fully aware of the political aims and objectives of the movement, viz annihilation of the Sikhs at first, and of the British afterwards, for establishing an Islamic State in India. He was able to stand up for his views because of his utter independence of mind. Even econo-

⁶Hakim Mohammad Momin, *Dīwān-i Momin*, Zia Ahmad Badauni, ed. (Allahabad, 1970), pp. 23-24 and 26. See, also, Maulana Mohammad Husain Azad, *Āb-i Hayāt* (Faizabad, n.d.), pp. 462-4; and Ibadat Bareilvi, *Momin aur Mutāleyāh-i Momin* (Karachi, 1961), pp. 15, 17, and 20.

⁷Bareilvi, n. 6, p. 23. Abdul Bari Asi, "Muāzinā Momin-o Ghālib", *Nigār* (Bhopal), Momin number, January 1928, p. 79.

⁸Zaheer Siddiqi, *Qasidā-i Momin* (Lucknow, 1960), pp. 51-52 and 56.

Momin in all wrote nine *qasidās*. He wrote seven *qasidās* in the form of *hamd* (in praise of God) and two for the rulers. Even the two *qasidās* he wrote for the rulers were written, not for gaining their favour, but for expressing his gratitude. One *qasidā* he wrote for Raja Ajeet Singh, brother of Raja Karan Singh, a *rayīs* of Patiala, to express his thanks for the gift of an elephant and a hundred rupees which the Raja had presented as a mark of respect for the great poet. The other *qasidā* he wrote for Wazir-ruddaulah, Amir of Tonk, in which, after expressing his thanks, he conveyed his inability to join him on his pilgrimage to Mecca. It should be noted that both Momin and the Amir of Tonk were followers of Saiyyad Ahmad Bareilvi.

⁹Badauni, n. 6, p. 30; Bareilvi, n. 6, pp. 77-80; and Aasi, n. 7, p. 79. See, also, *Kulliyāt-i Momin* (Lucknow, n.d.), pp. 286-7.

mically he did not depend on anybody. Firstly he was a physician, and the profession brought him more money than he needed. Secondly he had some income from a number of sources. He never sought to cash in on his prestige. This is evident from the fact that he rejected many offers of appointment from the Indian rulers. When he was offered a post of teacher in Persian in the Delhi College by Lieutenant-Governor Thomson, he declined it because the post carried a salary of just forty rupees a month, which, he thought, was much too low for a man of his honour and dignity. He in fact demanded a hundred rupees a month. Eventually Imam Bakhsh Sahbai accepted the offer.¹⁰

Hakim Momin Khan was, like others, not happy with the state of affairs which then obtained. He criticized the Muslim rulers for their impolitic ways and moral degeneracy. The people of Delhi were fed up with the chaotic conditions under the later Mughal rulers. They heaved a sigh of relief when the British occupied Delhi in 1803 and provided some stability.¹¹ However, a number of Muslim aristocrats, who were especially noted for their orthodoxy, found it difficult to reconcile themselves to the coming of the British. Hakim Momin Khan was one of them. He was not happy with the state of affairs under the Mughal rulers, but he wanted to ensure the well-being of the Muslims only under Muslim rulers. He, therefore, abhorred the British rulers and called them usurpers.¹² He held the British responsible for the restlessness then convulsing India. In a letter to his uncle Hakim Ghulam Husain, he severely condemned the British rulers.¹³ He even thought of leaving Delhi to settle either in Lucknow or in Hyderabad, where Muslim rule still obtained, however feebly.¹⁴

From such meagre evidence as is available we can easily see that in spite of receiving a stipend etc. from the British, Momin thoroughly detested them and longed for a revival of Muslim rule. However, he too did not take part in any openly hostile action against the British. Instead he tried to adjust himself to the new situation.

¹⁰Barelvi, n. 6, pp. 77-80; and Abdul Haq, *Marhūm Dillī Kālej* (Delhi, 1945), pp. 152-3.

¹¹Barelvi, n. 6, pp. 338-9.

¹²Ibid. The word he used was *ghāsib*.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid.

Of the poets Mirza Asadullah Khan Ghalib (1797-1869) of Delhi proved to be the most radical. He gave an indication of his liberal outlook before 1857 when he advised Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan not to waste his time in glorifying old things but to look forward.¹⁵ His life and career reveal his liberal and progressive outlook. In his poems and writings we come across both appreciation and criticism of the British. He was among the leading intellectuals of his age who openly welcomed the introduction of Western ideas in India.

Ghalib came of a noble family with a literary and military background. His relatives had served in the higher civil and military posts for a long time first under the Muslim rulers and later under the British. His father, Abdullah Beg Khan, was killed in a battle. His uncle, Nasrullah Beg Khan, served under the British as the commander of a cavalry unit. His father-in-law, Nawab Ilahi Bakhsh Maroof, was a landlord who was also a famous poet. Young Mirza Ghalib is said to have joined Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh in an action undertaken by the latter on behalf of the British against the Raja of Bharatpur in 1825.¹⁶ After the death of his uncle in 1806, Ghalib was granted an annual pension of seven hundred and fifty rupees, along with a robe of honour and a title from the British Government.¹⁷

Mirza Ghalib received his early education under Nazir Akbarabadi and Maulvi Mohammad Muazzam at Agra. Much credit, however, has been given to Mullah Abdul Samad for teaching him Persian. Ghalib had great regard for Fazle Imam Khairabadi. It is possible that he was influenced by the school of thought led by him. He was a good friend of Fazle Haq Khairabadi's. His family maintained good relations with the British.¹⁸

¹⁵Malik Ram, *Ayār-i Ghālib* (Delhi, 1969), p. 125; idem, *Diwān-i Ghālib* (Delhi, 1969), p. 5; and Ghulam Rasul Mehr, *Ghālib* (Lahore, 1946), pp. 264-5. See, also, Ghalib's *Kulliyāt-i Ghālib* (Lahore, 1965), Ahmad Ali Shaikh, ed., pp. 144-6. *Murdā parvardan mubārak kār nīst, khud bago kār nezjuz guftār nīst.*

¹⁶Zoe Ansari, *Ghālib Shanāsī* (Bombay, 1965), pp. 33-34; and Mehr, n. 15, p. 15.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 15-16.

¹⁸Salam Sandelvi, *Ghālib kī Shāirī kā Nafsiyātī Mutāleyāh* (Lucknow, 1969), p. 99; Mukhtaruddin Arzoo, *Ahwāl-i Ghālib* (Aligarh, 1953), pp. 234-65; and Akhtar Siddiqi, *Ghālib Āpne Aiyine mein* (Delhi, 1970), pp. 34-36.

It was as a poet that Ghalib joined the Mughal court. In 1850 he was commissioned to write the history of the House of Timur. In 1854, after Zauq's death, he became the *ustād* of Bahadur Shah Zafar. Mirza Ghalib felt much privileged to serve the Mughal court. He also received stipends from other Muslim rulers. In 1842 Lieutenant-Governor Thomson of the North-West Frontier Province called him for an interview with a view to appointing him to a post of teacher of Persian in the Delhi College. Ghalib refused to present himself when he felt that he would not be accorded the same respect that he used to receive at court.¹⁹

Mirza Ghalib was, however, always sensible of the high status and position he enjoyed under the British. As he had been the recipient of a hereditary allowance from the British after the death of his uncle Nasrullah Beg Khan, he used to call himself a *namak khvār* of the British. For him the status which he enjoyed at the British court was far more precious than anything else. He was overjoyed when he was assigned a seat at the British court on the right side at No. 10. He was conferred a robe of honour of seven pieces, along with a *choghā* and a garland of pearls.²⁰

During the Uprising in 1857 Ghalib kept himself aloof and adopted a non-committal attitude. Saunders also confirms that he took no part in the events, whether in favour of, or against, the British. He even stopped the use of the titles conferred upon him by the Mughal Emperor so as to avoid any misunderstanding with the British.²¹ He was charged to compose an epigrammatical superscription for the coin issued to mark the anniversary of the coronation of the Emperor Bahadur Shah II in 1857. Later, after the suppression of the Uprising, the British held this against him, but they acquitted him after he protested his innocence.²² They, however, withheld his pension for failing

¹⁹ Altaf Husain Hali, *Yādgār-i Ghālib* (Kanpur, 1897), pp. 28-29; Imtiaz Ali Arshi, *Makātīb-i Ghālib* (Rampur, 1969), p. 67; Mohiuddin Qadri, *Ruh-i Ghālib* (Hyderabad, 1950), p. 25; and Haq, n. 10, pp. 152-3. Haq gives 1840 as the year of the interview.

²⁰ Arshi, n. 19, pp. 53-54.

²¹ Ibid., pp. 55 and 68. See, also, Krishan Lal, "The Sack of Delhi as Witnessed by Ghalib", *Bengal Past and Present* (Calcutta), vol. 74, December 1955, pp. 103-4.

²² Malik Ram, *Zikr-i Ghālib* (Delhi, 1950), edn 2, p. 80; and Lal, n. 21, p. 104.

to render any appreciable help to the British during the crisis. Soon Ghalib managed to get himself registered as a loyal supporter of British rule. And in 1860, after much pleading, his annual pension of seven hundred and fifty rupees was restored to him along with the robe of honour. He was also summoned to attend the Ambala *darbār* to receive his *khil'at* personally in 1863. He, however, expressed his inability to attend the *darbār* on grounds of ill health. He made his last formal appearance in the Delhi *darbār* held on 1 December 1866.²³

It is very interesting to note that Mirza Ghalib wrote a number of *qasidās* in praise of the British rulers to gain some position at the court. These *qasidās* are in a commonplace style: there is nothing original in them to suggest that they came from the pen of a poet of Ghalib's calibre. In fact Ghalib composed *qasidās* whenever there was a change of government, not only in the Muslim States, but also in the British set-up. In fact he was a victim of the peculiar circumstances obtaining in his time. Conscious of his traditional social prestige, he would compose *qasidās* for the money that they brought him. As an aristocrat it was against his grain to stoop to such a shift. Yet to achieve his mundane objectives he often allowed himself to flatter those in power like any common poet. This he himself admits: "Being a bard of the Government, I wrote poems in praise of the rulers and received robes of honour. I stopped composing *qasidās* with the discontinuance of the robe of honour."²⁴

In fact, whenever he had to attend the British court, Ghalib had to present something. As a poet he could only present a poem in praise of the rulers. Lord Dalhousie did not hold any *darbār* in Delhi during the eight years of his rule. Ghalib, therefore, did not write any *qasidā* in his honour.²⁵ The fact that he had no hesitation about dedicating a *qasidā* to more than one patron shows that he attached little importance to this mode of expression.²⁶

²³Arshi, n. 19, pp. 58 and 61-64.

²⁴Asadullah Khan Ghalib, *Urdū-i Muallā* (Allahabad, 1952). See, also, Ghalib's *Kulliyāt-i Ghālib* (Persian) (Lahore, 1965), Shaikh Mubarak Ali, ed., pp. 307-55.

²⁵Malik Ram, *Zikr-i Ghālib* (Delhi, 1964), edn 4, pp. 274-5.

²⁶Ansari, n. 16, p. 36. A *qasidā* written for the King of Oudh was later dedicated to the Governor-General as well.

Hence for anybody to judge the attitude and real feelings of Mirza Ghalib to British rule solely on the basis of the *qasidās* he composed would be to bark up the wrong tree. Ghalib was only following a common practice of the poets of his time. He himself admitted that he regarded the writing of *qasidās* as a means of ensuring his status and earning his livelihood. Change of rulers was for him too insignificant a matter to be taken seriously. Mirza Ghalib congratulated Lord Hardinge on the conquest of the Punjab in 1846 and wrote a *qasidā* in his praise. Surprisingly enough, he even regretted his inability to participate in the battle owing to his old age.²⁷ He composed poems in praise of Lord Ellenborough, Lord Canning, and other British officials. He expressed his gratitude to the Chief Secretary, Edmonston, who, in spite of the absence of any prior acquaintance with the poet, addressed him with much respect.²⁸ Mirza Ghalib welcomed the take-over of the Government of the country by the Crown in 1858. Perhaps he thought that the change might turn out to be to his advantage. He expected to receive much more gain from the Government under the Crown than he had received under the Company. He, therefore, composed a long poem in praise of Queen Victoria. He even asked to be appointed as a poet at the Queen's court. The request, however, was not conceded.²⁹

In order to assess Ghalib's attitude and feelings towards British rule and culture, we shall have to turn to other things in his writings. Fortunately his reactions to the Uprising of 1857 are available in his pamphlet *Dastambū*, a document of some historical value on the great events of 1857. The nature of the pamphlet, however, has given occasion for some suspicion in the minds of a number of writers. Khwaja Hasan Nizami says: "Ghalib wrote this book [*Dastambū*] after the Mutiny at a time when the life and honour of Muslims were in great danger."³⁰ Some other writers feel that Ghalib conceived the idea of presenting *Dastambū* to the British authorities (especially the Viceroy and Governor-General and the Queen

²⁷Ibid., p. 83; and *Kulliyāt-i Ghālib*, n. 24, p. 344.

²⁸Ghalib, *Urdū-i Muallā*, n. 24, pp. 257-8. See, also, *Kulliyāt-i Ghālib*, n. 24, pp. 321-3.

²⁹Ghalib, *Urdū-i Muallā*, n. 24, pp. 251-2; and *Kulliyāt-i Ghālib*, n. 24, pp. 307-11.

³⁰Quoted in Lal, n. 21, p. 103.

herself) in 1858 in order to win their favour and patronage. For instance, Ikram comments: "To assume that Ghalib has recorded the whole course of events plainly and without inhibition would not be correct." It may safely be presumed that Ghalib toned down whole passages to save his skin.³¹

Mehr, however, says that when Ghalib wrote the pamphlet, nobody was sure that the British would succeed. The charge that Ghalib was only flattering the British "to save his skin" would not, therefore, hold water. It was, of course, possible that as a matter of expediency he deleted certain portions offensive to the British.³²

In any case, a few observations made by Ghalib in this book are worthy of note. For example, he described the events of 1857 as a *rast khez-i bejā* or an unnecessary upheaval. He denounced the "natives" who rose against the British as "rebels" and "disloyal elements".³³ He condemned them for inflicting injuries on, and cruelly killing, men, women, and children of the English race. A few of those who were killed were his close friends and pupils.³⁴

Ghalib appears to have been happy to see the British back in Delhi after the suppression of the Uprising. Of course he was not prepared for the merciless massacre of the "natives" carried out by the British.³⁵ Nevertheless, according to him, the British were fully justified in killing even the dogs and cats of the "natives"; for he felt that the "natives" had behaved towards the British in a most atrocious manner.³⁶

After the suppression of the Uprising of 1857 Ghalib ceaselessly endeavoured to regain his lost prestige and pension. He was quite hopeful of his success as he knew that the class-conscious British officials would definitely give due importance to people

³¹Ralph Russell and Khurshid-ul-Islam, *Ghalib: Life and Letters* (London, 1969), pp. 132-3; and K.M. Ashraf, "Ghalib and the Revolt of 1857", in P.C. Joshi, ed., *Rebellion of 1857: A Symposium* (New Delhi, 1957), p. 246.

³²Mehr, n. 15, pp. 241-2.

³³See Asadullah Khan Ghalib, *Dastambū*, Ghulam Rasul Mehr, trans., in *Tahrīk* (Delhi), March 1969, pp. 33-34. See, also, Raziuddin Ahmad Zakir, *Nazr-i Ghālib* (Hyderabad, 1964), p. 179.

³⁴Mehr, n. 15, p. 245. See, also, *Dastambū*, n. 33, pp. 33-34.

³⁵Mehr, n. 15, pp. 248-9; and Zakir, n. 33, p. 183.

³⁶*Dastambū*, n. 33, p. 42.

of high birth, especially to those who had remained neutral in 1857. However, the British, although they respected Ghalib for his literary achievements, did no such thing for quite some time. They restored his pension and his robe of honour only in 1860.³⁷

After making due allowance for whatever Ghalib might be held to have done or written to meet the exigencies of the circumstances in which he found himself, we still find that there is enough evidence in his writings to prove that he was a genuine admirer of British rule and Western culture. Though a typical Muslim from the religious point of view, Ghalib yet possessed a secular and liberal mind.³⁸ The poet in him did not profess any precise religion. He certainly believed in certain lofty and universally applicable moral principles, especially love of man: "I treat every man, Muslim, Hindu, or Christian, with affection and consider him my brother. I do not care whether others believe likewise or not."³⁹ He professed great admiration for Maulana Fazle Imam Khairabadi and Maulana Fazle Haq Khairabadi among the *ulamā* of Delhi. The Khairabadi family had good relations with the British up to the Uprising of 1857. Ghalib condemned all reactionary ideas. He wrote a *mathnavi* against the Wahhābis at the instance of Fazle Haq Khairabadi. A study of his multi-dimensional personality in historical perspective would show that he was far ahead of his times.⁴⁰

Mirza Ghalib believed that a meaningless nostalgia for the past would be a formidable obstruction in the path of progress. Indeed, according to him, it was tantamount to worship of the dead. In his *taqriz* to a new edition of *Āin-i Akbari* brought out by Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan, Mirza Ghalib condemned old institutions and openly lauded British culture and institutions and the material achievements of the Western countries. He especially commended the Western conception of equality and

³⁷Yusuf Husain Khan, *Ghālib aur Āhang-i Ghālib* (New Delhi, 1968), p. 20; and Arshi, n. 19, pp. 57-62.

³⁸Ale Ahmad Surur's article in *Ilm-o Fan* (Delhi), April 1969, p. 49.

³⁹M. Mujib, *Indian Muslims* (London, 1967), pp. 474-5. See, also, Zakir Husain, "Poet of Humanism", in M. Mujib, *Ghazliyat-i Ghālib* (Delhi, 1969), p. v.

⁴⁰Ansari, n. 16, pp. 51-53; Asloob Ahmad Ansari, *Naqsh-i Ghālib* (Delhi, 1970), pp. 15 and 34; and Hali, n. 19, p. 17. See, also, Khalil-ur-Rahman Azmi's article in *Ilm-o Fan*, n. 38, p. 60.

justice, which, he declared, had "no match" in history. He suggested to Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan that he should give up glorifying the old Mughal institutions. He also repeated these ideas in one of his poems on the new culture with a view to inviting the attention of his countrymen to them.⁴¹

Like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Dwaraka Nath Tagore in Bengal, Mirza Ghalib and Sir Saiyyad Ahmad attached much importance to the new culture and the need to change in accordance with the new ideas. They, therefore, advocated complete loyalty to the British. They had seen the dark days of the later Mughals and were, therefore, able convincingly to plead in favour of change. For them, benevolent British rule was an established fact. Mirza Ghalib was also in favour of introducing English education in India. Along with Mufti Sadruddin Azurdah he fully supported the scheme for reorganizing the Delhi College on Western lines. Soon English became, along with Persian and Urdu, one of the compulsory subjects of study in the College. The College aimed at disseminating the Western arts and sciences and inculcating Western ideas and trends. Books on modern sciences and disciplines were translated into Urdu so as to impart education in the sciences through the medium of the Urdu language.⁴²

Ghalib paid a visit to Calcutta during 1828-29. He had the opportunity there to study British institutions and the material achievements of Western culture and to compare them with those of India. He found a world of difference between the two. The old things of the Indians stood nowhere before the glittering trophies of the British age. He admired British administration based on justice and law. He saw well-lit, clean, and wide roads and the fast means of transport and communication that were in use there. He was enchanted by the sight of the green lawns and the beauty of the women. He enjoyed fine liquor and fresh fruit. These attractions tempted him. A poet and a liberal, he was naturally charmed by the prospect of life in such a society, a society brimming with new life. He found the British officers there very polite, courteous, and benevolent in their dealings.⁴³

⁴¹*Kulliyāt-i Ghālib*, n. 15, pp. 144-6. See, also, Khan, n. 37, pp. 24-31.

⁴²*Ibid.*

⁴³Ansari, n. 16, p. 59; and Malik Ram, n. 22, pp. 44-45.

Ghalib had a number of Englishmen as well among his friends and pupils. Some of them were serious students of Urdu and Persian and wrote poetry in those languages. There was, for instance, Alexander Skinner, son of Colonel James Skinner, who wrote under the *nom de guerre* of Sikandar. And then there was the young Alexander Heatherly, who wrote under the *nom de guerre* of Azad. Yet another friend was Andrew Sterling, who at first worked in Delhi and who was subsequently transferred to Calcutta, where he rose to be a Secretary to the Government. He was a scholar in the Persian language and a good friend and admirer of Ghalib's. He was also a close friend of William Frazer's. Ghalib expressed his great shock in a letter to Shaikh Imam Bakhsh Nasikh when Frazer was assassinated in 1835.⁴⁴

Mirza Ghalib, a poet of acknowledged eminence and a great scholar of his age, possessed rare insight as well as foresight. An ambivert, he was a man of this world with a liberal mind. He was especially distinguished for his secular ideas and progressive attitude towards life.⁴⁵ He loved all men—Hindus and Christians, as well as Muslims. He criticized conservative ideas and reactionary movements. He was equally respected by Muslim and British rulers. He expressed his deep gratitude to the British for granting him a pension and a robe of honour. At the same time he kept up his attachment to the Mughal court till the end. He maintained friendship with the members of the Imperial family as well as with the officials of the British *rāj*. His pupils included princes and nawabs, officials of the British *rāj*, and Hindu aristocrats. Mirza Ghalib, a man of vision, was endowed with a great heart. He believed in progress and movement. He regarded changes in life as inevitable and as conducive to what was good and fair from a long-term standpoint.⁴⁶

In fact British patronage of the upper classes further strengthened the feudal character of Indian society. Education was confined only to the upper classes. This enabled the upper classes to retain their own social status and in many cases to raise it further. Their lives were little influenced by Western values like

⁴⁴Hali, n. 19, pp. 424-5; Amjad Ali, "Ghalib: His Life and Times", *Pakistan Quarterly* (Karachi), vol. 17, no. 1, p. 83; and *Kulliyāt-i Ghālib*, n. 24, pp. 339-40.

⁴⁵Sandelvi, n. 18, p. 125; and Azmi, n. 40, pp. 49-52 and 60.

⁴⁶Azmi, n. 40, p. 52.

democracy. The democratic spirit was indeed inconsistent with their class interests. Hence the educated, class-conscious Muslims of this period were concerned more about material progress than about political change.⁴⁷ If at all they cherished any idea of political change, they could only conceive of it in the light of their Western education. Sardar Jafri hence observes: "Mirza Ghalib welcomed the gift of science that the British made to India, but he failed to realize the ruinous effects of British capitalism which accompanied that gift."⁴⁸

As for the attitude of three well-known poets—Mir, Momin, and Ghalib—it is quite clear that in spite of their ambivalence they represented their age and class. Although they were also interested in advancing themselves by adjustment to the new situation and confessed to a sneaking admiration for the British, they yet cherished a desire for the political regeneration of Muslim society.

Shaikh Muhammad Ibrahim Zauq (1789-1854), who was *ustād* to the Emperor Bahadur Shah II, was one of the leading poets of Delhi. He wrote not only beautiful *ghazals* but also memorable *qasidās*. As a composer of *qasidās* Zauq was next only to Muhammad Rafi Sauda.⁴⁹ However, Zauq was no representative poet of Muslim sentiment. What seemed to bother him most was his own economic deprivation: he failed to get his due in terms of worldly goods in accordance with his position and calibre. In one of his poems he lamented: "What a pity that the accomplished should go about distressed in this way! I pity you, O perfection: I perfectly pity you."⁵⁰ Sadiq rightly observes: "The greater part of his verse is like an arid landscape without scent or savour."⁵¹

Bahadur Shah Zafar (1775-1862) acquired great fame as a poet. In fact the position which he lost as a ruler was more than made up for him by the recognition he achieved as a poet. In his poems he gave full expression to his anger and discontent over the behaviour of the British Government towards the Mughal Imperial house. The position to which the Mughal Emperor had been reduced by the British is reflected in the following couplet

⁴⁷Such feelings find ample expression in the works and writings of the Muslim *élite*—as, for example, in those of Mirza Ghalib, Sir Saiyyad Ahmad, Zakauallah, *et al.*

⁴⁸Sardar Jafri, *Paighambrān-i Sakhun* (Bombay, 1970), p. 186.

⁴⁹Saiyyad Aijaz Husain, *Mukhtasar Tārīkh Adab Urdū* (Delhi, 1934), p. 21.

⁵⁰Sadiq, n. 1, p. 165.

⁵¹*Ibid.*

composed by him: "Whoever ascends this throne as Emperor is a prisoner of the *firangis* as long as he lives."⁵² Bahadur Shah spoke of the deceitful character of the British in the following couplet:

I know full well that your words are absolutely unreliable.
You may write a lakh of pledges under solemn oath, but it matters little.

He lamented the destruction of the City of Delhi, which he loved deeply and which he had designated *Chaman-i Dehli*, as follows :

Delhi is a ruined wasteland.
It was no city but a garden of hearty pleasures.
Chaman-i Dehli—this appellation is now obsolete.⁵³

The Mughals had long ceased to be patrons of poetry and scholarship. Hence a large number of poets from Delhi and the surrounding areas migrated to other centres of Muslim culture, especially to Lucknow.⁵⁴ They did so not only because Lucknow was closer to Delhi but because the State of Oudh was quite prosperous and the Nawabs, especially Asafuddaulah, were generous patrons.

Thanks to the competition between them Lucknow gave birth to many new styles in poetry. It also contributed to the sophistication and refinement of the Urdu language.⁵⁵ None of the poets, however, paid attention to the burning political and social questions before the Muslim community.

⁵²Mahdi Husain, *Bahadur Shah II and the War of 1857 in Delhi* (Delhi, 1958), pp. 335-41.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴The poets who flocked to the Oudh court included: Mirza Muhammad Rafi Sauda (1713-1781); Mir Ghulam Hasan (1736-1786); Saiyyad Muhammad Mir Soz (1720-1798); Shaikh Qalandar Bakhsh Jur'at (1748-1810); Mir Insha Allah Khan Insha (1757-1817); Mir Taqi Mir (1722-1810); and Shaikh Ghulam Hamdani Mus-hafi (1750-1824).

⁵⁵According to N.S. Gorekar, these poets made Urdu "a language of culture and refinement, one also capable of expressing delicate nuances of thought and feeling." See his book, *Glimpses of Urdu Literature* (Bombay, 1961), p. 17.

Shaikh Ghulam Hamdani Mus-hafi (1750-1824) of Amroha, a prolific composer of *ghazals* and *qasidās*, at first settled in Delhi, but soon migrated to Lucknow. There are ten collections of his poems extant today. It is believed that he even used to allow others for a consideration to publish his poems under their own authorship.⁵⁶ His poetry is, however, devoid of charm partly because of his experiments with too many styles but chiefly because of his lack of vision. Sadat Yar Khan Rangin (1757-1835) evolved a new mode of poetry named *rekhti* in which, for the first time in Urdu poetry, a language characteristic of women was used and in bad taste at that. Imam Bakhsh Nasikh (1752-1838), Khwaja Haidar Ali Atish (1767-1847), and many others contributed in one way or another to the variety of styles and modes in Urdu poetry. Lucknow accordingly evolved its own style, which is easily distinguished from that of Delhi on account of the impact of these poets in the realm of literature. However, almost all of them closed their eyes to the political and social changes taking place in the country. Gorekar hence rightly observes that Urdu literature in its early stages was "entirely poetical in purpose and was essentially subjective in character without the objective note".⁵⁷

Mir Babar Ali Anis (1802-1874) and Mirza Salamat Ali Dabir (1803-1875) distinguished themselves by their skill in composing *marsiya's*. It goes to the credit of these two poets that they succeeded in getting a place in Urdu poetry for this mode of expression. In the earlier years it used to be regarded as incompatible with good taste. It was then the special province of the poetasters.⁵⁸

As we have seen already, Mir, Momin, and Ghalib expressed what they observed and felt about the political and social issues of the community. In point of style they too belonged to the old order. And yet they expressed their views and feelings on the changes in the social and political spheres in a number of ways. Of course they never accepted any challenge; nor did they give a call for reform or revolution. Khwaja Altaf Husain Hali (1837-1914) of Panipat was the first poet to accept the transformation of the Indian scene as a challenge. He wrote poems with a

⁵⁶Sadiq, n. 1, p. 124.

⁵⁷Gorekar, n. 55, p. 17.

⁵⁸Sadiq, n. 1, pp. 145-6.

purpose. In fact he was the last-born child of the period of decadence. He was the first poet to give a clarion call to the Muslims and also to others through his *nazms*.

Hali was basically a religious man and a poet of the traditional type in his early days. He came to Delhi some time before 1857 and witnessed the Uprising with his own eyes. He was shocked at the humiliations that were inflicted upon the Muslims. He was associated with Mirza Ghalib and closely observed Sir Saiyyad's pragmatic approach to Muslim problems. He was well conversant with Sir Saiyyad's ideas, having met him and read his articles in *Tehzib-al Akhlāq*. All this must have broadened his outlook.⁵⁹ In 1874 he went to Lahore to take up a job there in a Government book depot. He came in contact there with two English officials named Colonel Holroyd and Major Fuller. Through these officials he learnt of the merits of the English language. He realized the weaknesses of the Urdu language and poetry. He gave up writing traditional poetry and started writing poems which had a purpose—such as “Barkhā Rut”, “Nishāt-i Ummīd”, and “Hubb-i Vatan”.⁶⁰ With the exception of Nazir Akbarabadi (1740-1830) no poet had ever attempted to write such thematic poems. Hali fairly surpassed his predecessor when, at the instance of Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan, he wrote a *musaddas* entitled *Madd-o Jazr-i Islām*.⁶¹ According to Ibadat Bareilvi, the reform movement of Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan immortalized *Musaddas-i Hāli*. The poem, in its turn, instilled great enthusiasm for the movement in the Muslims.⁶² Once Sir Saiyyad paid a glowing tribute to the genius that was Hali. He said that if the Almighty should ask him on the Day of Judgement what he had brought for Him from the world, he would say with pride that he had brought Him *Musaddas-i Hāli*.⁶³

Through *Musaddas-i Hāli* Sir Saiyyad achieved what he had failed to do through his oratory and journalism. While Sir Saiyyad appealed to the reason, Hali stirred the very conscience

⁵⁹Ibadat Bareilvi, *Jadīd Shāirī* (Aligarh, 1973), pp. 108-11.

⁶⁰The titles of the poems can be translated as “Season of Rains”, “Bliss of Hope”, and “Patriotism” respectively.

⁶¹Bareilvi, n. 59, p. 136.

⁶²*Ibid.*, p. 144.

⁶³*Ibid.*

of the Muslim. The poem presents a total picture of the rise and fall of the Muslims right from the inception of Islam; and at the same time it arouses great hope in the Muslims and gives strength to their determination.

Hali, a confirmed follower of Sir Saiyyad's, believed that the salvation of the Muslims lay in imbibing the virtues of Western culture and that the Muslims should avail themselves of the opportunity afforded by the establishment of British rule in India. He spoke highly of the benevolence, magnanimity, and impartiality of the British Government.⁶⁴ Were these sentiments real? Or did Hali merely simulate them for reasons of expediency? It is impossible to tell. However it may have been, it is clear that like Sir Saiyyad, Hali considered an amicable adjustment with the British unavoidable in the circumstances then obtaining.

In his poem "Hubb-i Vatan" Hali urged his fellow countrymen to give up their lethargy and love of ease and comfort, work hard, and learn English if at all they wished to make their country as beautiful and advanced as England itself.⁶⁵

According to Abdul Haq, Hali did not know English himself although he once vainly tried to learn it; yet he considered a mastery of the English language, along with a knowledge of the modern sciences, skills, and techniques, essential for achieving prosperity.⁶⁶ In his poem "Filsfā-i Taraqqī" he advised the Muslims to engage themselves in commerce and to travel extensively in order to progress.⁶⁷ Besides supporting Sir Saiyyad he founded a Muslim High School and a library at Panipat for the spread of education.⁶⁸

According to Hali, every period in history had its own characteristic values and traditions, but there were also times when the people were confronted by the challenge of new ideas and values. In his view such a time had arrived in the life of the people of his generation. Hali considered Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan a true friend and real leader of the Muslim community. He was in total agreement with Sir Saiyyad's diagnosis of the

⁶⁴Barelvi, n. 59, p. 172.

⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 158-60.

⁶⁶Abdul Haq, *Chand Ham Asr* (Aligarh, 1959), p. 172.

⁶⁷Barelvi, n. 59, p. 177.

⁶⁸Haq, n. 66, p. 172.

Muslim malaise.⁶⁹

Hali also showed concern for the deteriorating status of women in Muslim society. He pleaded the cause of women eloquently in two poems, "Munājāt-i Bevāh" and "Chup ki Dād". Woman, he lamented, had now become a mere object or means of man's sexual satisfaction. Hali wanted women to be restored to their respectability as mothers, sisters, and daughters. He stood for the education of women.⁷⁰

Like other Muslim leaders Hali wanted the Muslims to emerge once again as political masters, but since he knew that it was mere wishful thinking on his part, especially in view of the suppression of the Uprising of 1857, he found no harm in accepting the British as political masters. He advised the Muslims to live amicably with them and adjust themselves to the new culture. He considered the British to be the harbingers of the new light.⁷¹ Impressed by the modern views of Sir Saiyyad and Mirza Ghalib he wrote their biographies entitled *Hayāt-i Jāved* and *Yādgār-i Ghālib* respectively.

To sum up, with Hali the poets shed their traditional trappings and mediaeval styles and themes and started writing in a markedly modern idiom on themes of contemporary relevance. Hali inaugurated a new era in Urdu poetry and manifested an unprecedented social consciousness. The growth of such a consciousness had long been stunted on account of the indulgence of the poets in romanticism and experiments in the refinement of language. Lucknow had excelled in this romanticism and suffered for it; for, in spite of its long association with the British, it had failed to imbibe the new values and ideas of the West. In Hali, however, we find the maturing of a trend of consciousness among the poets which started in the first half of the nineteenth century and which was long overdue.

⁶⁹Barelvi, n. 59, p. 159.

⁷⁰Ibid., pp. 151-3.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 177.

Chapter 8

THE INTELLECTUALS AND MODERNIZATION

As representatives of the educated segment of society the intellectuals—teachers, scholars, writers—are generally sensitive to social problems. Where there is no intellectual regimentation and other similar political constraints they express their feelings and judgements freely and frankly. In the context of our discussion of liberal trends in the Muslim society of the first half of the nineteenth century Mirza Abu Talib (Landani) (1752-1806) was perhaps the first outspoken educated Muslim to respond favourably to British rule and Western culture. Like Mir he witnessed the decline of Muslim rule and the rise of the British. He also had the chance to serve a number of Muslim kingdoms, especially Oudh. He was, besides, indebted to the British for their generous help in his career. As a liaison officer between the Government of Oudh and the British for a long time he was able to gain considerable insight into the virtues and drawbacks of both the British and Indian systems of government. His observations on Western culture are all the more important on account of the opportunity he had of visiting London in those days and studying the virtues and weaknesses of Western peoples from close quarters.

Abu Talib was born in Lucknow. His father, Haji Muhammad (a Turk from Abbasabad), was Assistant to Muhammad Quli Khan, Deputy Governor of Oudh, having been appointed to that post by Nawab Vizier Abul Mansur Khan Safdar Jang. When Shujaudaulah succeeded to the throne in 1754, there arose a tussle between the Nawab Vizier and Muhammad Quli Khan. This affected the career of Haji Muhammad, who was dismissed from service. Haji Muhammad thereupon settled in Calcutta. After his death in 1768 in Murshidabad, Shujaudaulah gave generous financial assistance to his family and enabled his son, Mirza Abu Talib, to complete his education.¹

¹Mirza Abu Talib, *Māsir-i Tālībī-fī Bilād Afranj: The Travels of Mirza Abu*

Like his father before him Abu Talib also joined the service of the Nawab Vizier of Oudh in 1775. It was a period of great political turmoil and socio-economic upheaval. It can be said that the old system of society was breaking down without being replaced by a new one. The British had already established their hegemony in Oudh. The treaties signed after the last battle between the British and Shujauddaulah at Rajau were decisive, and the subsequent treaties only transformed an independent State into a British-protected State. The Nawab Viziers too became increasingly irresponsible, which resulted in further deterioration in the conditions of Oudh. It was in such a situation that Abu Talib was called upon to play a role in State affairs.

After the accession of Nawab Vizier Asafuddaulah in 1775, his Minister Mukhtiaruddaulah summoned Abu Talib from Calcutta and appointed him *Āmildār* of Etawah under Zainulabdin. After the assassination of Mukhtiaruddaulah, Haidar Beg Khan became Minister. The new Minister was unhappy with Zainulabdin. He dismissed him from his service and offered the post to Mirza Abu Talib. Mirza, however, declined the offer.

In the following year Mirza was offered the post of Assistant to Colonel Hanney, Collector of Gorakhpur. Lest the Nawab Vizier should misunderstand him he hesitated at first to take up service under the British. However, at the instance of Haidar Beg Khan, who had meanwhile developed a dislike for him and was seeking in his own sly fashion to ruin him, he finally accepted the offer. That was his first assignment under the British, and he served there for about three years.

In 1781 Warren Hastings ordered the then Resident of Oudh, Middleton, to use the experience of Mirza Abu Talib in crushing the rebel Raja Balabhadra Singh and in looking after the finances of the State, which had been badly depleted on account of the mismanagement of the Minister. Mirza again hesitated to accept the assignment for fear of antagonizing the Nawab Vizier. However, the British kept on pressing him to accept it, and eventually Mirza allowed himself to be persuaded to do so. He successfully

Talib Khan in Asia, Africa, and Europe, 1799-1803, Charles Stewart, trans. (London, 1810), pp. 9-11. The Persian original was edited and published by Mirza Abu Talib's son Mirza Husain Ali in 1812 from Calcutta.

crushed the Raja after several encounters and improved the finances of the State. He was not, however, duly rewarded for the services rendered by him. Instead, he was even deprived of his job after the departure of Warren Hastings. Thus Mirza, who had drifted away from the Nawab and the Minister by allying himself with the British, lost his position at the Oudh court for ever. A scholarship of six hundred rupees a year he used to receive was also discontinued.²

Mirza thereupon went back to Calcutta in 1788. There he met Lord Cornwallis and Sir John Shore and asked for employment. Both of them sympathized with him and assured him of their help but failed to do anything for him on account of their preoccupation with certain military expeditions and other administrative affairs.

With his pleasing manners and scholarly disposition Mirza was able to win the friendship of a number of non-official Europeans. It was during this period of acute financial trouble that one of his English friends, a doctor called Richardson, offered to take him along on a tour of England. Richardson also undertook to teach him English during the voyage and to provide for all his wants. This afforded Abu Talib an opportunity to get first-hand knowledge of the tremendous achievements of the civilization of the West. He sailed for Europe with Richardson in February 1799 and stayed in England until 1804. On his return he wrote about his experiences in England. He died in 1806.³

Mirza was much impressed by the glittering material achievements of the West. This, however, did not make him blind to the weaknesses of Western society.

Many things about Western culture which Mirza highlighted in his writings are valid even today. He liked the English system of education, the English legal system, the English Constitution, and some of the English customs and manners. He was of the view that the Muslims in India should embrace

²Ibid., pp. 11-15. See, also, Mirza Abu Talib, *Tafzih-al Ghāflin*, Abid Raza Bedar, ed. (Rampur, n.d.), pp. 10-12. See, also, *Tārīkh-i Asafī*, Sarwat Ali, trans. (Delhi, 1968), pp. 63 and 86.

³Abu Talib, n. 1, pp. 16-18; idem, *Tārīkh-i Asafī*, n. 2, pp. 9-10; and *Tafzih-al Ghāflin*, n. 2, p. 15. See, also, Humayun Kabir, *Mirza Abu Talib: The Russell Lectures* (Patna), 16 April 1961, p. 6.

such of the Western values as were healthy and morally sound.

Mirza spoke very highly of the courtesy and hospitality which he received in England during his stay there. He was presented to the King and the Queen. Warren Hastings treated him very kindly and even offered him financial help. Of course Mirza politely declined it.

Mirza was impressed especially by the freedom given to women in matters of employment. The provision for suitable employment, he observed, "is the best mode of keeping them [i.e. women] out of the way of temptation and their minds from wandering after improper desire". He described how, after performing their usual domestic duties, the women took care of the shops, and by their grace and charm, attracted a good deal of custom. He also praised their manners and morals. He admired the generally high level of education and culture among the shopkeepers and traders of London. He observed that they did not differ in their dress and manners from the nobles. They were very courteous and polite to every customer, rich or poor.

As for the system of education in England, what impressed him most was that it inculcated a sense of honour upon young boys and taught them to face hardships courageously. The boys were sent to a public school at a very early age where they were frequently called upon to compete with their seniors not only in studies but also in physical feats. They thus spent five or six years developing character, untainted by dishonour and unblemished by cowardice. Similarly the education imparted to the girls tended to render them accomplished. The girls were instructed to sing, to dance, to play on musical instruments, and to be cheerful and agreeable in company. Children of both sexes were taught to respect their parents, brothers, sisters, and other near relations.⁴

Mirza admired the working of the English Parliament and the democratic and liberal character of the English Constitution and the people. He observed: "Liberty in England is considered

⁴Abu Talib, n. 1, pp. 161, 177, 179, 261-4, and 269-71. See, also, Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan* (London, 1967), p. 8. According to Aziz Ahmad, Abu Talib Khan was perhaps the first modern Muslim to pay fearless tribute to monogamy. Single marriages as among the Christians could be more conducive to domestic peace.

an idol or tutelary deity.”⁵ He was also impressed by the material achievements of the English people, which, he noted, were largely the outcome of scientific progress. He noticed the application of scientific techniques in the field of industry. He saw how the use of machinery had led to increased production and reduction in the prices of the various commodities. He was surprised to find machines being used even for grinding corn and spinning yarn. We may remember that Mirza went to England at a time when the Industrial Revolution had started. The use of machines in every field of life would definitely have astonished any Indian at that time. Mirza also observed that the English carried their passion for machines so far as to equip even their kitchens with all manner of gadgets.⁶

Mirza rightly concluded that the greatest perfection to which the English had brought their navy was undoubtedly the main cause of their prosperity.⁷ He liked their clubs and associations where all talented people assembled daily. These institutions provided an opportunity to the artists to express themselves. At the same time they served as the main centres of entertainment. Mirza was charmed by the exquisite wine provided in the clubs and the graceful women who lent life to conversation. He also liked their music and dances.⁸ He also admired the English passion for collecting things and for preserving them in well-managed museums. He was especially astonished to see the wonderful collections in the London Museum.⁹

Indeed, so enamoured Mirza became of Western culture that he composed a long poem in Persian, an ode to London, in glorification of it. If one considers seriously the romantic outbursts of the poet and the blasphemous sentiments celebrated in that poem, one might well wonder whether he had at this time ceased to be a Muslim.¹⁰

⁵Abu Talib, n. 1, p. 273.

⁶Kabir, n. 3, p. 10.

⁷Abu Talib, n. 1, pp. 225 and 231. See, also, Alfred Lyall, *The Rise and Expansion of British Dominion in India* (Delhi, reprinted 1971), pp. xxviii, xxix, and 86. Lyall in his book substantiates the theory enunciated by T.A. Mahan in his book *Influence of Sea Power on the History of Europe, 1660-1783*, viz that “whoever rules the waves, rules the world”.

⁸Abu Talib, n. 1, p. 208.

⁹Ibid., p. 194.

¹⁰Ibid., p 179. See, also, Appendix V of the present work for an English translation of his “ode to London.

Abu Talib, however, was by no means blind to the weaknesses of English society. He compared the villages of Ireland with the villages of India, and declared that the Irish peasants were even poorer than their counterparts in India. Many of them could not afford even shoes in the cold weather.¹¹

Another fact which Mirza noted was the extent of economic disparity in England. He remarked that equality in England was more preached than practised as the difference between the rich and the poor was much greater there than it was in India. He was surprised to see a large number of beggars in England.¹² This economic disparity was the obvious result of the developing concept of individualism and *laissez-faire* under industrial conditions. Of course Mirza was not slow to appreciate the work done by the parishes to solve the problem of beggary.¹³

Mirza found the average Englishman absolutely irreligious and feverishly devoted to worldly pursuits. The English lived a life of luxury. Although he himself lived in much luxury Mirza did not consider it a sign of culture. He also did not like the utter disregard of the English for the customs of other nations. Indeed in this respect he found them wanting in sophistication.¹⁴

A study of his life and career would show that Mirza was deeply concerned about the social and political malaise of Oudh. According to him, the reasons for the malaise were the top-heaviness of the administration, the economic wastage resulting from ill-conceived, unimaginatively planned, and clumsily executed public measures, and, above all, the glaring economic disparity between the rulers and the ruled.¹⁵ He held the British

¹¹Kabir, n. 3, pp. 7-8.

¹²Abu Talib, n. 1, pp. 215-16; and Kabir, n. 3, p. 8. Humayun Kabir draws our attention to a significant fact, viz that even before Karl Marx, it was Mirza Abu Talib who showed his deep concern about the deplorable conditions of the poor people under the rulers of Oudh and also in England, especially in Ireland. Abu Talib appears to have been critical of the newly emerging structure of society in England and in India based on the principle of *laissez-faire* and exploitation of the poor by the rich. Quoted in *Tārīkh-i Āsafī*, n. 2, p. 19.

¹³Abu Talib, n. 1, pp. 215-16; and Ahmad, n. 4, p. 8.

¹⁴A. Yusuf Ali, "Muslim Culture and Religious Thought", L.S.S. O'Malley, ed., *Modern India and the West* (London, 1941), p. 392. See, also, Kabir, n. 3, p. 8.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 19-21.

responsible, at least partly, for the anarchy in Oudh. The whole administration had come to a standstill owing to the negligence of the Nawab Vizier. Conditions deteriorated in the country owing to the enormous economic cleavage which separated the rulers from the ruled. Mirza was clear that it was due to the British alliance system that the Nawab Vizier had grown cruelly careless of the administration. He regretted that there was no open rebellion against the system, but observed that this was due to the tendency of the people of India to reconcile themselves to their lot in life. He believed that a catastrophe could not be averted unless things changed radically and a complete transformation of the social structure came about. He suggested that first of all the Ministers should be properly disciplined and their expenses limited. An admirer of British discipline, he recommended that British officers should be appointed to superintend the troops and see that the men were paid regularly every month. He also suggested that the Government should at once expel from the country all those who violated rules—soldiers, officers, and others—so that the rest might peacefully pursue their respective avocations. He proposed the dismissal of the old collectors, their subordinates, and the military officers from the Oudh Government, for they were puffed up with pride and were given to prodigality and were unable to discriminate between benefactors and mischief-makers. In fact, he became so disgusted with the rule of the Nawab Vizier that he was at one stage prepared even to tolerate the intervention of the British. He, however, preferred direct British control over the States rather than partial control through Subsidiary Alliances. Although he admired the English judicial system, he felt that it was too complicated and too expensive and entailed too much delay to suit the ignorant masses of India. The introduction of that system in all its complexity had led to much serious abuse in India. The hardships and inconveniences which witnesses suffered when summoned to Calcutta were so great that people used to avoid tendering evidence in any case as far as possible. Civil cases often dragged on for twenty years on end to the ruin of both the parties. And yet Mirza regarded it as an improvement upon the Indian system because in the English system the rule of law was the deciding factor, whereas in the Indian system there was greater room for the *brāhmanas* and the *qādīs* to bring their prejudices or partisanship into play in for-

mulating their judgements. Besides, the English always saw to it that those constituting the bench were all men of the highest honour and probity and above temptation.¹⁶

It is true that Mirza did not launch any reform movement in India in spite of his great concern for the welfare of his people. And yet there is no doubt that he was one of the first few to set the ball rolling in that direction. As to the reasons for his inability to launch a reform movement, the time was not ripe. Also he was so engrossed in his personal problems, especially with regard to his employment, that he was in no position to volunteer himself for a country-wide movement. He sincerely wanted to improve the conditions of Oudh. He even strove to that end. However, the discord at the Oudh court stood in his way. It also needs to be noted that the glory of Western culture never dulled his love for his own country and countrymen. He devoutly longed for a complete transformation of his country on new lines.

Mirza was probably sure, in his last days, that the British would become the sole masters of the country. He, therefore, proposed to found a public academy in London to impart instruction in Arabic, Hindustani, and Persian to those Englishmen who were planning to go out to serve in India.¹⁷

Abdur Rahim Dahri (1785-1850), came of a family of weavers of Gorakhpur. His father, whose name was Musahib Ali Khan, took keen interest in his education and was not in favour of his taking up the family profession. Abdur Rahim was a keen seeker after knowledge. Soon after completing his traditional education he turned to the secular and rational disciplines. Besides mastering Arabic and Persian, he learnt Pushtu and Turkish. He also learnt two European languages—English and Latin. He acquired such a mastery in English that towards the end of his career he was appointed English Master at the Fort William College.¹⁸

Being endowed with a philosophical bent of mind, Abdur Rahim underwent many mental and spiritual experiences in his

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 12-13 and 19-22.

¹⁷Abu Talib, n. 1, p. 163.

¹⁸Abdur Rahman Parvaz Islahi, "Abdur Rahim Dahri ki Khud Navisht Svānih Umri", *Jamia* (New Delhi), April 1975, pp. 186-8. See, also Maulana Abdul Razzaq Malihabadi, *Azād ki Kahāni Khud Azād ki Zubāni* (Delhi, 1958), p. 389.

life. Eventually, with great moral courage, he chose a path which was so revolutionary for a man of his years that fellow Muslims started calling him by the nickname of Dahri. (The nickname means "the worldly-minded one".) He emphasized the need for the Muslims to acquire the new learning from the West.

Abdur Rahim was an orthodox Sunni and was at first much attracted to mysticism. When he reached Lucknow in 1813 to receive further education, he came under the spell of the colourful society of Lucknow. This, together with the influence of certain poets and influential followers of the Shia sect, weakened his orthodoxy. He also began to compose poems in Persian.¹⁹

In the early years of the nineteenth century Abdur Rahim visited Delhi along with one of his teachers in search of knowledge. Delhi had become a great centre of Muslim culture. It had become especially famous because of the reformatory activities of Shah Waliullah's family. Abdur Rahim joined the famous school of Shah Abdul Aziz, where he received training and education in the religious disciplines. This removed many of his misgivings but only temporarily. In due course he realized that each group denounced the other and sought to hide its own defects. His study of Persian literature had acquainted him with the mystic heights attained by the *sūfīs* and the love of justice and generosity of the kings of Iran. It was still fresh in his mind. The diametrically opposite trends of knowledge and the different religious philosophies created further confusion in his mind. He, however, kept up his quest of truth. Being a keen seeker after knowledge, he availed himself of an opportunity to visit Afghanistan with Frazier. There he studied many rare books of that country on various subjects for about four months.²⁰ He returned to Delhi after about a year.

Within three months of his return Abdur Rahim sought permission from Frazier to go to Calcutta. He appears to have found Calcutta to be a place after his own heart. He liked the freedom of speech obtaining in Calcutta and the liberal and congenial atmosphere of the city. He must have compared for himself the new, emerging life in Calcutta with the feudal, decadent life in Delhi and Lucknow. He saw the contribution of British rule and

¹⁹Islahi, n. 18, pp. 189-90; and Malihabadi, n. 18, p. 389.

²⁰Islahi, n. 18, p. 191.

Western culture to the change in the complexion of Calcutta and its society. (It may be recalled that Mirza Ghalib too had felt similarly during his stay in Calcutta). He liked the freedom with which people moved about and worked and the sense of protection they enjoyed.

The free atmosphere in Calcutta, however, had at first a most undesirable effect on Abdur Rahim. He shed all his inhibitions, gave himself over to drinking, and forgot himself in the seductive atmosphere of the music and dance parties that he attended in the city. He now became more sceptical and more uncertain as to the meaning of life, the relation of body and soul, the reality of God, and the comparative merits of the various religious philosophies. Neither the books he read nor the spiritual leaders he met provided him with satisfactory answers to his questions. The elaborate work *Hikmat-al Shirāq* by Shahabuddin Suhrawardy appeared to him to be too ambivalent for his purposes. He continued to ponder over the questions throughout his life. At last he reached the conclusion that human life was a developing process and that the traits of character of each man underwent change from birth to death. This at last removed the doubt that had been created in his mind by the different philosophies and religious disciplines.²¹

In the company of Dr Martin, a great European scholar who was a master of the Persian language, Abdur Rahim learnt the English language. He also familiarized himself with a number of modern subjects which were then becoming very popular—as, for example, geometry. He was well versed in English and spoke that language as well as any Englishman.²² His knowledge of English gave him access to the great English writers, philosophers, and poets, who left an indelible imprint on his mind. He translated *A History of India* by John Marsh Clarke into the Persian language at the instance of Prince Azam Shah, son of Tipu Sultan. He wrote a booklet entitled *Jarr-i Saqail* on the laws and principles of modern mechanics.²³ He spent the last days of his life teaching English at the Fort William College. Consequently his large collection of Arabic and Persian books got scattered.

²¹Ibid., pp. 191-3.

²²Malihabadi, n. 18, p. 389; and Islahi, n. 18, pp. 191-3.

²³Malihabadi, n. 18, p. 390.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad observes that even before Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan there were many Muslims, Abdur Rahim Dahri being the most prominent, to advocate the learning of the modern sciences and the English language. Abdur Rahim also wrote a booklet in support of the view that the Muslims should take kindly to the new learning.²⁴

Abdur Rahim believed that a revolution had come about in the field of knowledge. The only way to progress, according to him, was to accept the new learning instead of adhering exclusively to the traditional learning. Significantly this was the time when T.B. Macaulay initiated a number of liberal moves in the direction of reorganizing the system of education in India on Western lines.

The most remarkable thing about Abdur Rahim was, however, that he was the Muslim counterpart of Raja Ram Mohan Roy. In every respect what he said and did bore striking similarity to what Ram Mohan Roy said and did. Incidentally they both lived in Calcutta and advocated the same ideas. Like Roy, Abdur Rahim also addressed a pamphlet to Lord Hastings in which he entreated the Governor-General to introduce modern education through the medium of the English language. He believed that the purpose of disseminating new knowledge could not be served by translations as European knowledge had not yet fully realized its promise and was still evolving, albeit at an ever-accelerating pace. Besides seeking to rejuvenate Muslim society through new education, Abdur Rahim wanted to inculcate a spirit of heroism upon the Muslims, especially on the political plane, on the model of Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan. This is evident from the keen interest he took in glorifying the Muslim dynasty of Mysore in his writings. He composed a *mathnavi* in Persian entitled "Saulat-i Zaigham" which dealt with Tipu Sultan's heroic deeds and his long-drawn struggle against the British. The title of the *mathnavi* was perhaps suggested by Dalhousie's description of Tipu Sultan as the Tiger of Mysore. In another historical writing Abdur Rahim dealt in detail with the events of Haidar Ali's life and career.²⁵

²⁴Ibid., p. 391. The booklet was entitled *Arzdāshat dar Bāb-i Zarūrat Tarvij-i Zabān-i Angrezī-o Ulūm Firang* ("An Appeal for the Study and Dissemination of the English Language and Western Learning").

²⁵Ibid., pp. 391-3.

It was a really remarkable transformation for a man who began with lessons in orthodoxy at the feet of Shah Abdul Aziz thus to turn ultimately away from orthodoxy and openly to champion the cause of modernization of Muslim life.

An interesting anecdote is current in history in this connexion. While on a visit to Calcutta *en route* to Madras, Saiyyad Ahmad Bareilvi and Maulana Ismail sought for a meeting with Abdur Rahim Dahri to learn the truth of the stories about his irreligious ways. According to Saiyyad Jafar, Abdur Rahim avoided the meeting.²⁶

However, the life of Abdur Rahim proves that a large number of Muslims were alert enough at the time to the changing situation. It also shows that they had realized the value of Western education even before Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan, i.e. even in the first half of the nineteenth century. Like Raja Ram Mohan Roy they too advocated the introduction of Western education for Muslims but failed to assert themselves in view of the strong hold of the orthodox on the Muslim mind.

Lutfullah (1802-54) was another important teacher and scholar of the first half of the nineteenth century notable for his liberal attitude towards British rule although he seems to have been totally ignored by modern historians. His writings afford interesting and instructive insights into the ways a perceptive mind reacted to a complex phenomenon like the downfall of the once-mighty Mughal Empire and the transformation of a trading corporation into a ruling Power. With the advantage of hindsight we may well say that some of the reactions of Lutfullah were rather naive, but the writing of history is basically an experience in understanding a particular period and in judging people of that particular period on the basis of the knowledge subsequently accumulated.

Lutfullah was one of the few members of the Muslim *élite* to react favourably to British rule. He learnt English and was perhaps the first Muslim to write his autobiography in English. The English Press hailed the work as a piece of literature and as a storehouse of information. His observations in the work on British rule and Western culture are especially worthy of note.

²⁶Ibid., p. 390.

Son of Shaikh Mohammad Ikram, Lutfullah was born at Daranagar in Malwa on 4 November 1802. His father was a descendant of Shah Kamaluddin, a saint who was also the moral preceptor of Sultan Mahmud Khilji of Malwa (r. 1435-69). Lutfullah's ancestors received a *jāgir* in Malwa from Sultan Mahmud Khilji in recognition of their services. After the death of Aurangzeb the Marathas conquered Malwa (1723) and confiscated the *jāgir* of Lutfullah's father, leaving only two acres of land for his bare subsistence.²⁷ Owing to financial stringency Lutfullah could not receive advanced education in accordance with the family tradition. However, he acquired much proficiency at home in the Arabic and Persian languages and in logic. Domestic exigencies forced him to take up service at an early age. At the same time, he worked hard to complete his education. He studied law under the Chief Law Officer, Shaikh Tajuddin. He also studied medicine under the well-known physician, Mir Isa. Later he learnt English too and acquired proficiency in that language.²⁸

The eighteenth century saw the phenomenal success of the British in replacing the decadent Mughals, who had fallen on evil days owing to the incompetence of the rulers and the unending discord among the nobles. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the British had extended their sway practically over the whole of India. An increasingly large number of British officers started coming out to serve in India, and they needed to be trained in the use of the various indigenous languages for administrative purposes. This opened up new avenues for literary men like Lutfullah, and they readily availed themselves of the opportunity which thus came their way. Lutfullah served in

²⁷Lutfullah, *The Autobiography of Lutfullah*, Edward B. Eastwick, ed. (London, 1857), pp. 1-2. Lutfullah sent the MS. of his autobiography to Eastwick in 1854. After that he is not mentioned anywhere. This means that he lived at least up to 1854. See, also, John Briggs, *The Rise of the Mohammedan Power in India* (Calcutta, 1910), vol. 4, pp. 195-6. "Sultan Mahmud of Malwa provided great patronage to learned men, so that the philosophers and Maulanas in Malwa bore a fair comparison with those of Shiraz and Samarkhand." R.V. Nadkarni, *The Rise and Fall of the Maratha Empire* (Bombay, 1966), pp. 175-6. "Baji Rao I outlined the policy of war and expansion, attacked the capital Ujjain (Malwa) in 1723, received chauth, and left Udaiji Shinde at Ujjain as his deputy."

²⁸Lutfullah, n. 27, p. 176.

various literary and political positions under the British and native rulers. It was, however, as a teacher that Lutfullah spent the best part of his life. He taught languages like Arabic, Hindustani, Marathi, and Persian to British officers.

Lutfullah started his career as a Persian teacher to a Bheel agent, Lieutenant B. MacMahon, at Nalcha in 1820-21. Within less than four-and-a-half months, however, MacMahon contracted jungle fever, a severe variety of malarial fever occurring in the tropical regions, and left for Bombay. Lutfullah's services were then transferred to one Lieutenant Hart. Very soon the relationship turned into a personal friendship. Lutfullah gained the full confidence of Hart; so much so that the latter entrusted to him the charge of his domestic affairs. Lutfullah proved his loyalty by nursing Lieutenant Hart day and night during a serious illness. Unfortunately, however, this very illness became the cause of a break between the two. The illness rendered the Lieutenant bad-tempered; Lutfullah, too sensitive to accept the rudenesses philosophically, made up his mind to leave. The final parting of the ways came in 1821-22. Lutfullah felt so disgusted by this development that he decided to leave for Mecca. However, two of his friends, Munshi Abha Miyan of Anjar and Mohammad Saiyyad Khan of Rampur, strongly dissuaded him from doing so. Abha Miyan got him appointed again as a teacher to an officer called Lieutenant M. Spencer at the Khaira military camp. He was assigned here, among other things, the job of copying a history of Bombay in Persian for Captain Bagnold of the 6th Regiment. He gave up this job after some time for personal reasons. In 1822 he joined the Maratha court of Prince Ram Chandra Rao as a Persian scholar. Very soon he resigned from this service also. In 1823 he rejoined the 6th Regiment, then stationed at Satara. There he taught six British scholars. He served there till about 1830. By now he had established a great reputation as a teacher.

In 1833 Lutfullah set up medical practice at home and acquired much proficiency and a fair reputation in this profession too. However, as his income from this profession was inadequate to meet his family obligations, he gave up his practice and returned to his old profession, viz teaching. In 1834 he became the preceptor of one Lieutenant H. Boye at Ahmedabad. He was sufficiently rewarded for his services here. When Boye left

for Bombay,²⁹ he joined Nawab Afzaluddin Khan of Surat as his personal secretary. The Nawab assigned him the task of translating Goldsmith's *Natural History* into Persian.³⁰ The Nawab was only a pensioner of the British Government and was thoroughly incompetent. Also his court was a hotbed of conspiracies. Lutfullah refused to work against his conscience by joining any conspiracy and resigned his position after serving for a period of seven months and ten days.³¹

Lutfullah then became the teacher of a keen scholar named W.J. Eastwick of the 12th Regiment, Bombay. Eastwick was a gentleman of great personal charm. Lutfullah was so happy with him that he even declined highly attractive offers of appointment elsewhere in order to continue his association with him. In 1840 Eastwick left for England. Lutfullah went to see him off. He burst into tears as he bade him farewell. Eastwick gave him many presents and certificates. He also wrote a letter to an officer named Pelly recommending his case for a suitable job. Pelly appointed him as a clerk and as a teacher to his daughter. Lutfullah was content enough to serve him. However, after Pelly's departure things became unbearable; for Langford, Pelly's successor, was insufferably arrogant. Lutfullah, ever self-respecting, resigned from the service.³²

A study of the life and career of Lutfullah throws sufficient light on his relations with the British. Throughout his life he held literary jobs either in his official capacity or privately. Mostly he served as a private teacher to many British scholars. Although he also served under Indian rulers, it was under the British that he prospered. He developed personal friendships with many Europeans. The British held him in high esteem. Lutfullah too was proud of having been a teacher to great British scholars like Eastwick. At the same time, on account of his free and independent nature, he was never able to get on with those British officers who were arrogant and rude to him.

²⁹Ibid., pp. 18, 85, 146-8, 174-5, 199-201, and 247-8; and M. Mujib, *Indian Muslims* (London, 1967), p. 499.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Lutfullah, n. 27, pp. 248-60.

³²Ibid., pp. 231, 346-7, and 357-62.

According to Lutfullah, service under the British Government was the best means for a career and material prosperity during his time. Although he was made to work under different masters every now and then, yet he preferred to serve under the British Government as it assured him of material prosperity.³³ Truly speaking, the Indian States were no longer autonomous. The Indian rulers were weak and incompetent and without an adequate source of income. On the other hand the British were masters of the country and controlled its resources.

Lutfullah believed that the incompetence of the Indian rulers and discord among the nobles were responsible for the downfall of the Mughal Empire. On the other hand he applauded the British for their technical achievements and political and military tactics which helped eliminate one by one all their European and Indian rivals from the Indian scene. Lutfullah was thus one of the few Muslims of his time to admire frankly the virtues of British rule. He observed that the people of India generally liked British rule and considered it a gift. They had great faith in the British sense of justice, and felt that the Indian rulers had become thoroughly weak and corrupt and incapable of performing the arduous tasks of government.³⁴

In his early life Lutfullah had formed certain prejudices against the Christians. He thought that the British had turned their back on the fundamental tenets of Christianity. When, however, he came in close contact with them and developed friendly relations with them, his prejudices gave way. He found the British polite, hospitable, and just. For instance, Ochterlony accorded to him royal treatment and gave him many presents at his very first meeting with him, and a number of English scholars and officers made him many unexpected gestures of kindness and of love. This obliged him to change his opinion of the British character.³⁵

Lutfullah had heard of the greatness of Mountstuart Elphinstone, who was Governor of Bombay. When he got an opportunity to meet him at a Maratha marriage at Satara, he found that Elphinstone was much greater than he had imagined him to be. Elphinstone was a charming man with amiable manners

³³Lutfullah, n. 27, p. 362.

³⁴Ibid., p. 35.

³⁵Ibid., pp. 35-41.

and a versatile character. Lutfullah felt that the Raja of Satara was no better than a child in comparison with the Governor. As they were talking with each other, Elphinstone said to the Raja: "I speak Hindustani better than Your Highness." It was indeed a fact, though conveyed with wry humour.³⁶

Lutfullah came by an opportunity to visit England when Mir Jafar Ali Khan, son-in-law and successor to Nawab Afzaluddin Khan of Surat, requested him in 1844 to join a delegation which was proceeding to London to secure his succession. Although the delegation failed eventually to achieve its objective, Lutfullah availed himself of the chance to observe Western culture and civilization from close quarters. He was impressed by the civility, refinement, and culture of the English people. Along with the other members of the delegation he went to pay his respects to the Queen and the Prince Consort. The Royal couple politely greeted them all. During a visit to the British Museum the members of the delegation met the Prince Consort and exchanged views with him. The Prince asked the usual questions. "How do you like this country? And what do you admire most in England?" Lutfullah at once responded by saying that they had liked it very much and that they were especially impressed by the courtesy of those occupying high rank and station.³⁷

This politeness and civility the members of the delegation encountered everywhere, especially among men of high rank. Once Lutfullah was taken to meet a few nobles who treated him like a brother. Lutfullah observes: "The fact is that in England you will find those who are highest in rank are the politest in society." He also visited the headquarters of the English East India Company. With a patriotic fervour he recalls: "It is a place where the destiny of my sweet native land lies in the hands of twenty-four men, called the Honourable Directors of the Honourable East India Company, who are the principal movers of the strings of the machine of the Government of India." There, too, they were received with great politeness and courtesy by Lord Ripon, the President of the Board of Control.³⁸

Lutfullah admired many other characteristics of the English people—such as their efficiency, their capacity for hard work,

³⁶Ibid., p. 227.

³⁷Ibid., pp. 371, 403-4, and 413-21; and Mujib, n. 29, p. 499.

³⁸Lutfullah, n. 27, pp. 413-15, 418, and 421; and Mujib, n. 29, p. 500.

their sense of cleanliness, and their punctuality and regularity. He also praised them for their technical expertise which enabled them to construct railways, enormous bridges, etc. which had undoubtedly made life comfortable for the people. These characteristics raised the English above all the other nations of the world.

Lutfullah also noted the English fondness for art and architecture. He was much impressed by St Paul's Cathedral, an edifice which, in his opinion, had no equal in the world. He was pleased to see the lofty and beautiful Westminster Abbey, built in the ancient Gothic style. He, however, thought that there were too many idols there and in the other houses of worship and that they distracted the mind and made one-pointed devotion to God difficult.

Lutfullah characterized the English people as entirely submissive to the law and obedient to the commands of their superiors. Their sense of patriotism was greater than that of any other nation in the world. They were also very courteous to their women and gave them full freedom of movement. Lutfullah thought that this freedom was responsible for much avoidable mischief. He was shocked to see scantily clad beautiful young ladies singing and dancing in clubs with men old enough to be their fathers or uncles. He also did not like women without the *pardāh* mixing with men other than their husbands. In his opinion this excessive freedom was father to immorality. According to him, eighty thousand women had been registered in the black records as being immorally victimized and deserted. He, therefore, preferred the Muslim system of seclusion of women rather than the English system of unlimited freedom for women. Muslim women, being in seclusion and busy most of the time in their domestic work, had little chance of going astray. Lutfullah also criticized the excessive attachment of the British to worldly pursuits and their pride of race and technical achievement.³⁹

What emerges from the foregoing discussion is in the nature of a minor paradox. None the less it is a paradox which characterizes most human reactions when they are viewed as a complex whole. Lutfullah showed remarkable discernment in comparing the merits and weaknesses of the British with those of his own people. Of course he lavished praise on the alien rulers. It is diffi-

³⁹Lutfullah, n. 27, pp. 338-40, 407-8, and 433; and Mujib, n. 29, p. 499.

cult to tell how far this was due to the sense of awe which he entertained for the people of that small, far-off country who had brought about an unprecedented political transformation on the Indian subcontinent, and how far it flowed from a feeling of hopelessness about the capacity of his own society to regenerate itself. In any case the praise Lutfullah accorded to the British had both a sociological and a psychological justification. We also find that he continued to uphold some of the traditional norms and values of his own society. Take, for instance, his observations on the freedom of movement enjoyed by the women of England and his justification of the seclusion of women in India. Qualitatively different from, but psychologically integrated into, this dimension of his reaction was the stirring patriotism which he manifested during his visit to India House. It is thus clear that Muslim reactions to British rule were not always hostile. It needs also to be emphasized that even the most favourable Indian response to British rule contained much criticism of the British and defence of the Indians, partial as the criticism and the defence were.

With the establishment of the Delhi College, Delhi, in 1825 there began a new era in the life of the Muslims of Delhi. It was the first successful attempt to impart Oriental and Occidental education under one roof through the medium of the Urdu language. The teaching of English began in 1827. Besides the traditional disciplines, a number of new subjects were taught, and these included algebra, arithmetic, geometry, trigonometry, political economy, moral philosophy, history, mechanics, grammar, geography, and science. The total student strength of the College in 1854 was 333. Of these, as many as 112 were Muslim students. Half of them also learnt English. The experiment was suspended in 1857 during the Uprising and was not resumed till 1864. In 1877 the College was transferred to Lahore. And yet the spirit and atmosphere fostered in the years before 1857 survived all the vicissitudes. The institution did pioneering work and provided a model and an example for the subsequent generations. Indeed it was the prototype of the Osmania University and the Jamia Millia Islamia. On the other hand it was a slap in the face for those who advocated the imparting of Western education through the medium of English rather than the vernacular. Though it was eventually closed down, it scored over the Aligarh Muslim University and other institutions in the sense that without turning its back

on the teaching of the Western sciences it managed to retain its traditional character. And it was a feat achieved through hard work done in a religious spirit and through sacrifice.⁴⁰

The products of this College cast off their ambivalence towards British rule and Western culture. They showed their interest fearlessly in Western knowledge. The Delhi College was an experiment in providing Muslims Western education along with Oriental education. Thus, even before the establishment of the Aligarh College by Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan for organizing education for Muslims on an all-India level, it pioneered the movement for the new knowledge in an atmosphere of cordial relations between Muslim students and the British. With its establishment the Muslim resistance and opposition to Western education was broken. The English staff (Felix Boutros, Sprenger, Kargil, Taylor, *et al.*) took great pains to impart Western learning. The Indian students in their turn showed great admiration and respect for their teachers and looked upon them as the fountain-head of the new knowledge. A number of well-known Muslim writers and reformers of the nineteenth century—Zakaullah, Muhammad Husain Azad, and Nazir Ahmad Nazir—belonged to this new generation. During the Uprising of 1857 they observed complete neutrality. Later they worked hard to reform and modernize Muslim society through their writings.⁴¹

Zakaullah (1832-1910) was a son of Sanaullah's. Sanaullah had served as a teacher to the Mughal Imperial family. Zakaullah obtained admission into the Delhi College in 1844 in the face of great opposition; for, in those days, whosoever received Western education used to be considered an infidel. Neither Zakaullah nor his father, however, found anything wrong in seeking knowledge as the Prophet had himself called upon his followers to "get knowledge even if it were to be found as far as China".

After completing his education Zakaullah served as a teacher, first at the Delhi College and subsequently at the Agra College, till 1855. Thereafter, he became a Deputy Inspector of Schools.

⁴⁰Abdul Haq, *Marhūm Dehlī Kālej* (Delhi, 1945), pp. 1-2, 6-15, 52, 60-62, 76-77, 146-9, and 171-3.

⁴¹C.F. Andrews, *Zakaullah of Delhi* (London, 1929), pp. 37-38; Mohammad Sadiq, *A History of Urdu Literature* (London, 1964), p. 235; and Hamid Hasan Qadri, *Dāstān-i Tārīkh-i Urdū* (Agra, 1966), edn 3, p. 185. The book was first published in 1938.

In 1866 he was appointed as the Headmaster of the Normal School, Delhi. Three years later, in 1869, he joined the Muir Central College, Allahabad, as Professor.⁴²

The Uprising of 1857 came as a terrible shock to the young students of the Delhi College, who had imbibed the new learning under the guidance of their English teachers. It shattered in one blow all their cherished hopes and desires. Their own Principal, F. Taylor, whom they deeply loved and respected, was killed. They did not know what to do. To go against their countrymen who had revolted seemed to them improper; and to support them was almost impossible. Not a single student took the latter course. Zakaullah and his whole family kept themselves aloof during those days. Zakaullah busied himself in his studies and kept out of public affairs. After the suppression of the Uprising his family was brought to the presence of Captain Wilson. They were asked to explain their antecedents. When it was shown to Wilson's full satisfaction that they were pious and peace-loving citizens, much kindness was shown to them. Not only were they released but also escorted to a place of safety. Zakaullah felt that he owed his life to the kindness of Captain Wilson.

The wounds caused by the ravages of the Uprising and the reprisals that followed did not trouble Zakaullah long. His spirit revived as the years went by. He was able, at least, to take up with a free conscience and without misgiving and with renewed hope, the task of inculcating the new learning. He also gained a fresh loyalty in his personal life, to Queen Victoria, whom he idealized in a historical book called *Viktoriyā-nāmāh*. He also wrote a biography of Lord Curzon.⁴³

Zakaullah held that there was a place for the British in India in the same way that there was a place for the Muslims or a place for the Hindus. Every community had to fulfil its destiny in India. And India was large enough and great enough to hold the Hindus, the Muslims, and the Christians all together. Zakaullah believed that British rule would end in the course of time and that the British would not always be in the position of rulers. He also believed that the work that was being done by the British administrators, statesmen, and educationists in

⁴²Andrews, n. 41, pp. 47, 59, 67, and 69; and Qadri, n. 41, pp. 446-7.

⁴³Andrews, n. 41, pp. 51, 57-58, and 75; and Qadri, n. 41, p. 451.

India had an enduring quality about it and that its impact would not end with British rule. As the Muslims had become a part of India, the Christians (i.e. the British) too would, in the course of time, become a part of India. He warned the British that if ever they ceased to be humble before the Lord, their fall would be the most terrible of all. He meant to say that neither the Christians nor the Muslims nor the Hindus could exclusively claim to be the owners of India. They all had to be humble and tolerant.⁴⁴

One of Zakaullah's ardent hopes was that in the wake of the spread of education and the growing enlightenment of the common people, relations between the Hindus and the Muslims would vastly improve. At the same time he felt that he could not look forward to a time when the influence of a third and neutral factor, such as the British power, would be rendered unnecessary. He, therefore, regarded the presence of the British (i.e. the Christians) in India as a permanent factor, not a temporary one. In the light of his own experience he was convinced that there was no possibility of a permanent union between the Hindus and the Muslims. And the growing differences between the two communities made it all the more necessary to ensure the presence of a balancing Power.⁴⁵ That was why, in His wisdom, God had sent the British to rule over India at the decline of the Mughal power. Zakaullah regarded Western education as necessary for development and progress. He looked upon religious tolerance as even more important in India.⁴⁶

Maulana Muhammad Husain Azad (1833-1910) was a son of Maulana Muhammad Baqar's. Like Zakaullah, he also received his education at the Delhi College. Although he did not learn English, he pursued a course of studies in European history, principles of constitutional law, mathematics, and the physical sciences through the Urdu medium. Thus he was well abreast of the latest developments in the field of learning.

Upon the suppression of the Uprising of 1857 Azad's father was arrested and put in jail on the charge of murdering Principal Taylor of the Delhi College. He pleaded not guilty, but in vain:

⁴⁴Andrews, n. 41, pp. 113-15.

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 112-16.

⁴⁶Ibid.

he was sentenced to death. Azad could do nothing to secure the release of his father. Instead he too was suspected. This led him to move from one place to another. When finally the storm of 1857 blew over, he removed to Lucknow. From there, in 1864, he went to Lahore.⁴⁷ And there with the help of one Pandit Manphool, who was *Mīr Munshī* to the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, he entered into British service⁴⁸ Once Master Pyare Lal, an old student of the Delhi College, spoke highly of the learning of Maulana Muhammad Husain Azad before Major Fuller. Impressed, Fuller sent for the Maulana and tested his knowledge. Azad came out with flying colours. From then on he started getting one promotion after another. He was appointed first as Assistant Editor of *Atālīq Panjāb*. He visited Calcutta in 1865 and Iran in 1883 at the instance of the British Government. He became eventually Professor of Arabic and Persian at the Government College, Lahore. The British Government awarded him the title and honour of *Shams-al-Ulamā* in recognition of his eminence in the field of learning.⁴⁹

Like Sir Saiyyad, Azad too was in the beginning a romanticist who took pride in the glorious achievements of the past. In his writings we can find him eulogizing Akbar, Abul Fazl, Kalidasa, and Valmiki. Gradually, however, a change came over him. In his later years he wrote critical articles and had them published under the titles *Qisās-i Hind* and *Nairang-i Khayāl*. This he did at the instance of Colonel Holroyd, then Director of Public Instruction in the Punjab. In the manner of Greek writers Azad sought to advise and reform his fellow countrymen, especially the Muslims. To that end he translated several articles from English into Urdu. These articles, though only translations, are yet distinguished for their exquisite style.⁵⁰

⁴⁷Qadri, n. 41, p. 383; Sadiq, n. 41, p. 388; and Haq, n. 40, p. 61.

⁴⁸Qadri, n. 41, pp. 289 and 385.

⁴⁹Haq, n. 40, pp. 166-7; Qadri, n. 41, pp. 385-6; and Sadiq, n. 41, p. 289.

⁵⁰Here are the titles of some of the more important of these articles.

1. "*Sach aur Jhūt kā Razīnāmāh*"—a translation of "Truth, Falsehood, and Fiction" by Samuel Johnson;

2. "*Sair-i Zindagī*"—a translation of "The Voyage of Life", by Samuel Johnson.

3. "*Jannat-al Humāqiā*"—a translation of "Paradise of Fools" by Parnell; and

4. "*Gulshan-i Ummīd kī Bahār*"—a translation of "The Garden of Hope" by Samuel Johnson.

Maulvi Nazir Ahmad (1836-1912) was a son of Maulvi Sadat Ali's and a class fellow of Zakaullah's at the Delhi College. He was proud of his having imbibed values like tolerance, freedom of expression, and *ijtihad*. He was also noted for his broad vision. He supported British rule as he felt that there was no alternative to it. Obviously, thus, his values and attitudes were shaped by the education he had received at the Delhi College.

It was as a teacher that Nazir Ahmad began his career. Soon he became Deputy Inspector of Schools at Kanpur. However, he resigned the post after a quarrel with an English Inspector of Schools. He then returned to Delhi, where he faced a challenge to his uprightness and judgement in 1857. During this period, when emotions ran high, none was free from danger. He, however, happened to save an English lady from the mutineers. In view of this service he was again appointed Deputy Inspector of Schools at Allahabad. He had not learnt English in his college days owing to the opposition of his father. Now, at Allahabad, he learnt the English language also. He was then assigned the work of translating *Tāzīrāt-i Hind*. His translation was an instant success. It became a very famous textbook of law. To reward him for his services, the British appointed him as a *Tahsildār* at Kanpur. Subsequently he became Deputy Collector. He was also conferred the honour and title of *Shams-al Ulamā* in 1897. Under the influence of Western culture he wrote many books, especially novels, for the reform of Muslim society on modern lines.⁵¹

Nazir Ahmad was the first to write novels in Urdu. It was through the medium of the novel that he sought to teach the community. He was opposed to cheap and blind imitation of the West. His famous novel *Ibn-al Vaqt* is a satire on those who blindly copied Western culture. The hero of the novel saves the life of a British officer and then adopts the English way of life. All goes well as long as his friend the officer is with him to protect him, but things begin to go wrong when he is transferred. The new British officer looks down upon him as an upstart, and though our hero fights bravely against heavy odds, he finds it

⁵¹Haq, n. 40, p. 173; and Qadri, n. 41, pp. 461-6. See, also, Sadiq, n. 41, pp. 316-18.

wiser to go back to his own community. Nazir Ahmad thus sought to warn his countrymen and co-religionists against a blind pursuit of Western values and systems.

Not that Nazir Ahmad was opposed to the teaching of the Western sciences and to the new learning, but he was totally opposed to anybody departing from Muslim religion and culture. He described himself ironically as *Ibn-al Vaqt* or as a time-server, but, according to Qadri, he actually had in mind Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan, who, in his view, had "crossed all limits" in his efforts to Westernize the Muslims of India.⁵²

Nazir Ahmad never compromised in respect of his religion and culture. He learnt many values and principles from the British, but he led a very simple life in the true Oriental manner. He never hit out at Sir Saiyyad Ahmad; for, although he differed with him, he recognized, and respected, the sincerity of the man's intentions and efforts. His quarrel was only with those who wanted to go the Western way and abandon their own. He believed that the craze for the Western way of life was a temporary phenomenon and that it would soon pass off.

That Nazir Ahmad differentiated between civilization and culture is quite clear from the speech he delivered at an educational conference in 1900. While suggesting the need to acquire Western learning, he spoke of two types of education—one which developed the rational faculties of man and helped him in achieving material progress through a mastery of the physical sciences and the rational sciences; and the other which refined cultural life through a grounding in religion. He conceded that the British had achieved remarkable progress in the first type of education. They were very backward like us in the olden days; but, by mastering the sciences, they had achieved tremendous material progress. Nazir Ahmad felt that the Muslims were foolishly neglecting the study of the sciences. He, therefore, advised them to take up the study of the sciences but not at the cost of their religious and cultural education. He wrote two works, *Al Ijtihād* and *Mubādi-al Hukmā*, to educate Muslim opinion.⁵³

As a political and cultural centre of India from time immemorial, Delhi had instilled a sense of pride in its people.

⁵²Qadri, n. 41, p. 525.

⁵³Nazir Ahmad, *Al Huqūq-val Faraiz* (Delhi, 1906), pp. 162-5 and 380-5. See, also, Qadri, n. 41, pp. 517-18.

According to Abdul Haq, the people of Delhi suffered from certain illusions. For instance, they considered themselves superior in civilization and culture to the rest of the people of India. Secondly, they did not accept any change easily.⁵⁴ And yet, surprisingly enough, the people of Delhi were the first to achieve a breakthrough in the field of Western education. They did not allow their conservatism to stand in the way of their acquiring the new learning. At the same time they took care to ensure that their culture did not suffer in the process. In contrast Lucknow, which excelled Delhi in culture during the first half of the nineteenth century owing to its comparative prosperity, proved more conservative.

Our study of the various prominent Muslims of the period shows that Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan (1817-99) was not the pioneer of Western education among the Muslims of India as is generally believed. In fact he was a late comer. We may well say that he only harvested a crop that other Muslims had sown. He was the consolidator of Muslim liberalism. Since the latter half of the eighteenth century a number of prominent Muslims such as Mirza Abu Talib, Abdur Rahim Dahri, Lutfullah, Mirza Ghalib, and the students of the Delhi College had already prepared the ground. They had revolted against traditionalism. However, it goes to the credit of Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan that in spite of all the criticisms made by his detractors he made progress at an accelerating speed and finished far ahead of his predecessors and contemporaries. Muslim society badly needed his missionary labours and got them. There was already an audience willing to listen to him, and he captured it soon enough with his pragmatism. The Delhi College started earlier than the Aligarh College to create a suitable climate in the North in favour of Western education among the Muslims. It was, however, a faint beginning limited to a small group. Sir Saiyyad made Western education a tool for the all-round progress of the Muslims of the whole of India. He turned an institution like Aligarh into the symbol of a movement.

Saiyyad Ahmad Khan was the son of Mir Muttaqi. His grandfather, Saiyyad Hadi, held the honourable offices of *Muhtasib* and *Qādi-i Lashkar* at the court of Shah Alam II. His

⁵⁴Haq, n. 40, p. 13.

maternal grandfather, Khwaja Fariduddin Ahmad, was a literary figure. The British Government appointed Khwaja Fariduddin Ahmad as Superintendent of the Calcutta Madrasah in 1791. The British held Khwaja Fariduddin in such high esteem that Lord Wellesley sent him to Tehran on an Ambassadorial mission in 1799. Both Khwaja Fariduddin and Mir Muttaqi had friendly relations with General Ochterlony. Thus Saiyyad Ahmad Khan's family enjoyed high position and received respect both under the Mughals and under the British.

Mir Muttaqi's mystic inclinations and indifference towards worldly life deprived Saiyyad Ahmad Khan of the chance of receiving systematic education. Saiyyad Ahmad Khan's mother, however, left no stone unturned to get him educated. Unlike the students of the Delhi College Saiyyad Ahmad Khan received education only in the traditional disciplines—i.e. in disciplines like Arabic, geometry, Persian, and *tibb* from Hakim Ghulam Haidar. Besides, the two great religious schools of Delhi, viz the school of Shah Abdul Aziz and the school of Shah Ghulam Ali, exercised great influence upon Saiyyad Ahmad Khan's family. Indeed the two schools left a deep imprint on the personality of young Saiyyad Ahmad Khan himself. Hence his early inclination towards revivalism.⁵⁵

The death of Mir Muttaqi in 1838 left the family without any source of income. The pension that his mother drew from the Mughal court was far too little to make both ends meet. It was a period when the whole Muslim community was feeling demoralized on account of the decline of the Muslim power. The Muslims had not yet got over the shock of loss of power, and they were yet to adjust themselves to the reality of a new Government under Christian rulers. They were leading a care-free life, indulging in whimsical and licentious activity. Saiyyad Ahmad Khan admitted in his later life that he too was guilty of such an unhelpful tendency.⁵⁶

A practical man, Saiyyad Ahmad Khan saw clearly what was required of him and took up service under the British against the wishes of his family. After being given preliminary training in rules and regulations he was posted as a *Sarishtdār* in

⁵⁵Altaf Husain Hali, *Hayāt-i Jāved* (Aligarh, 1922), pp. 11-17 and 19-29

⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 30-33.

Delhi in 1838. Of course his joining British service was not entirely against the family tradition, but somehow the step he took was not liked.

In 1839 Saiyyad Ahmad Khan was appointed as Deputy Reader by the Commissioner, Sir Robert Hamilton, in his office in the Agra Division. In 1841 he passed a test. This secured his appointment as sub-judge at Mainpuri. In 1842 he was transferred to Fatehpur Sikri, where he lived for about four years. In 1846 he got himself transferred to Delhi so that he might be able to give solace to his disconsolate mother after the death of his elder brother. In 1855 he was appointed *Sadr Amin* at Bijnor. He stood by the British Government during the events of 1857. In 1858 he was appointed Chief Judge at Muradabad. He served there till his retirement in 1877.⁵⁷

Hardly had Saiyyad Ahmad Khan completed two years of service as *Sadr Amin* at Bijnor when the Uprising of 1857 broke out. It posed a serious challenge to his judgement and to his loyalty to his employers, viz the British Government. The news of the Meerut mutiny of 10 May 1857 reached Bijnor on 12 May. Saiyyad Ahmad Khan at once took a number of steps to protect the lives and properties of the Europeans and the Eurasians who were living at Bijnor. The rebels under Nawab Mahmud Khan, the Rohilla chief of Najibabad, were furiously bent upon indiscriminate killing of all Europeans and Eurasians—men, women, and children.⁵⁸ Saiyyad Ahmad Khan, however, assured the Europeans and the Eurasians of all possible help.⁵⁹ So whole-heartedly was he resolved to save the Europeans and the Eurasians that he himself went to fight the rebels. At night he personally guarded the residence of Shakespeare, the Commissioner, where all the Europeans had taken shelter. He negotiated with the Nawab and persuaded him to let the Europeans go safely from Bijnor to Roorki.⁶⁰ Converting the

⁵⁷Ibid. See, also, G.F.I. Graham, *Life and Works of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan* (London, 1909), p. 5; H. G. Rawlinson, "Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan", *Islamic Culture* (Hyderabad), July 1930, p. 389; and W.C. Smith, *Modern Islam in India* (London, 1946), pp. 15-16.

⁵⁸Ghulam Rasul Mehr, *1857 ke Mujāhidīn* (Lahore, 1960), pp. 278-9; and Hali, n. 55, pp. 47-49.

⁵⁸Ibid. See, also, Mehr, n. 58, pp. 278-9.

⁶⁰Hali, n. 55, pp. 47-49. See, also, Saiyyad Ahmad Khan, *Sarkashī-i Bijnor*, Moinul Haq, ed. (Karachi, 1962), p. 21.

furious Nawab into a man of peace in that hour of dire peril was a feat of tremendous tact and courage.

After the departure of the British from Bijnor, the Nawab invited Saiyyad Ahmad, Deputy Rahmat Khan, and *Tahsildār* Mir Turab Ali to work for his Government. He also promised to give Saiyyad Ahmad Khan more *jāgir* for serving under him. Saiyyad Ahmad Khan, however, declined the offer. On the other hand he advised the Nawab to switch his loyalty to the British as he felt that the British would soon regain control over the country and continue for long years to rule over India.⁶¹ The Nawab did not listen to him. On the contrary he dismissed him and his colleagues in great anger. Saiyyad Ahmad Khan kept the British informed of the internal tussle between the Chaudharis and the Nawab. The British advised Saiyyad Ahmad Khan to proclaim the re-establishment of British rule at Bijnor. Meanwhile the Muslims of Nagina rallied, drove the Chaudharis out, went in a body to the support of the Nawab, and requested him to take over the administration of the district. The Nawab attacked and captured Bijnor and Haldaur. The Muslim families of Nagina were very angry with Saiyyad Ahmad for his alleged role in instigating the Chaudharis to plunder the Muslims. In view of their hostility Saiyyad Ahmad Khan escaped to Delhi via Chandpur and Bachchraon. Wilson, Judge and Special Commissioner of Meerut, applauded the extremely loyal role played by Saiyyad Ahmad Khan. Men like John Strachey, Auckland Calvin, Theodore Beck, and Shakespeare too expressed their appreciation of his dedication and loyalty and recommended him for high rewards for his services.⁶² Saiyyad Ahmad Khan, however, rejected the offer of the Jahanabad *jāgir* of Rustam Ali, a rebel Muslim of Bijnor.⁶³ His colleagues and he were thereupon rewarded substantially in other ways. He was granted a pension for life. His eldest son was granted a stipend of two hundred rupees a month. Besides receiving a *khil'at* he was promoted to the post of *Sadr-us Sudūr*. In 1858 he was transferred to Muradabad. He was also honoured with the title and medal of Companion of the Order of the Star

⁶¹Hali, n. 55, pp. 49-50; and Graham, n. 57, pp. 16-18.

⁶²Hali, n. 55, pp. 51 and 235; and Graham, n. 57, pp. 19-21.

⁶³Hali, n. 55, p. 55; and Graham, n. 57, pp. 22-23. See, also, Saiyyad Ahmad Khan, n. 60, p. 21.

of India (C.S.I.) on 16 August 1869 at the instance of Lord Lawrence. He, however, received all these rewards without much joy; for his uncle and cousin had been killed and his own property had been pillaged during the grim happenings of 1857. And yet he remained firm in his loyalty to the British.⁶⁴

Saiyyad Ahmad Khan had formed certain views about British rule on the basis of his understanding of its progress. He was convinced that the foundations of British rule had been firmly laid in India. This conviction was further reinforced by the manner in which the British suppressed the Uprising of 1857. Saiyyad Ahmad Khan thought that if the Muslims with their mediaeval ways could rule over India for about eight hundred years, the British with their modern system of administration and military would stay longer. Not only did he disapprove of the Muslim participation in the Uprising of 1857, but he held the Muslims responsible for the complete destruction of their own community in India. He also expressed the view that Bahadur Shah II was unwise to participate in the Uprising.⁶⁵

Immediately after 1857 Saiyyad Ahmad Khan wrote a pamphlet entitled *Asbāb-i Baghāvat-i Hind*. Later he had it translated into English under the title *The Causes of the Revolt of 1857*. In this pamphlet he held the British Government itself responsible for the Uprising. He criticized British policies. The main cause of the Uprising, according to him, was the failure of the British Government to win over the Indian leaders. He said that while framing the laws, the British Government ought to have consulted the Indians by giving them representation in the legislative councils and providing for their participation in the administration. He also refuted the British charge that the Muslims were exclusively responsible for the Uprising of 1857, and said that other communities also had participated in it. Indeed he asserted that a section of the Muslims had remained loyal to the British Government. He gave in his pamphlet a long list of the loyal Muslims who had fought for the survival of British rule in India. Further, he rejected Hunter's charge that the Uprising of 1857 was a religious war against the British

⁶⁴Graham, n. 57, p. 23; and Rawlinson, n. 57, p. 390.

⁶⁵Saiyyad Ahmad, n. 60, pp. 21-23. See, also, J.N. Farquhar, *Modern Religious Movements* (Karachi, 1953), p. 92; and Abdul Latif, *An Outline of the Cultural History of India* (Hyderabad, 1950), p. 290.

Government perpetrated by the Wahhabis. At the same time he underlined British interference in religious matters as one of the important causes of the Uprising.⁶⁶

Saiyyad Ahmad Khan's view that the Wahhabi movement was never against British rule is quite unfounded. There is sufficient evidence, and we have already discussed it in the previous chapters, to show that Saiyyad Ahmad Barelvi and his followers, who fought against the Sikhs in the beginning, had definite plans to annihilate the British. Indeed, whenever they had the opportunity, they rose against the British. Of course they did not participate in the Uprising, but they had definitely created an atmosphere conducive to it and had contributed to the spirit of *jihād* which swept the whole country.⁶⁷

In sheer disgust Saiyyad Ahmad Khan at first thought of migrating to Egypt after the Uprising of 1857. However, a voice from within urged him to stay back for the sake of the Muslims of India. He used all his energy and eloquence to clear the misunderstandings that had arisen between the British Government and the Muslim community. He persuaded the Muslims to adjust themselves to the new reality of British rule and be receptive to the good things in Western culture. He highlighted the importance of Western education.⁶⁸ He sought in several ways to strengthen the incipient renaissance movement among the Muslims. He believed that it would be possible for the Muslims to achieve social and political progress only if they learnt English

⁶⁶Saiyyad Ahmad, *Asbāb-i Baghāvat-i Hind* (Karachi, 1957), pp. 110-13 and 119; Graham, n. 57, pp. 40-73 and 150-2; and Latif, n. 65, p. 290.

In a letter to Sir John Kaye, Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan asserted that it was not a revolution. In the same letter he mentioned a number of causes of the revolt. He, however, emphasized the decay of the respectable families under the British, the absolutism of British rule, and religious interference as the main causes of the revolt.

See his letter introduced by Moin-ul-Haq, "Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's Letter to John Kaye", in *Journal of Pakistan Historical Society* (Karachi), vol. 8, July 1960, p. 229.

⁶⁷Mujib, n. 29, p. 425. See, also, a discussion on the Uprising of 1857 in Chapter 6 of the present work. Sir Saiyyad Ahmad himself emphasized the religious causes in his book *Asbāb-i Baghāvat-i Hind*, n. 66, pp. 105-8.

⁶⁸Hali, n. 55, pp. 55 and 149; and Smith, n. 57, pp. 15-16. See, also, Farquhar, n. 65, p. 92. See, further, Shahid Husain Razzaqi, *Sar Saiyyad aur Islāh-i Muāshirāh* (Lahore, 1963), p. 92.

and the Western sciences and established cordial relations with the British.

This was a strange exhortation on behalf of English from a man who did not know the language himself. Going by the adage "while in Rome do as the Romans do", Saiyyad Ahmad Khan declared that subject nations had no alternative but to learn the language of their rulers. He pointed to the example of the Hindus, who, he said, had prospered under both Muslim and British rule by learning the language of the rulers of the day. The sooner the Muslims adapted themselves to the new conditions the better. Moreover, the Muslim system of education had become obsolete and did not help in any way in preparing the youth for life. It took no account of recent scientific developments.⁶⁹

To remove the Muslim prejudice against Western education Saiyyad Ahmad Khan took great pains. At first he declared that India under the British was not a *dār-al harb*. For some time he even sought to reinterpret Islam on rational lines. In his speeches he often cited a verse from the *Qurān* which says: "Let everybody pursue his own religion." He advised his co-religionists never to hesitate to learn good things from others as the British had done. This willingness to learn, he declared, was the secret of the British success. He also advised the Muslims to treat religion as a purely private matter. And, finally, he declared that to learn English was not repugnant to the *Shari'ah*. He reminded the Muslims of one of the Prophet's teachings, viz to acquire knowledge even if it meant going as far as China. He tried to bring the Muslims and the Christians nearer to each other by reminding the Muslims that the Christians were one of the *ahl-i kitāb*.

Before embarking upon his great mission Saiyyad Ahmad

⁶⁹Saiyyad Ahmad Khan, *Khutūt-i Sar Saiyyad*, Saiyyad Ras Masud, ed. (Delhi, 1960).

G.A. Natesan observes: "It is certainly to his [Sir Saiyyad's] credit that, although ignorant of English and other European languages, he mastered the principles of the British constitution and the principles of Occidental jurisprudence so perfectly. Brought up as an Oriental scholar he rose to be the apostle of English learning among his co-religionists." See his *Eminent Musalmans* (Madras, 1926), p. 1. See, also, Razzaqi, n. 68, pp. 62-63. See, further, B.M. Chaudhuri, *Muslim Politics in India* (Calcutta, 1957), pp. 7-8.

Khan wrote a letter to R. Simon, Secretary to the Government of the North-West Provinces. In this letter he admitted that the people of the North-West India were definitely backward and lagged behind the people of the other areas of India, especially the people of the more enlightened and prosperous Presidencies like Bengal, Madras, and Bombay, in acquiring the new learning. He invited the Governor to lay the foundation-stone of the building of a society which he had set up for the purpose of spreading the new learning among the people of the north-west, especially the Muslims.⁷⁰

Saiyyad Ahmad Khan availed himself of an opportunity to visit England in 1869.⁷¹ England appeared to him to be a dream-land, a Utopia, the very heaven. He was amazed to see the miraculous achievements of the English people. He was so impressed by the glitter of Western civilization and culture that he wrote to his friend Saiyyad Mahdi Hasan: "I can truly say that the natives of India, high and low, merchants and petty shopkeepers, educated and illiterate, are as removed from the English in education, manners, and uprightness as a dirty animal is from an able and handsome man."⁷² These were harsh and humiliating words, but anybody visiting England at that time was likely to be impressed as profoundly by Western civilization and culture and to speak almost in the same language. The observations of Abu Talib and Lutfullah too were, as we have seen already, much the same.

Again, in a speech in a function in London, Saiyyad Ahmad Khan expressed his admiration for the remarkable achievements of the English people. He said that English education, weapons,

⁷⁰Hali, n. 55, pp. 254-6; Saiyyad Ahmad Khan, *Tehzib-al Akhlāq*, Munshi Fazluddin, ed. (Lahore, 1894), pp. 246, 354, and 528; idem, *Ahkām-o Tuām Ahl-i Kitāb* (Kanpur, 1868), pp. 3-7 and 15-18; K.P. Karunakaran, *Religious and Political Awakening in India* (Calcutta, 1965), p. 77; T. Titus Murray, *Religious Quest of India* (London, 1963), p. 193; and E.M. Wherry, *Islam and Christianity in India and the Far East* (New York, 1907), p. 175. The *ulamā* were dead opposed to Saiyyad Ahmad's movement in favour of complete Westernization. See Abdul Hasan Ali Nadvi, *Muslim Mumālik mein Islāmiyat aur Maghribiyat kī Kashmakash* (Lucknow, 1964), pp. 75-76.

⁷¹Yusuf Husain Khan, ed., *Selected Documents from the Aligarh Archives* (Aligarh, 1967), p. 51.

⁷²Hali, n. 55, pp. 100-4; and Graham, n. 57, pp. 125-6.

and justice had played a significant role in establishing the power and prestige of the British *rāj* in India. According to him, the most impressive achievements of the English, i.e. the achievements which had invested the new rulers with a special distinction, lay in the field of engineering. He referred in this context to the works carried out by the British such as railways, bridges, canals, and tunnels. He was filled with a sense of awe when he visited spacious mansions, museums, enormous engineering workshops, gunfoundries, telegraph companies, and libraries.⁷³ He was equally impressed by the English character, especially by the politeness, learning, good faith, cleanliness, skilled workmanship, accomplishments, and thoroughness of the English people. He also admired the spiritual qualities of the Europeans. He said that all good things spiritual and worldly which should be found in man had been bestowed by the Almighty on Europe, especially on England. He found that even his maid-servant, Annie Smith, was an educated lady with excellent manners, very active and industrious.⁷⁴

Saiyyad Ahmad Khan keenly observed the English system of education. He was convinced that all the achievements of England could be traced to a single source, viz the English system of education. He observed the kind of training that was being imparted to the boys in the public schools and universities of England. He realized that in England a boy was educated whereas in India he was only instructed. He was now confirmed in his belief that only English education could remove the backwardness and stagnation of the Muslim community in India. He determined at once to popularize English education among the Muslims of India at any cost. He dreamed of the day when English education and the Western sciences would raise the economic, social, and political prestige of the Muslims of India sky-high. He had seen the other communities of India—as, for example, the Bengalis and the Parsees—advancing on the path of progress by being receptive to the good things in the European civilization, by adjusting themselves to the new conditions, and by changing over to English education. And he knew that

⁷³Hali, n. 55, p. 104; and Graham, n. 57, p. 125.

⁷⁴Natesan, n. 69, p. 6; and Hali, n. 55, p. 107. See, also, Graham, n. 57, pp. 126-31.

Muslim countries like Egypt and Turkey were also making tremendous strides in similar fashion.⁷⁵ He, therefore, felt that the Muslims of India also should go in for Western education for their betterment.

Thus Saiyyad Ahmad Khan made it his mission to encourage a selective diffusion of Western cultural traits into the collective life of the Muslims of India. He wanted the traditional Muslim culture in India to come to terms with the modern technological age. He was influenced by Adam Smith's philosophy of *laissez-faire*. He made truly heroic efforts to convert the Muslim community to his viewpoint. He wrote to Saiyyad Mahdi Ali Khan from England about the futility of the Muslim *madrasāhs* imparting obsolete education. He urged him to do something for the education and improvement of the Muslim community.⁷⁶ He himself founded an organization for carrying out a programme for the education of the Muslims. He started publishing a journal called *Tehzib-al Akhlāq* to awaken the Muslims and to bring about a *rapprochement* between the Muslims and the Christians.⁷⁷ As expected, he encountered tough resistance from the orthodox section; but, undaunted, he persisted in his efforts and eventually succeeded in converting a fairly large number of Muslims to his point of view. At first he started a few schools, and ultimately he launched the giant project of a Muslim university.

The Aligarh College, when it came up in 1875, adopted a compromise curriculum by including Muslim theology among the subjects to be studied along with the Western sciences. This was done to placate the orthodox section of the Muslim community. Saiyyad Ahmad Khan took special care to develop the institution by taking all possible help from British academics and administrators. He recruited Englishmen to all key posts in order to ensure that the institution developed on Western lines.

⁷⁵Rawlinson, n. 57, p. 394; and Natesan, n. 69, p. 6. See, also, Fazl-ur Rahman, "Muslim Modernism in the Indo-Pakistan Sub-Continent", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies* (London), vol. 21 (1958), pp. 82-83. See, further, Graham, n. 57, pp. 126-30.

⁷⁶Hali, n. 55, pp. 92, 131, 254-6, and 269. See, also, Hafeez Malik, "The Religious Liberalism of Sir Saiyid Ahmad Khan", *The Muslim World* (Hartford, Conn.), vol. 54, pp. 160-4.

⁷⁷Hali, n. 55, pp. 269 and 282.

He made it a rule that all European teachers should live on the premises of the College.⁷⁸ He also opposed use of the vernacular language in imparting education in the Western sciences as at the Delhi College and elsewhere. He insisted that the Western sciences should be taught exclusively in the English language. He thought that the vernacular was not adequate for the purpose.⁷⁹

With Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan we arrive at the dawn of a new age, the beginning of a new era. No other figure in the history of the Muslims of India deserves such reverent consideration and respect as this sturdy pioneer and beloved leader who, in the face of endless opposition, blazed a new trail for his Muslim brethren to follow.

A critical analysis of Sir Saiyyad's many-sided personality would reveal that he was concerned not so much about the survival of British rule in India as about the revival of Muslim glory. For instance, even when he was serving under the British he wrote books glorifying Muslim culture. However, we find a radical change of attitude in him after 1857. He was now convinced that there was no way open to the Muslims of India except to expose themselves to the new culture. For him the future of the Muslim community was dark without English learning and without a grounding in the Western sciences. The way to survival lay in adopting the new culture.

⁷⁸*Indian Review* (Madras), vol. 10, January-December 1909, p. 758. See, also, S.G. Wilson, *Modern Movements among Moslems* (London, 1916), pp. 163 and 186-8. See, further, Nadvi, n. 70, pp. 75-76.

⁷⁹Karunakaran, n. 70, p. 135. See, also, A. Yusuf Ali, "Muslim Culture and Religious Thought", n. 14, p. 399.

Chapter 9

MUSLIM SOCIETY AND THE NEW LEARNING

It is now time to turn to the progress of Muslim education and examine critically the general assumption that the progress of education among the Muslims was stunted on account of the decay of Muslim political authority during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. As a matter of fact some aspects of Muslim culture and learning received especial encouragement and promotion during this period. Some Muslim schools imparting religious and secular education acquired world-wide fame such as the Delhi School of Shah Abdul Aziz and the Firangi Mahal of Lucknow. In the field of literature fresh ground was broken. The new language, Urdu, a by-product of Hindu-Muslim cultural assimilation, attained great heights and gave birth to Mirza Ghalib, one of the most eminent poets of the world, who was, along with Momin and Zauq, patronized by the last Mughal Emperor, Bahadur Shah II.

Another widely current wrong notion about the Muslims is that they were averse to the new learning. Although the Muslims appeared reluctant at first because of a sense of uncertainty and as a natural reaction to loss of power, they did not set their face against the new learning. Indeed, aversion to the rational and natural sciences is a feature common to all religious communities: orthodox Christians, for instance, resisted the progress of rationalism and renaissance in Europe.¹ The Muslim hesitation to accept the new learning readily in the period under study is to be attributed to their suspicions about British intentions, designs, and policies.

For a considerable period in the beginning the British desisted from introducing Western education; and, when they eventually introduced it, they did so in a very restricted and discriminatory

¹F.S.C. Northrop, *The Meeting of East and West* (New York, 1947), p. 414; and Syed Ameer Ali, *The Spirit of Islam* (Delhi, reprinted 1978), p. 397. See, also, Sir Mohammad Iqbal, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Delhi, reprinted 1974), p. 9.

manner and manifestly for the purpose of transplanting Christian religion and culture to an apparently backward country. Although the orthodox *ulamā* allowed the Muslims to receive English education and accept service under the British, yet they did not want their beliefs to be defiled.² The Muslims did not make much progress in Western education because they were seized of the real intentions of the British. Muslim society, being more orthodox than Hindu society, did not readily give in to the fascination of Western education. Hence it lagged behind in the race for worldly progress and modernism.³ The Hindus too hesitated at first, but they were soon overwhelmed by the intellectual riches that were spread out before them. Even then eventually they too understood the designs of the British. The success of the experiment in the form of the Aligarh College and the Delhi College prove that had the Muslims been provided English or Western education along with their religious and cultural education, they would have started along this path with little resistance. Unfortunately, however, the British rulers never cared for the sentiments of the "natives" and hence failed to make any durable impact, particularly on the Muslims.

Whether in extending official patronage or in making private efforts, the Muslims never showed any aversion to learning. Islam, if understood in the true spirit, does not bar any Muslim from the pursuit of knowledge.⁴ In fact, a universal, proselytizing religion like Islam could hardly afford to entertain reservations about acquisition of knowledge. Islam as a religion transcended regional, linguistic, and ethnic barriers. Those who were converted to Islam continued with their several languages, traditions, and cultures, wherever they went and ruled. "The concept of change and evolution", observes Luchtenstadter, "had been a basic function within Islam itself in its early formative period."⁵ Besides propagating their own way of life, the Muslim rulers sought to learn the languages and understand the culture of their subjects. Even before their confrontation with the British in India the Muslims had conquered European countries, and mutual intercourse and interaction had taken place. They had

²Shah Abdul Aziz, *Fatāvāh-i Azīzī* (Delhi, 1909), pp. 91-92 and 114.

³Northrop, n. 1, pp. 414-15.

⁴Ameer Ali, n. 1, pp. 360-2.

⁵Ilse Luchtenstadter, *Islam and the Modern Age* (London, 1959), pp. 195-8.

contributed handsomely to the European Renaissance. They had, thus, helped in inaugurating a new age, a new civilization, which is now the pride of the Europeans.⁶ Their relations with the British in India, therefore, were very much governed by the old religious affinities and antagonisms between them and the Christians in Europe and elsewhere.

Even during the early stages of British rule a section of Muslims of the upper class manifested its willingness to go in for Western education in disregard of the antagonism between their own religion and Christianity. This is proved by the observations made by an official, Adam, in a report prepared by him for the Government. He observed: "Learned Musalmans [*sic*] are in general much better prepared for the reception of European ideas than learned Hindus. . . . When they shall have become convinced of the integrity of our purpose and the utility of the knowledge we desire to communicate, they will be found most valuable coadjutors."⁷

The political supremacy of a community can be challenged and finished all of a sudden, but the socio-cultural pattern of a society cannot easily be altered. The literary and cultural traditions are the inner core of the life of any people, and they can be changed only if the people concerned realize the need for it themselves. The Muslims by and large did not feel anything wrong in their system of education, and so they did not think it necessary to opt for progress at the cost of their religion and culture.

Yet it can be asserted with certainty that a beginning in the direction of the new learning had been made, simultaneously, by some individual Muslims in the early nineteenth century.

To understand this interesting paradox and probe the mystery behind the initial prejudice of the Muslim community to the new learning, it would be necessary to examine, albeit briefly, the attitudes of the *Qurān*, the Prophet, the various Muslim rulers, and the Muslim community as a whole towards education down to the end of the eighteenth century.

The *Qurān* highlights as follows the supreme value of learning and science: "And He has brought them out of the

⁶Ameer Ali, n. 1, p. 371; and Iqbal, n. 1, p. 7.

⁷Quoted in Azizur Rahman Mallick, *British Policy and the Muslims in Bengal, 1757-1856* (Dacca, 1961), pp. 294-5.

darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge and made them aware of the inestimable blessings of the knowledge of writing.”⁸

The sayings and traditions of Prophet Muhammad are a fountain-head of inspiration for the Muslims. The Prophet has said :

Acquire knowledge, because he who acquires it in the way of the Lord performs an act of piety; who speaks of it, praises the Lord; who seeks it, adores God. Knowledge enables its possessor to distinguish what is forbidden from what is not; it lights the way to heaven ; it is our friend in the desert, our society in solitude, our companion when bereft of friends; it guides us to happiness; it sustains us in misery; it is our ornament in the company of friends; it serves as an armour against our enemies. With knowledge the servant of God rises to the heights of goodness, and to a noble position, associates with sovereigns in this world, and attains to the perfection of happiness in the next.⁹

Again,

Seek knowledge even up to China. He who travels in search of knowledge, to him God shows the way to paradise. An hour's meditation on the work of the Creator [in a devout spirit] is better than seventy years' prayers.¹⁰

Further,

The seeker of knowledge will be greeted in heaven with a welcome from the angels. To listen to the words of the learned, and to instil into the heart the lesson of science, is better than religious exercises. . . better than emancipating a hundred slaves. He who honours the learned honours me.¹¹

⁸*Qurān*, Sura (Iqra, or Alaq) xcvi. See Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Meaning of the Glorious Qurān* (Cairo, 1938), edn 3, vol. 2, pp. 1760-1. See, also, Ameer Ali, n. 1, p. 361.

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 361.

¹⁰Shaikh Ali Muttaqi, *Kanzul Ummal fī Sunanil-Aqvāl val Afāl* (Hyderabad, A. H. 1312), vol. 5, p. 202. See, also, Ameer Ali, n. 1, p. 361.

¹¹*Mishkāt Sharīf*, Noor Muhammad trans. (Karachi, n. d.), p. 97; and Ameer Ali, n. 1, p. 362.

Orthodox Muslims emphasized in the beginning the importance of teaching the religious disciplines. They dreaded the study of rational subjects such as history, philosophy, etc. as these, in their view, tended to undermine faith. However, some other sects of the Muslim community (such as the Mutazalites) included the rational sciences in the syllabus. These two trends in Muslim education have always existed side by side.

The Muslim protagonists of the rational sciences and secular education at one time acquired preponderance over the orthodox; so much so that subjects like astronomy, chemistry, geography, geometry, history, logic, philosophy, and *tibb* became popular subjects of Muslim education. Subsequently the Muslim community produced many great philosophers and learned men who contributed to the world renaissance—such as Al Farabi (A.D. 874-950), Ibn Sina (A.D. 980-1037), Ibn Rushd (A.D. 1126-1198), Ibn Khaldun (A.D. 1332-1406), *et al.*¹² Even a scholar of eminence like Ibn Khaldun once remarked that the study of philosophy (or history or any other rational science) was dangerous to faith; and that, although it was a good thing to acquire knowledge of, and training in, the principles of argumentation, it should be preceded by a deep and thorough understanding of the disciplines of religion. Early Muslim *madrasāhs* used the Arabic language as the language of culture, but the teachers betrayed no prejudice against other languages. The teachers of Madrasah-i Nizamia of Baghdad knew the Armenian, Ethiopian, Greek, and Persian languages besides Arabic.¹³

When the Muslims established their rule in India, they paid their utmost attention to the promotion of learning. Most sultans were highly educated and well trained in the arts and sciences of the period. Even those who had no formal education proved to be great patrons of learning.

From the writings of Alberuni (A. D. 973) we can get an insight into the rapid progress that Arabic and Persian literatures were then making by laying under contribution the rich store of knowledge embedded in both Sanskrit and Greek. Indian mathematics and astronomy, philosophy, medicine, and

¹²Ibid., p. 397. See, also, Ninian Smart, *The Religious Experience of Mankind* (New York, 1969), p. 413. See, further, Z. H. Faruqi, "Qaumi Madrasāh kī Tehrik", *Jāmiā* (New Delhi), October 1975, pp. 175-92.

¹³Faruqi, *ibid.*

pharmacology were favourite subjects of study with Muslim scholars. There appeared numerous translations of Indian works, including a good deal of narrative literature, into Arabic and Persian. A beginning was made in the field of education by the early Slave Sultans. Balban advised Prince Muhammad as follows : "Spare no pains to discover men of genius, learning, and courage. You must cherish them with kindness and munificence, that they may prove the soul of your councils and instrument of your authority."¹⁴

Delhi gradually rose in eminence as a centre of learning and a resort of learned men, thanks to the attention of the sultans. Amir Khusrau once declared : "Delhi could now successfully compete with Bukhara, the greatest university city of Central Asia."¹⁵

Feroz Tughlaq was one of the greatest Muslim rulers of India. Fond of history, he authored an elegant autobiography called *Futūhat-i Firozshāhi*. Among the historians who lived at his court were the famous Ziauddin Barni and Siraj Afif. The Palace of Grapes, one of the three palaces built by him, was where he used to meet learned and distinguished men.¹⁶

During Sikandar Lodi's reign the Hindus applied themselves to the study of Persian for the first time. Soon there was born the Urdu or Hindustani language. Obviously there was considerable intercourse at that time between the Hindus and the Muslims. During the time of Sikandar Lodi the writing, translation, and compilation of a number of books took place under his orders : the famous treatise *Argār Mahābheda* was translated under the title of *Tibb-i Sikandari*.¹⁷

The liberal educational policies laid down by Akbar remained almost unchanged throughout Mughal rule. It was his love of knowledge that promoted him to build the famous Ibadat Khana in his newly built city of Fatehpur Sikri. Rodolpho Aquaviva, a missionary from Goa, who, by virtue of his intelligence and learning, occupied a very high place among the Christian doctors, came there to "try a fall" with the Indian

¹⁴Narendra Nath Law, *Promotion of Learning during Mohamman Rule* (Delhi, reprinted 1973), pp. 13-14 and 27.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 28.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 49-51.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 73-77.

savants in an intellectual wrestling-match. The Emperor always kept his mind open to any new light that any man, whatever his creed or nationality, might bring. Many books in Sanskrit and other languages were translated into Persian under the Emperor's orders. Abdur Rahim, the son of Bairam Khan, who was equally popular among the Hindus and the Muslims, was a great patron of letters. Rahim still lives as a Hindi poet.¹⁸

The Mughal Imperial family had a scholar in Prince Dara, who mastered both Arabic and Persian and was proficient in Sanskrit and translated some of the best Sanskrit works into Persian. He was much impressed by the religious lore of the Hindus. He translated the Upanishads (*Sirr-al Asrār*), the *Bhagavadgītā*, the *Yoga Vāsishtha*, and the *Rāmāyana*. He also wrote *Mukālamāh-i Bābā Lāl Dās*, an account of a dialogue between the Prince and Baba Lal Das on the lives and doctrines of Hindu ascetics and many other important works.¹⁹ Had Dara succeeded to the Mughal throne instead of Aurangzeb, the education of the people would have been of a different character.

Unlike Akbar, Aurangzeb cared very little for the promotion of Hindu learning. He, however, tried earnestly to promote the education of Muslim youth at the same time that he abolished capital punishment, encouraged agriculture, and founded many schools and colleges. He confiscated the Firangi Mahal of Lucknow, which belonged to the Dutch, and made it over to a Muslim for starting a *madrasāh*. He also took steps to educate the Bohras of Gujarat. During Aurangzeb's reign Sialkot was a great seat of Muslim learning. He was dissatisfied with his own education, and this made him attach great value to education. He once said to his teacher:

Was it not incumbent upon my Preceptor to make me acquainted with the distinguishing features of every nation of the earth—its resources and strength, its mode of warfare, its manners, religions, form of government, and the things in which it is principally interested—and, by a regular course of

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 139-71.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 185.

historical reading, to render me familiar with the origin of states, their progress and decline, and the events, accidents, or errors, owing to which such great changes and mighty revolutions have been effected?²⁰

With the death of Aurangzeb central authority became weak; and, with that, ceased Imperial patronage. From then on, the nobles and the governors of the provinces took great interest in the promotion of learning. During the time of Bahadur Shah I two colleges were established—one by Ghaziuddin, father of Asaf Jah, near Ajmeri Gate, and the other by Khan Firuz Jang. The Ghaziuddin College was closed in 1793 for want of funds. During Mohammad Shah's reign, in spite of political instability, great impetus was given to scientific education. Sawai Jai Singh constructed observatories at Jaipur, Ujjain, Mathura, Banaras, and Delhi.²¹

By the end of the eighteenth century, when Imperial patronage completely ceased and the nobles also failed to pay adequate attention to the promotion of learning, the cause of education was taken up by private individuals and the *ulamā*. These private individuals and the *ulamā* worked so hard that their schools became very famous centres of learning. Although they laid greater emphasis on the religious disciplines, they did not altogether neglect the secular disciplines.

The disintegration of the Mughal Empire and the absence of Imperial patronage of learning and education did not affect the advancement of Muslim education. In Rohilkhand, about five thousand *ulamā* imparted education in the different schools and colleges there. In Lucknow, Maulana Qutubuddin Sahalvi had obtained Firangi Mahal from Aurangzeb. His son Maulvi Nizamuddin established Madrasah-i Alia Nizamiah. He prepared a course of education for the Muslims which became famous as Dars-i Nizamiah. An important centre of Muslim learning was established in Delhi by Shah Waliullah. At the death of Shah Waliullah, his son Shah Abdul Aziz took charge of the institution. The other sons—Shah Abdul Qadir, Shah Rafiuddin, and Shah Abdul Ghani—along with relations like Shah

²⁰Quoted, *ibid.*, pp. 187-92.

²¹*Ibid.*, pp. 194-6.

Muhammad Ismail, Shah Muhammad Ishaq, Shah Yaqub, and Shah Abdul Hai, taught there. The institution became very famous and launched an all-India movement. Among the Shias, Maulvi Dildar Ali taught in Lucknow during the time of Nawab Vizier Asafuddaulah. Subsequently his son Maulvi Saiyyad Muhammad Sultan-al Ulama continued his work and established Sultan-al Madaris during the reign of Nasiruddin Haidar. Among the secular disciplines philosophy and logic formed the main part of the syllabus, especially in Firangi Mahal, but the school of Shah Waliullah in Delhi focussed on the religious disciplines. In Delhi there was yet another centre of Muslim learning, the one headed by Khairabadi, which taught the secular disciplines also.²²

This same pattern of education was followed in the British-ruled Presidency of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa. The Arabic and Persian schools there continued to impart education to the Muslims. However, for want of State patronage and on account of the poverty of the Muslim community not much progress was achieved even in the sphere of traditional education. Education was restricted to the few rich Muslims. Muslim education, however, received some impetus in Bengal with the founding of the Calcutta Madrasah by Warren Hastings in 1781. Here too Arabic and Persian continued to be the main subjects of instruction long after they had lost their relevance to the mundane objective of bread-winning. An effort was made in 1826 to adapt the institution to the changed conditions of the times, and English was introduced as a subject of study. Unfortunately, however, the experiment was soon given up. After three years yet another effort was made, but without much success.²³

In the Punjab, Muslim schools and Muslim teachers continued to dominate the sphere of education till 1857. Even Hindu students studied Persian in those schools under Muslim teachers. Arnold, Officer of Public Instruction, concedes the popularity of Muslim teachers in the Punjab. The Muslims made great strides in religious and traditional education even during the eighteenth century in spite of the decline of Muslim rule and economic deprivation.²⁴

²²Saiyyad Tufail Ahmad, *Musalmānon kā Raushan Mustaqbil* (Aligarh, 1937), pp. 134-8.

²³Mallick, n. 7, pp. 152-6.

²⁴Ahmad, n. 22, pp. 173-4.

Although Muslim education was confined to the rich classes, there was no dearth of learned Muslims. They enjoyed great respect in society for their knowledge and learning. They, however, failed to reap the benefits of British rule, not only because they were deliberately ignored or even victimized by the British Government for obvious political and religious reasons, but also because they were slow to respond to Western learning, which was the only means to progress in worldly life. The Muslims were definitely reluctant to opt for English education. Part of the reason for this was the religious antagonism between them and the Christians. It would, however, be wrong to assume that the Muslims were altogether opposed to English education or to the new learning. A subdued trend in the Muslim community to learn the Western sciences was discernible from the very beginning. And Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan's movement for the promotion of the new learning was but the culmination of that trend.

Thus the initial reluctance of the Muslims to go in for Western education was due to the misconceived policies of the British Government. According to Howell, "education in India under the British Government was first ignored, then violently and successfully opposed, then conducted on a system now universally admitted to be erroneous".²⁵

During the early period of its administration, the East India Company did not regard the promotion of education among the "natives" of India as one of its proper duties or concerns. As a commercial company its main object was to make profits through trade. It used its political gains exclusively to subserve its economic interests. In England too education had never been a State subject. On the contrary there had been stout opposition there to State interference in the sphere of education. In 1792-93 the Directors of the East India Company rejected a proposal from Wilberforce to send out schoolmasters and missionaries to India. One of the Directors stated that the British had just lost America by their folly in permitting the establishment of schools and colleges there and that there was no case for repeating the

²⁵Quoted in H. Sharp, ed., *Selection from Educational Records, 1781-1893* (New Delhi, 1965).

folly in India.²⁶ However, following efforts by some missionaries some kind of beginning was made early in the nineteenth century in the direction of promoting education.

It would appear that from the time of establishment of British rule till the arrival of William Bentinck and T.B. Macaulay, the officials of the Company were divided on the proposal to introduce the new learning in India. Grant appears to have been one of the exponents of English education. As late as 1792 he observed: "It would be odious and immoral to keep India ignorant owing to apprehended risks to British rule." He gave priority to moral considerations. He looked upon "imparting knowledge and moral instruction" as a strict duty cast upon the British in India in consequence of their achievement of political ascendancy. He concluded his thesis thus: "Although many excellent improvements have of late years been made in the government of our Indian territories, the moral character and condition of the natives of them is extremely depraved. . . ." According to him, the idea of introducing the new learning was not bad at all, but it had to be introduced along with the moral principles of Christianity. He observed: "A remedy has been proposed for these evils: the introduction of our light and knowledge among the benighted people, especially the pure, salutary, wise principles of our divine religion [viz Christianity]."²⁷

The efforts of the liberal group led by Grant and Wilberforce had little success in influencing Government policy till 1830. They did, however, manage to soften the official attitude towards the missionaries, who were allowed to carry on their educational and religious work. In 1793 Lord Wellesley appointed Carey, a missionary, as Professor of Sanskrit at the Fort William College. Carey steered a course half way between Charles Grant and J. Shore and the anti-education party. In 1799 he was joined by two more missionaries, Marshman and Ward, who at first settled in Serampore, a Danish settlement, and gradually expanded their missionary activity up to Calcutta. Lord Minto

²⁶ Mallick, n. 7, p. 167. See, also, Syed Mahmood, *History of English Education in India, 1781-1873* (Aligarh, 1895), pp. 2 and 16. See, further, Ahmad, n. 22, p. 141.

²⁷ Mahmood, n. 26, pp. 15-16. See, also, Qazi Abdul Wadud, "The Musalmans of Bengal", *Studies in the Bengal Renaissance*, A.C. Gupta, ed. (Calcutta, 1958), p. 471.

objected to their work but did not dismiss them from India. Lord Hastings was the first to give recognition to their work. He even paid a visit to Serampore in 1815. He was convinced of the need to evolve some system of public education for the improvement of the moral and intellectual conditions of the people. According to Arthur Howell, it was the first instance of direct encouragement which missionary effort in behalf of education received from the Governor-General of India.²⁸

Naturally the Muslims had every reason to suspect the intentions of the advocates of the new learning. They were in fact convinced that the primary object of introducing the new learning was proselytization.

For the first time in 1813 the Government of India made an annual provision of a lakh of rupees for the encouragement of education among the "natives". This was all the provision made till 1833-35. Clearly the Government was not serious about the introduction of English education or the new learning to the "natives". Interestingly, in their first official communication in regard to education the Directors advised the Government of India to encourage in the Hindus the custom of teaching and learning in their own houses instead of establishing public colleges. The interests of the Muslims were thoroughly ignored.²⁹

Holt McKenzie underlined in 1832 this great difference in the conception of State responsibility for the people's education in India and England. The people of England governed themselves and educated themselves; the people of India were governed by the English. The Muslims suffered in consequence of the ignorance and tight-fistedness of the Directors. Inadequacy of funds led the Government to formulate a policy of enabling only the upper classes to receive education and of leaving it to these classes to spread education among the masses. This policy had for its basis the theory of downward filtration. Education thus became very much a monopoly of the rising commercial classes, comprising mostly the Hindus.³⁰

A proposal to start a course in English at the Sanskrit College

²⁸Mahmood, n. 26, pp. 24-25; and Wadud, n. 27, p. 471. See, also, *Friends of India* (Serampore), 11 April 1844. See, further, Appendix VI of the present work.

²⁹Mahmood, n. 26, pp. 22-24; and the *Friends of India*, 5 April 1838.

³⁰Quoted in Mallick, n. 7, pp. 170-2, 175, and 180-3.

was considered. The Government had already taken charge of the Hindu College to improve its management. Lumsden, an English official, suggested dissemination of European learning among the students of the Madrasah. The Madrasah Committee, however, rejected the suggestion as it considered it to be incompatible with the views with which the Madrasah had been originally established and endowed. Lumsden then directly approached the students, and some fifteen students volunteered to study English. In view of this response Lumsden requested the General Committee to appoint a qualified English teacher at the Madrasah, but nothing came out of his efforts. Thus even this well-known Muslim educational institution remained without an English teacher. Ultimately, in August 1829, the Madrasah relented, and as many as forty-two students came forward to learn English. The rapid increase in the number of Muslim students wanting to learn English disproves the view held in certain circles that the Muslims were averse to English education. It is found that the Muslims showed great interest whenever provision was made to give them English education along with the study of the languages and literatures they loved and respected.³¹

W.W. Hunter observed in the course of his exposition of the causes of Muslim backwardness in education that, in the case of the Muslim, mosque preceded school even in the sphere of education and that, regardless of his worldly means, the Muslim often chose for his son an education which would secure for him an honoured place among the learned of his own community in preference to an education which would open the gates of success in the modern professions or in the official line.³² He further wrote:

The truth is that our system of public instruction which has awakened the Hindus from the sleep of centuries and quickened [the] masses with some of the noble impulses of the nation, is opposed to the traditions, unsuited to the requirements, and hateful to the religion of [the] Musalmans [sic]. Under Mohammadan [sic] rule the Hindus accepted their fate

³¹Ibid., pp. 187-9.

³²W.W. Hunter, *The Indian Musalmans* (Lahore, reprinted 1964), pp. 132-3.

exactly as they have done under our own. . . . With the Musalmans [*sic*] the case was altogether different. Before the country passed to us, they were not only the political but the intellectual power in India. . . . Had the Musalmans [*sic*] been wise, they would have perceived the change and accepted their fate. But an ancient conquering race cannot easily divest itself of the traditions of its nobler days.³³

For the first time, under the influence of Macaulay and Bentinck, the Government of India declared in a resolution, not without overtones of racial and cultural superiority, that its aim was to promote European literature and science. In his minute of 7 March 1835 William Bentinck endorsed Macaulay's view, and directed that all the funds at the disposal of the Government should thenceforth be spent on imparting to the Indians a knowledge of English literature and science.³⁴

The observation that the Muslims were not so intensely or widely interested in the study of English as the Hindus contained much truth. There was, equally, much justice and force in Macaulay's reply: "There is no good English school for the Mussulmans [*sic*], and one of our first duties is to establish one."³⁵

The protagonists of Arabic and Persian felt aggrieved with that part of the resolution which said that while colleges of Oriental learning were not to be abolished, the practice of supporting their students during their period of education was to be discontinued. Against this part of the resolution, says Wilson, there was a petition from the Muslims of Calcutta, signed by about eight thousand of them. This petition is often cited as supporting the common assumption that the Muslims were particularly prejudiced against English education. It is, however, important to remember that the Hindus of Calcutta too submitted a petition expressive of their alarm and suspicion as to the aims of the resolution and their misgiving as to the consequences of its implementation. The alarm of the Muslims would appear to be quite natural when we consider how

³³Ibid.

³⁴Mahmood, n. 26, pp. 50-51. See, also, Ram Gopal, *Indian Muslims* (Bombay, 1964), p. 18.

³⁵Mallick, n. 7, p. 200.

the very existence of the only institution in which their religious and cultural literature was being taught was at stake. The petition was by no means a protest against English education. It was an attempt to defeat a proposal which, if accepted, would have resulted in the closing down of the Madrasah.³⁶

The orthodox group believed that the object of the Government was the conversion of the "natives" and that the Government encouraged English exclusively and discouraged Hindu and Muslim studies because it wanted the people to become Christians. This belief was not unfounded. The schools founded by the Christian missions, which were the forerunners of Government institutions, were already mingling the teaching of English with the teaching of Christianity in disregard of the policy of religious neutrality.³⁷ In the words of Duff, a missionary, as quoted by Ram Gopal:

Our great object was to convey as largely as possible knowledge of our ordinary improved literature and science to the young persons; but another and more vital object was to convey a thorough knowledge of Christianity with its evidences and doctrines.³⁸

Alarmed by the militant views of the Anglicists and the extreme zeal of the missionary institutions and moved by the petition of the Muslims of Calcutta appealing to the Government to spare the Madrasah and abstain from measures which might result in the destruction of the literature and religious system of Islam, William Bentinck declared a policy of religious neutrality.³⁹ The missionaries and certain overzealous Europeans protested, saying that "Christianity should not be sacrificed to worldly expediency". As late as 1846 the Governor of Madras decided to introduce the study of the Bible in all educational institutions. Attendance in the Bible class was, however, made optional.

³⁶Mahmood, n. 26, p. 53; and Ram Gopal, n. 34, p. 18. See, also, Mallick, n. 7, p. 204.

³⁷Ram Gopal, n. 34, pp. 18-19; and the *Friends of India*, 5 April 1838. See, also, *the Hindu Intelligencer* (Calcutta), 16 October 1854.

³⁸Quoted in Ram Gopal, n. 34, p. 20.

³⁹Mahmood, n. 26, p. 64.

Later abandoned under instructions from the Court of Directors, the work of disseminating the tenets of the Christian religion was left to the missionaries and the overzealous Europeans.⁴⁰ And yet this throws considerable light on the attitude of the officials towards religious education and their hope of proselytization. In any case it does not disprove the charge that the Government of India intended to replace Islam and the Hindu religion and culture with their own. The anti-Islamic attitude of the Europeans was to be found reflected in the comments of the various newspapers as well. The *Friends of India* observed:

We are expending large sums in teaching "a religion in which we do not believe and a philosophy which we ridicule in a language for which we can never have the smallest occasion". . . . The Musalmans [*sic*] have the right to know and learn their own traditions and history. We object only to the direct communication of such knowledge in our colleges. . . . we cannot understand those who advocate the teaching of Mohammedan [*sic*] traditions, even accompanied by English instruction. That creed [i.e. Islam] is not the belief of the governing Power.⁴¹

In fact the British considered the imparting of Islamic education highly dangerous. The *Friends of India* thus observed:

Sugar plums are not the end of education, but if the child will not learn without them it must have sugar plums. Perhaps so, but they should not contain poison. Our argument is that Government is deliberately teaching that which it deliberately confesses to be injurious and absurd. We are compressing [suppressing?] Mohammedanism [*sic*] in Constantinople, longing for its downfall in London, and sharpening its weapons in Calcutta.⁴²

Small wonder if, in view of observations of this type, the

⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 58-59 and 72.

⁴¹*Friends of India*, 31 July 1856. See, also, Appendix VII of the present work.

⁴²Ibid.

Government's policy of religious neutrality appeared to be a hollow slogan and a hoax to the Muslims.

According to O'Leary, the survival of an antagonistic spirit between the Muslims and the Christians and the tendency of the natural sciences to breed irreligiousness were the real causes of the Muslim reluctance to learn English and acquire Western learning. To the Muslims their religion was not just a set of opinions or a speculative ideology. It implied a social order of life which differed vastly from that of the Christians, the Jews, and the heathens.⁴³

O'Leary held that each religion in the East represented a social group with a more or less self-contained culture and that in many respects the term "religion" corresponded to what the West understood by the term "nation". He also observed that the Muslims were accustomed to regard Islam and Christendom as two nations. He remarked a certain brotherhood in Islam which bound its adherents together as against the non-Muslim world and made them imagine that Christendom was actuated by a similar feeling of fraternity and loyalty. He admitted: "In the past such a feeling was recognized among the Christians and survived down to the eighteenth century, when it was still felt as a disgraceful act of treachery for a Christian Power to be allied with Muslims against another Christian State."⁴⁴

It was only towards the end of the eighteenth century, thanks to the impact of the writings of liberal thinkers like Locke, Bentham, and others, that the West moved over to the doctrine of equality of men irrespective of their religions and cultures and started treating religion as though it were just a matter of private opinion. Even then the change-over to the liberal policy of treating all religions equally was painfully slow. Most people, especially the missionaries, were animated by a feeling of superiority of the Christian religion or culture over the Oriental religions. This was why the Muslims felt that the spirit which formerly led the various Christian peoples to unite in a common attack upon Islam was still alive. "The Muslims impute to the Christian nations", in the words of O'Leary, "a crusading spirit

⁴³Ram Gopal, n. 34, p. 19. See, also, Smart, n. 12, pp. 421 and 423.

⁴⁴Ibid.

which aims at the wrecking of Islam, and there are circumstances which appear to endorse this view."⁴⁵

Many thoughtful Muslims objected to Western influence on the ground that it was unduly rationalistic in tendency and that it undermined the people's commitment to orthodoxy. They based their objection on some very real evidence of the generally irreligious orientation of those who had come under Western influence. They pointed out how not only Islam but Christianity and Judaism too had quite as definitely lost their hold on the younger generation and were surviving only as a kind of humanitarianism more or less corresponding to positivism. Was it possible for religion to keep pace with intellectual progress? In ancient Greece religion had stood apart, and the intellectual life of philosophy had developed independently. However, neither Christianity nor Islam countenanced this sort of divorce between the observance of religion and the pursuit of intellectual life. The question, therefore, was whether religion was capable of readjusting itself to a new intellectual atmosphere. Islam had faced this challenge earlier too. After taking shape in the Arab atmosphere it had spread to lands already steeped in Hellenistic culture and in the process had adapted itself to conditions not contemplated by its early protagonists.⁴⁶ Christianity too had confronted this question during the Renaissance. Now, in the context of nineteenth-century India, the Muslims were called upon to make another readjustment—to the new learning.

Hence the Muslims felt inhibited, not by English education or the new learning as such, but by the purposes which the new learning was apparently designed to serve. And such a reaction was not particularly or exclusively limited to the orthodox Muslims but extended to the orthodox Hindus as well. The average Muslim regarded Western education simply as a species of craftsmanship, a knowledge extremely useful for certain purposes, especially for the pursuit of wealth and comfort and prosperity, but in no sense possessing the depth and the power of illumination associated with the learning or scholarship that was available in the mosque.⁴⁷ When, therefore, the Muslims

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 61-62 and 64.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 64.

were required to submit themselves to what they regarded as a defective system of education, and that too at the hands of their old rivals, who looked for all the world like being bent upon destroying Islam, they naturally baulked at it. They fell back in order to think and consider all the pros and cons and, if possible, to devise some *via media*.

Though the Muslims thus generally preferred traditional education, it would be wrong to say that they entirely ignored modern education. A liberal section, though very small, did exist in the Muslim community from the very beginning of the nineteenth century and was fascinated by Western education and culture. Unlike the orthodox, these liberals cared much for their own worldly progress and the material prosperity of Muslim society. Although they did not ignore their religious education in quest of material progress, they thought it necessary for the sake of keeping pace with the times not to give in to fear and find refuge in conservatism. Hence they acquired secular as well as religious education. They learnt English and advised the Muslims to learn from the West all that was good. A number of examples may be cited. Abdur Rahim Dahri of Gorakhpur at first received religious and traditional education and subsequently acquired proficiency in the English language. Indeed he ended up by becoming a devoted teacher of English at the Fort William College.⁴⁸ Mirza Abu Talib and Lutfullah were highly knowledgeable in the Oriental sciences. They too learnt English, visited London, and, impressed by the achievements of Western culture, advised fellow Muslims to learn from the West and acquire a knowledge of the Western sciences.⁴⁹ Concerted efforts were made in Bengal to introduce English for the Muslims. These efforts bore fruit only during the middle of the nineteenth century. In 1854 the Calcutta Madrasah was reorganized. The Anglo-Persian Department was enlarged. Every step was taken to make the Calcutta Madrasah worthy of the confidence of the Muslim community. In 1856-57 it had 158 students on its rolls, and these studied both English and Persian. In course of time a Colingah (Kalinga) branch of this school was opened.⁵⁰ Nawab

⁴⁸See Abdur Rahman Parvaz Islahi, "Abdur Rahim Dahri ki Khud Navish: Svānih Umri", *Jāmiā*, April 1975.

⁴⁹See Chapter 8 of the present work.

⁵⁰Mallick, n. 7, pp. 253-5. See, also, the *Hindu Intelligencer*, 30 October 1854.

Abdul Latif, founder of the Muhammadan Literary Society in Bengal (1853), made a vigorous plea for the imparting of English education to Muslim boys and suggested the elevation of the Anglo-Persian Department of the Calcutta Madrasah to the status of a college.⁵¹ A college known as Madrasah Aliyah was set up on 1 August 1836 with the help of the resources provided by the Haji Muhammad Mohsin Fund. This college also provided English education.⁵²

Nawab Shamsuddaulah and, later, Sir Salar Jang of Hyderabad were great advocates of Western education and established schools and colleges.⁵³

Madrasah Ghaziuddin, founded for the study of Oriental languages, became the Delhi College in 1825 for imparting instruction and training in the Western as well as Oriental sciences. According to Zakaullah, the *fatvās* issued by Shah Abdul Aziz and Maulana Abdul Hai pronouncing the study of English lawful cleared the way for the spread of English education among the Muslims. Zakaullah himself, Deputy Nazir Ahmad, and Maulana Muhammad Husain Azad studied in the Delhi College and profited intellectually by the new learning. They respected their European teachers and loved them very much. The College produced a group of people who aimed at a revolution of the Muslim inheritance in the way of ideas and beliefs.⁵⁴

And, finally, Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan launched a vigorous movement among the Muslims in favour of Western education in the second half of the nineteenth century. His conspicuous success was made possible by the pioneers mentioned above. Even then he had to struggle hard to remove the fears and misgivings of the Muslims by means of a compromise formula that gave due regard to the views of the Orientalists and the *ulamā*. The Muslims were provided a balanced course of Western,

⁵¹R.C. Majumdar, *Glimpses of Bengal in the 19th Century* (Calcutta, 1960), p. 50; Wadud, n. 27, p. 473; and the *Hindu Patriot* (Calcutta), 31 May 1855.

⁵²M. Mujib, *Indian Muslims* (London, 1967), p. 519.

⁵³Vaidya and others, *History of the Freedom Struggle in Hyderabad* (Hyderabad, 1956), pp. 211-15. See, also, Chapter 3 of the present work.

⁵⁴See Chapter 8 of the present work.

Oriental, and religious education in the Aligarh College. The College later blossomed into a big university and played a very important role in the life of the community.⁵⁵

In short, the inner contradictions of modern political and economic theories current in England in the first half of the nineteenth century, the dual character of the Government, the rapid changes on the political scene and in the economic conditions of the people, the deceitful nature of British rule, the British policy of discrimination and *divide et impera*, and the arrogance of race and power which British officials manifested at every step made the people of India generally and the Muslims particularly regard Western education with serious misgiving and, at times, hostility. One consequence of this was the extremely inconsistent and slow growth of Western institutions and values in India. No wonder, then, that British rule with all its inner contradictions failed to make a durable impact on the Indian mind and social structure. The conservative societies put up stout resistance for some time but soon found their intellectual defences crumbling and they eventually succumbed to the temptation of immediate gain. On the other hand the orthodox societies, thanks to their strong intellectual defence, never yielded. They sought for reforms within and readjusted, though late, to the new system without compromising their own.

⁵⁵Altaf Husain Hali, *Hayāt-i Jāved* (Aligarh, 1922), pp. 149-50; and Jain, n. 51, pp. 28-30. See, also, L.S.S. O' Malley, ed., *Modern India and the West* (London, 1968), edn 2, pp. 399 and 400.

Chapter 10

CONCLUSIONS

Our detailed study of Muslim reaction in India to British rule and culture during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries thus shows that the attitudes of the Muslims during the period do not admit of any monolithic categorization. There were many variations. The erstwhile ruling class and the *ulamā*, who successively assumed the leadership of the Indian Muslims, manifested a sustained hatred of British rule and Western culture. The Muslim masses loyally followed in their footsteps. However, the nobility and a section of the *élite* within the Muslim community showed themselves to be responsive to the changing values and situations. Although they looked upon British rule as a temporary phase, they felt that the impact of Western values and institutions upon the people of India in general and the Muslims in particular was significant and would leave an enduring mark.

The Muslim ruling houses submitted to British domination owing to the force of circumstances. Later they were unable to reassert themselves. They were too effete to play any role in the resurgence of Muslim society. Politically anti-British, they were entirely insensible of the significance of the changing situation.

With the beginning of the eighteenth century a new political phenomenon emerged in court politics. The nobility excelled the rulers in all departments. The incompetent representatives of the once-mighty Royal houses showed no inclination to change. On the other hand they accelerated the process of degeneration by placing too much trust in their nobles, who in their turn made compromises with the British. The last three Mughal Emperors paid a heavy price for the policy of ruling by proxy adopted by their predecessors. Hence they were not exclusively responsible for the humiliations which they suffered at the hands of the British. The sins committed by their corrupt predecessors and selfish nobles were

visited upon them. The situation was already beyond their control: the whole administrative machinery had been affected by the atmosphere of decadence all round. They lost all hopes of restoration of their sovereignty and resigned themselves to the will of God. They lingered on with their hollow titles and depended abjectly on the British even for their maintenance. And when they felt that their nominal position too was being undermined by the British, they started mumbling about what they called the chicanery and dishonesty of the British rulers.

Was there any alternative before the Muslim rulers? This is a difficult question. It would appear that there was no way for them except to welcome the change, to learn the new ways and imbibe the new values and ideas from the British, and to organize themselves afresh to hit back at an opportune time. They, however, failed to rise to the occasion.

A long period of inertia had deprived the Mughal Emperors of the basic qualities required for vigorous leadership. They were suited more to peace-time activity than to diplomacy and warfare. They had thus already forfeited the right to rule over India. In Hyderabad Nizam Ali maintained his posture of independence till the arrival of Wellesley. He signed three alliances with the British, and these reduced the State of Hyderabad to the status of a British dependency. The successors of Nizam Ali like other Indian rulers came increasingly thereafter under the iron control of the British. On all important issues the Nizams were obliged to consult the British and act on their advice. This filled them with resentment. It is true that the rulers of Hyderabad were never an appendage of the British as the rulers of Oudh had allowed themselves to become. Even then they failed to revive the glory of their past. The nobles began to play a dominant role in the politics of the court. Though they were not as unwise and cruel as the nobles of the Mughal court, yet with their narrow aims they proved more loyal to the British than their counterparts in other centres. In Oudh Shujaudaulah, the Nawab Vizier, who was a great military leader and a shrewd statesman, was the first to join the British alliance system. He was the only ruler in North India who was capable of defeating the British. As ill luck would have it, he chose to pioneer the fatal course of alliance with the British. This showed the narrowness of his

purpose and struggle. His successors most faithfully but imprudently followed his policy. All the rulers of Oudh remained sincerely loyal to the British. However, in course of time this faithfulness proved fatal to their status, nay to their very existence. The British in fact turned out to be their worst enemies. No one suffered more than the rulers of Oudh at the hands of the British. Undue British interference crushed all the initiative of the rulers and their interest in the administration. Shujaudaulah, Sadat Ali, Mohammad Ali Shah, and Wajid Ali Shah would have made a name for themselves in history if they had avoided meek submission to the British. Among the smaller States, Rampur and Tonk at first offered resistance to the British imperialists. Later, like other States, they too accepted subordination to the British.

The independence of the *ulamā* was, at first, undermined by their own strong-willed rulers. With the decline of Muslim political power, however, they came into their own. They paid special attention to the purification of Muslim society. They had hardly commenced their work in the sphere of religious reform when they came up against a formidable religious and political enemy in the British. The *ulamā*, who had not spared even the Muslim rulers for following un-Islamic ways, could hardly be expected to accept the acts of the foreign rulers without judging each one of them with scrupulous reference to the basic principles and teachings of Islam. They were especially wary and critical of the British administrative measures because they suspected that the Christian rulers, who were well known for their inimical attitude towards Islam, were out to undermine the hold of Islam in India and to destroy the Muslims in India.

The Muslims entertain a great religious pride on account of the finality and universality of the Prophet's message. It is a commonly observed feature of the character of the Muslims that whenever they fail in any field of life, they tend to fall back exclusively upon their religious defences, especially the four orthodox schools of Islamic jurisprudence. And where these defences do not appear to give them clear-cut guidance, they tend to sulk, forgetting to use *ijtihād*, a golden principle of Islam which authorizes learned Muslims to adjust either to the new conditions in a new country or to changed circumstances through a creative re-interpretation of the message of the Prophet.

Shah Waliullah, a renowned Muslim religious thinker of the eighteenth century, reminded the Muslims of this principle and stressed the need to use it in the new situation created by the advent of the British. Accordingly his successors allowed the learning of English. And yet their Christian phobia and their excessive caution rendered the principle of *ijtihād* unavailing.

A comparative study of the various Muslim religious movements reveals a similarity of purpose and pattern. Although they differed in the causes which gave them birth and in their territorial settings, they all began with attempts to purify Muslim society and aimed eventually at organizing a *jihād* against the British. Khairabadi *ulamā* began with a liberal approach to the British but subsequently turned out to be entirely anti-British.

The various religious leaders commanded much influence with the masses. Most Muslims, being ignorant and illiterate, always depended upon them for guidance. Economically oppressed and politically dormant, the Muslim masses could not be roused except through an appeal to their religious susceptibilities. Hence the reaction of the Muslim masses to British rule and culture was not spontaneous. It was a reaction fostered by the orthodox *ulamā*.

Religion played a great role in the Uprising of 1857. Whatever may be the general nature of the Uprising, for the Muslims its suppression meant the tragic end of all their efforts to revive the Muslim power and restore Muslim prestige in India.

The nobility and the *élite* within the Muslim community were sensible of the changing values from the very beginning of British rule. Two factors contributed to their vulnerability. First, they had an open mind, being in touch with secular knowledge and not being too conservative in religious matters; and second, the attraction of lucrative careers got the better of their other-worldliness. Indeed they may well be looked upon as the pioneers of a renaissance in Muslim society.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century the Muslim nobles in the various centres fully realized that the Indian rulers stood nowhere in power and position before the British; so much so that, whenever any Indian ruler opposed British interference, the nobles persuaded him to desist from such "useless"

opposition. On the other hand the nobles who sided with the ruler in his opposition to British interference lacked calibre, strength, and conviction. The nobles generally adopted a dual policy. They pretended to be the courtiers of the Indian rulers and received huge salaries from them but served as yet another Subsidiary Force for the British Government. The rulers were left with no alternative but to rely upon these "amphibious" nobles as their only link with the British. This policy in the long run proved fatal to the interests of the rulers and the States as well. However, among the pro-British nobles we find some sincere men who genuinely appreciated the Western system and institutions and sought to reorganize their respective States on modern lines. The nobles of Hyderabad were especially consistent in their pro-British leanings. In fact they excelled the nobles of the other States in their response to Western culture and education. In their hostile reaction to the British ascendancy however, the people of Hyderabad excelled the people of other States. Sikandar Jah's stubborn reluctance to give in to British interference, Mubarizuddaullah's frequent brushes with the British power, and the popularity of the movement of Saiyyad Ahmad Bareilvi in the State clearly reflected the strong hostility of the people of Hyderabad to British rule. Their struggle, however, ended with the suppression of the Uprising of 1857.

In Oudh, on the other hand, there was not a single noble of any consequence who was anti-British. Some nobles did participate in the Uprising of 1857, but they did so more on account of their immediate shock at the deposition of Wajid Ali Shah and the abolition of the *tālukdārī* system than on account of their membership of any resistance movement. The only noble with an indisputably anti-British orientation was Mulla Mohammad, who helped Wazir Ali in his hostile activities against the British. Although politically they were allies of the British, neither the rulers of Oudh nor the nobles there showed any inclination to Western education and culture. In fact the conditions of the Oudh society were by no means propitious for the spread of Western culture. Political instability and love of Urdu and Urdu culture worked together to stem the tide of Westernization.

The Urdu language reached new heights and became famous for its refinement during the period covered by this study. Lucknow and Delhi emerged as the two powerful centres of

Urdu culture, followed by a third in Rampur. These centres could be compared with any other literary centre of the world like Baghdad, Bukhara, Nishapur, and Paris. However, this emotional attachment to Urdu and Urdu culture resulted in a state of stagnation in the life of the people of the whole of North India, especially Oudh. Paradoxically Oudh, which was politically a British stooge and which was no centre of opposition to Christian rule, proved to be more inimical to the growth of the new Western culture than Delhi or any other centre of the Muslim power. Delhi in fact struck a balance. The people of Delhi began to learn the Western sciences through the medium of the Urdu language without prejudice to their own language and culture.

As regards Western learning, there were differences of attitude and approach among the Muslims of India. The Muslims are enjoined by the Prophet to be receptive to learning, whatever the source. Moreover, it is universally admitted that the contribution of Muslim civilization to the European Renaissance, which enabled the Europeans to attain unparalleled heights of achievement, was by no means inconsiderable. We should, therefore, have thought that the Muslims would enthusiastically absorb Western learning when it was introduced in India. If they did not do so, it was because the circumstances in which the new learning came rendered it suspect. Later, of course, a section of Muslims felt that there was need to evolve a formula by which the rational sciences might receive their due importance in the curriculum without coming in the way of the religious disciplines; for in no situation could a Muslim neglect religious education.

Muslim liberalism in India dates back to the early nineteenth century. It grew slowly at first but gained momentum after 1857. The number of enlightened Muslims—poets, teachers, scholars, *et al.*—was so small before 1857 that they could not exert any influence upon the mind of the Muslim community. Besides, the orthodox movements, the conservative outlook of the *ulamā*, and the psychological antipathy between the Muslims and the British rulers inhibited orderly growth of Muslim liberalism. Nevertheless it is important to remember that the Muslims who emerged as leaders and exponents of change after 1857 were no sudden converts to liberalism. Nor was their

liberalism a product of fear of revenge by the British. In fact they had started their work long before. However, the failure of Muslim orthodoxy to recapture power in 1857 made their task easier and accelerated the pace of growth of the liberal movement.

The *élite* responded favourably upon the whole to British rule and Western culture right from the start. Though they considered British rule a temporary phase, they did not altogether ignore or omit to assess Western values, ideas, and institutions. The early poets were much shocked at the political, social, and economic degradation of the then Muslim society. They could not reconcile themselves to the establishment of British rule on the debris of the Mughal Empire. They even hoped for a miraculous revival of the Muslim power. However, instead of turning openly hostile to the British, they adopted an attitude of compromise.

As we come close to the middle of the nineteenth century, we observe a subtle change in the attitude of the poets. The greatest of them all, Mirza Ghalib, distinguished himself by his genuine liberalism and appreciation of Western culture. He looked forward to a new India, an India transformed by contact with Western culture.

Teachers, scholars, and writers are as sensitive as poets to the problems of society and frequently express their opinions freely and frankly. A number of such men of repute responded favourably to Western ideas and institutions. These included Mirza Abu Talib Landani, Abdur Rahim Dahri, Lutfullah, and Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan Nechari.

During the third decade of the nineteenth century the Delhi College was established for imparting modern education. This College produced a number of good Muslim scholars such as Zakaullah of Delhi, Deputy Nazir Ahmad, and Maulana Muhammad Husain Azad. They imbibed the new learning without losing their own inheritance of Muslim learning and without departing from the Muslim intellectual tradition. It is interesting to note that the orthodox generally ridiculed all those who accepted the new learning with nicknames like Landani, Dahri, Nechari, and so on.

It should be clear from the above instances that even before Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan appeared on the scene, the liberal

ideas of the West had won many admirers in the Muslim community. Several men of great reputation and learning had urged the Muslims to learn freely from the West if not from the British. Among the centres of the Muslim power the last to fall was Delhi, and yet Delhi was the first to go in for Western education and to arrange for the imparting of it in a manner that would be acceptable to the Muslims. Nevertheless, in Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan and his movement the process of liberalization among the Muslims reached its culmination. Sir Saiyyad Ahmad Khan regarded Western education as the only possible way to the total regeneration of the Muslims in India. He was concerned not so much about the well-being of British rule in India as about the restoration of the lost prestige of the Muslims of India.

The Muslims were fully aware of the boons as well as the evils of the new learning; and they were not, therefore, opposed to the new learning as such. In fact some aspects of Muslim learning and culture received much more encouragement during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries than they had ever received before. There arose numerous schools and movements during the period. It must, however, be admitted that although, during the first half of the nineteenth century, there were certain restrictions on the study of English and Western learning along with the rational and natural sciences, there was no prohibition of it. Moreover, there was nothing special about the Muslims dragging their feet about Western learning. It is well known that whenever an ancient or orthodox community comes up against a challenge, it at first resists. For instance, orthodox Christians resisted the progress of rationalism and the Renaissance in Europe.

The success of the experiment at the Aligarh College and, more importantly, at the Delhi College proves that if the Muslims had been provided Western education through the medium of Urdu along with training and instruction in their own religious and cultural traditions, they would never have objected. Unfortunately, the British rulers never respected the sentiments of the Indians. Hence they failed to make any durable impact, especially on the Muslims. Islam, which is a universal, proselytizing religion, could hardly afford to be indifferent to new currents of learning and culture. It had already broken

the regional, geographical, and ethnic barriers of the world to become a religion of all mankind. In fact the Muslim community did not at first feel anything wrong in pursuing their own sciences through their own system. This was why they did not think it necessary to opt for the Western sciences merely for the sake of worldly progress and at the risk of being alienated from their own religion and culture. Hence the objection of the Muslims was not to the acquisition of the new learning as such but to the style, system, and purpose for which, in their view, it was being imparted among the Indians. Not that modern education was entirely ignored among the Muslims. A liberal section did exist in the Muslim community even at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Having gained supreme power, the British found themselves in a position to discharge their duty to their religion and culture by propagating the tenets of Christianity and denouncing the Indian religions, especially Islam. They had ceased to be mere merchants; they were now the champions of a specific culture, religion, and civilization which they proclaimed to be superior and which they sought to transplant to India at the expense of the religions which had flourished on its soil for centuries. Hence the resistance of the orthodox Muslim *ulamā*. The Muslim resistance was open and direct in Bengal, where the British were in total control. It was ambivalent in North India, where the British thought it expedient to avoid denouncing the Muslims openly and blatantly.

The British played down Muslim liberalism deliberately with a view to projecting the Muslims as a fanatical and static community. However, this liberalism had its roots in Islam itself and was nurtured by the situations and circumstances then obtaining in India. It was of course used also by those sections of Muslim society which cared more for worldly progress and economic prosperity. Not that the Muslims who took the liberal line had lost their faith altogether or that they had been alienated from their religion. They considered that their religion was in no way inconsistent with human progress. In fact they sought to justify their liberalism on the basis of Islam.

What was the British response to this liberalism? Fundamentally it was negative. The British seemed to have decided that

whatever the Muslim attitude they would deal with the Muslims in accordance with their well-known policy, which was characterized by political deceit, social discrimination, and religious antagonism.

Appendix I

SHAH ALAM'S LETTER TO GEORGE III*

[In reply to the Emperor's request for a military force to be stationed at Allahabad "to help him ascend the throne at Delhi", Lord Clive said that he regretted his inability to comply without a "reference to his sovereign". The Emperor then decided to send a representation to George III and had a letter drafted at Damdama in consultation with Clive, Carnac, and George Vansittart but without the knowledge of the Council. However, this letter was never presented.]

Owing to the treachery and ingratitude of the servants of the State the Kingdom of the House of Timur has fallen on evil days. Through the disloyalty of the people, especially of Ghaziuddin Khan, . . . my father, the late Emperor Alamgir, attained martyrdom. He [Ghaziuddin Khan] was planning to deal similarly with me, but this supplicant of God managed to escape and for years was living miserably at Allahabad when Nawab Saulat Jang Bahadur [Lord Clive] and General Carnac presented themselves at his court and by their unsparing efforts. . . reorganized the affairs of State. They entrusted the affairs of this province of Bengal to the loyal servants of the Kingdom, and have assigned the districts of Kora and Allahabad to the Crown for maintaining the dignity of the court. . . . This supplicant of God is immensely pleased with the services and sincerity of Nawab Salut [Saulat] Jang Bahadur and General Carnac and all the English officers. It is due to their help and support that I am firmly established at Allahabad. Considering the sincerity of friendship and nobility of heart of my Brother in England, I feel confident that he would dispatch a force of 5 or 6 thousand English troops to be stationed near me at Allahabad, so that, with Nawab Salut [Saulat] Jang and General Carnac, they may escort this supplicant of God to his capital, Shahjahanabad, and

*Indian Historical Records Commission, *Proceedings*, vol. 16, December 1939. The letter bears no signature or date.

place him on the throne of Hindustan, to which he is rightful heir. The kindness and generosity that my Brother would thus be showing would be recorded for ever on the passage of time; every city and country in the world would gratefully remember the King of England, who helped Shah Alam, King of Hindustan, regain his ancestral throne. As a proof of my absolute trust in their friendship and also as a reward for their services to me, I have granted the Diwani of the Subah of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa to the Company, and this, I feel sure, would please my Brother in England.

Appendix II

COMMON MAN'S CONCERN FOR THE MUGHAL EMPEROR

[Here is a letter which appeared in *John Bull* (Calcutta) of 14 March 1832 on the treatment meted out to the Emperor Akbar II by the authorities. It purports to be a protest from a poor Muslim and expresses dismay at the humiliations that were being heaped on the head of the Emperor.]

We were fully assured that the English gentlemen were men of truth and uprightness and that nothing could be done contrary to what they stipulated and promised. . . . But of late we have noticed many deviations from their former promises and character. The first instance is that they have discontinued the respect and the honour which used to be paid at Delhi to His Majesty the Emperor by the appointment of a Resident. In the second place, having taken away the Resident from the court of Delhi, they have appointed Residents to Rajpootana and other inferior Hindu courts of Delhi. If it be said that the Emperor of Delhi is not independent and, therefore, it is almost useless keeping up a great establishment there, then we would say that when the promise was made this consideration should have been used; for it was likewise improper then. . . . at that time the condition of His Majesty was not different from what it is now. If this was done because the Governor-General was not presented the *nazrs*, it is likewise improper; for that was most completely opposed to the practice of the former Governor-General. If it be in consequence of Rammohun's [*sic*] going to England as Vakeel, this likewise is unreasonable; for had the complaint been made to the Badshaw [*sic*] of Arabia or Constantinople, the English might have been justly offended. If they maintain that [the] Moosalmans [*sic*] are their enemies and from them they have taken this country, and that to treat [the] enemy lightly is generally approved, we have no answer to such a plea. If again they are offended through the insurrection of Teeto Meer [*sic*], neither is this any justification. Many other Teeto Meers [*sic*] spring up. We had

thought [that] as the followers of Islam are possessed of the scripture there might be a union between them and the English; and the honour of the Moosalmans [sic] could not, we thought, be in any measure affected by the British governing Hindustan. But this hope is now departing.

Appendix III

A NEWLY FOUND DOCUMENT ON WAJID ALI SHAH*

[A very interesting handwritten note on Wajid Ali Shah's character is found attached to a book on Oudh in the Dr Zakir Husain Library, Jamia Millia Islamia. It is an Urdu translation by one M. Aly Riza of Muradabad from an English magazine called the *Calcutta Review*. Unfortunately, however, the translator has not given us complete details. This makes it difficult for us to determine its validity and authenticity. Hence the need for caution in using it in any historical analysis.

From the text it would appear that the translator, being sympathetic to Wajid Ali Shah for one reason or another, is keen to paper over the weaknesses in the character of Wajid Ali Shah. He brings many new facts to light about Wajid Ali Shah's character. The text discredits the theory that Wajid Ali Shah had an obsession about women. All the same it concedes his neglect of the administration.

According to the note, Wajid Ali Shah's morals were good, and he never indulged in licentiousness or maintained illicit relations with women as is generally believed. He always acted upon the advice of the religious leader, Mujtahid-ul Asr, who always accompanied him. He was endowed with a tender heart for the poor and the needy.

The note says further that contrary to the general belief Wajid Ali Shah was a very talented king with rare qualities of head and heart. He patronized learned men. He was a lover of fine arts and invented several styles in classical music and dance. His name is especially associated with the invention of *thumri*. He was the first to introduce drama in the Urdu language. As a builder he was next to Shah Jahan. He was very fond of

*See Kamaluddin Haidar, *Qaisar-ut Tavārikh* (Lucknow, 1907), vol. 2, in the Dr Zakir Husain Library, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.

gardens, zoos, and museums. He was also a poet of considerable merit.

Aly Riza in the end accuses the European as well as Indian historians of ignoring the good qualities of Wajid Ali Shah and focussing on certain alleged weaknesses in his character.

What the note says may well contain some exaggeration on the part of Aly Riza. Due allowance should be made for this possibility. However, from our study of the other sources of the history of this period we know that some of the facts mentioned by Aly Riza as regards the talents of Wajid Ali Shah are correct. We cannot, however, argue that those talents justify Wajid Ali Shah's lack of interest in the administration as a ruler or his meek submission to British rule. It may be that he was not without character, but he clearly lacked the virtues expected in a good ruler.

We reproduce here some excerpts from the original handwritten text.]

واجد علی شاہ کے کردار کے بارے میں

ایک نادر خرید

سلطنتِ اودھ کا مشہور مگر معزول بادشاہ واجد علی شاہ ان بد نصیب
اشخاص میں سے تھا، جن کے عمدہ چال چلن کی تصویر پبلک کی نگاہ سے
پوشیدہ ہے اور برائیوں کا فوٹو ہمیشہ پیش نظر رہا ہے۔ اس میں شک نہیں کہ
اس میں انتظامِ سلطنت کا ایسا مادہ نہیں تھا جو اس کو ہر دل عزیز حاکم بنا دیتا
اور یہی وجہ اس کے زوالِ سلطنت کا اصل باعث ہوئی۔

یہ بالکل ٹھیک ہے کہ واجد علی شاہ کے زمانے میں سلطنت کی
انتظامی حالت بہت خراب تھی، لیکن جو اس سے اچھی طرح واقف ہیں
وہ کہہ سکتے ہیں کہ اس نے کسی پر ظلم و ستم نہیں کئے۔ چند واقعات جو پیش
آئے وہ اس کی لاپرواہی یا افسروں کی ناانصافی سے پیش آئے تھے۔
اودھ کا دارالخلافہ ایشیا میں عیاشی اور آرام و آسائش کا اعلیٰ نمونہ
تھا۔ وہاں کی پبلک امن و عیاشی میں زندگی بسر کرنے میں حاکم کے قدم
بہ قدم چلتی تھی۔ بادشاہ کی عیاشی تمام ملکوں میں اس طرح پھیل گئی کہ لوگ
اس کو اول درجہ کا عیاشی تصور کرنے لگے اور اس کے عمدہ خصائل کو بکلیت
فراموش کر دیا۔ بہت کم لوگ جانتے ہیں کہ وہ علم دوست اور ہندوستانی راگ

میں روح پھونکنے اور بہت سے مفید ہنروں کا موجد تھا۔ اس کا نتیجہ یہ ہوا کہ لکھنؤ ہرن کے مشہور آدمیوں کا مرکز بن گیا۔

جب واجد علی شاہ کلکتے جا کر رہے اور میٹا بئرج رہائش پذیر ہوئے تو انھیں ایک لاکھ روپے کی پنشن انگریزی حکومت نے منظور کی۔ نواب خاص محل نے کہا کہ یہ منظور نہ کریں۔ یہ آپ کے شایان شان نہیں ہے میں جب تک زندہ ہوں ہر ماہ اتنا دیا کروں گی۔ وہ بہت مال دار تھیں لیکن بادشاہ نے اپنی زوجہ کا پنشن یافتہ ہونا منظور نہیں کیا۔ اس دولت سے میٹا بئرج کو سجایا۔ محلات تعمیر کرائے، باغ لگائے اور عجائب خانے کھلوائے۔ وہاں بھی یہ فضول خرچیاں شروع ہو گئیں تاکہ اودھ کے بادشاہ کی وہاں بھی آخر وقت تک یہ شان رہے۔ یہ محلات دریا کے کنارے تھے اور سد سلطان اور حد سلطان کہلاتے تھے۔ ان دونوں حدوں کے درمیان باغ عدن تھا۔ یہ سب بادشاہ کی دانائی اور تجویز کے نمونے تھے۔ ۱۸۵۶ء سے ۱۸۶۶ء تک میٹا بئرج لکھنؤ کی تصویر بن گیا۔ میٹا بئرج میں کسی بیرونی آدمی کو جانے کی اجازت نہیں تھی لوگ چھپ چھپ کر باغات دیکھنے آتے تھے۔ پھر اُمرائے کے سمجھانے سے سال میں دو ایک بار میٹا بئرج دیکھنے کی اجازت دے دی جس سے وہاں بڑا میلہ لگتا تھا۔

واجد علی شاہ اردو کا عمدہ شاعر تھا۔ اس فن میں اس کو معقول واقفیت تھی۔ کلیات اختر جو میٹا بئرج سے چھپا اس کی شاعری کا مجموعہ ہے فن موسیقی میں بھی بڑا کمال حاصل کیا تھا۔ اُس نے گانے اور ناچنے میں عام

سیر ایجاد کیں۔ بعض کا خیال ہے کہ ٹھمری اسی کی ایجاد کی ہوئی ہے۔
 ابھی تک ڈرامے کا اردو میں چلن نہیں تھا۔ واجد علی شاہ نے ڈرامے
 کے لئے راجہ اندر کا واقعہ چنا اور اُس زمانے کے مشہور شاعر امانت کو حکم دیا
 کہ اس کو نظم کریں جو اندر سبھا کے نام سے مشہور ہوا۔ واجد علی شاہ اس
 تماشے کو لکھنؤ کے قیصر باغ میں کرایا کرتے تھے۔ اور خود کلفام کا پارٹ ادا کرتے
 تھے۔ باغ کو ایک بڑی تماشہ گاہ بنا دیا تھا۔ ٹیبا برج میں اس ڈرامے کو
 اس طرح دکھانا ناممکن تھا تاہم دو چار پارٹ اس کے کئے جاتے تھے۔
 وہ احکام مذہبی کا پابند تھا۔ اُس نے بیویاں شادی کر کے رکھیں۔ اُس پر
 زنا کا الزام نہیں لگایا جاسکتا تھا۔ مجتہد العصر اس کو صلاح و مشورہ دینے
 کے لئے ہر وقت ساتھ رہتے تھے۔ وہ بہت رحم دل تھا۔ لکھنؤ سے اجڑے
 ہوئے لوگوں کو کسی نہ کسی طرح روزگار دیتا تھا۔
 تعجب ہے اتنی صفتوں والے بادشاہ کو عیاش مشہور کر دیا اور
 یورپین اور ہندوستانی موڑخوں نے اس کی صفتوں پر توجہ نہ دی۔

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Appendix IV

PROCLAMATION BY MIRZA MUHAMMAD FEROZ SHAH SHAHZADA

To all Hindus and Mohammedans [*sic*] of Hindustan who are faithful to their religion—know that sovereignty is one of God's chief boons, . . . [a boon] which a deceitful tyrant is never allowed to retain for long years. The English have been committing all kinds of excess and tyranny, being desirous of doing away with the religion of Hindus and Musalmans [*sic*]. God, having seen this fact, has so alerted the hearts of the inhabitants of Hindustan that they are now engaged in efforts to get rid of the English altogether. Now the Firangis, though fast being destroyed, are vainly seeking to fight back.

O Hindustani brethren, gird yourselves against their subversive determination. . . . Break their heads and send the *kāfirs* to hell.*

*Dated Bareilly [Bareilly], Rujjab 3, A. H. 1274. See *Bengal Harkaru* (Calcutta), 9 August 1858.

Appendix V

TALIB'S ODE TO LONDON*

Henceforward we will devote our lives to London and its heart-alluring damsels.

Our hearts are satisfied with viewing fields, gardens, rivers, and palaces.

We have no longing for the *toba* [or for] *Sudreh* or other trees of paradise.

We are content to rest under the shade of these terrestrial cypresses.

If the Sheikh of Mecca is displeased at our conversion, who cares?

May the temple which has conferred such blessings on us and its priests, flourish.

Fill the goblet with wine: If, by this, I am prevented from returning to my old religion, I care not; nay, I am the better pleased.

If the prime of my life has been spent in the service of an Indian cupid, it matters not; I am now rewarded by the smiles of the British fair.

Adorable creatures, whose flowing tresses, whether of flaxen or of jetly [*sic*] hue,

Or auburn gay, delight my soul, and ravish all my senses;

Whose ruby lips would animate the torpid clay, or marble statue.

Had I a renewal of life, I would with rapture devote it to your service.

These words of cupid, on your heart,

Taliba, are not accidental.

They were engendered by nature, like the streaks on the leaves of a tulip.

*Taken from Mirza Abu Talib, *Māsir-i Tālibī-fī Bilād Afranj: The Travels of Mirza Abu Talib Khan in Asia, Africa, and Europe, 1799-1803* Charles Stewart, trans. (London, 1810), p. 179.

Appendix VI

INDIFFERENCE OF MUSLIMS TO THE LEARNING OF ENGLISH*

[The following is an editorial published in a leading English daily of the nineteenth century on the so-called Muslim hostility to the English language. The views expressed in it are typical of the Englishmen serving in India at that time.]

It quite escaped our recollection to offer some remarks on a letter from a Mohammedan [*sic*] which appeared in our columns a fortnight since upon this subject. . . . It is a lamentable fact that with some few exceptions Moosulman [*sic*] subjects have evinced the greatest indifference if not aversion to the study of the English language and to the acquisition of the knowledge embodied in it. While hundreds of Hindus have obtained so complete a mastery of our tongue as to be able to use it with almost as much felicity as an Englishman, rarely do we meet a Mohammedan [*sic*] who has acquired even a smattering of it. The Mohammedans [*sic*] have been so accustomed for so many centuries to impose their own language on the conquered people of India that the idea of applying to the language of the new dynasty which has displaced them carries with it an appearance of degradation; and they have so overweening a conceit for the sciences taught in their own books that they treat the most magnificent scientific discoveries of the unbelievers with a degree of sovereign contempt. Of the students of the Hindu College, and the institution of the general assembly, of the free Church, we question whether one in twenty is a Mohammedan [*sic*]. And the attempt to introduce English into the Mohammedan [*sic*] College in Calcutta may be considered as a failure. The Maulvis and students have submitted to it because it is the wish of those on whom their stipend depends, but their feelings towards it are little different from those expressed by the Mohammedan [*sic*] conqueror respecting the Greek tongue, when he exclaimed, "What a barbarous language these

**Friends of India* (Serampore), 11 April 1844

dogs speak!" If their own wishes were consulted, they would doubtless expel English from the college tomorrow.

A language so refined and difficult as . . . English can never be acquired to any available [reasonable] extent where it is only a secondary object, and in the Mohammedan [sic] College it is not only an object of secondary importance, but an object which is seldom contemplated without a feeling of aversion.

We fear that the Mohammedans [sic] are destined to stand still in the national career of improvement which had commenced under our dynasty and to find that the Hindus, hitherto the object of their contempt, have shot ahead of them in all those mental pursuits which give true dignity to man and which under our government will become in an increasing ratio a passport to office. It is possible that the dread of being proselytized to the faith of the Christians may [sic] contribute to deter the Mohammedans [sic] from applying to our language or literature, but the main obstacle is doubtless that sectarian conceit of superiority and that deep-rooted contempt of everything which is not associated with Mohammedanism [sic], of which the cure is all but hopeless.

Appendix VII

THE EDUCATION OF THE MUSLIMS*

[Here is one more editorial from the same newspaper. It deals with the question of education of the Muslims. It reflects the arrogance and superciliousness as well as hostility of the British rulers to the Muslims generally.]

The proposal of the Government of Bombay to erect a grand Mussalman [*sic*] college within the fortifications of Aden struck the public as absurd. The class to be instructed was too small. The place was singularly ill adapted for a seat of learning. The teaching to be given was not required, and was opposed to the entire spirit of the Indian scheme of education. Yet the project was not so illogical. We maintain a madrasah at Calcutta. We are expending large sums in teaching "a religion in which we do not believe and a philosophy which we ridicule in a language for which we can never have the smallest occasion", although the institution has been reformed, English has been introduced, and Arabic studies are now only inducements to [the] Mussalmans [*sic*] to accept a tuition which conveys knowledge of a more practical character.

Mr Lee's comments on the progress of the first class: "Not a student in the class could tell me the position of Madinah with reference to Makkah, nor could one of them inform me of one single remarkable incident connected with it. All were alike ignorant of the grandfather of their own Prophet. None knew [of] the father of his favourite wife. Yet the average age of the students of the class is 18, and several of these young men are upwards of two and twenty years of age. The best boy in the class is Osad Ally [Asad Ali].

In other words, the State funds are expended in order that Mussalman [*sic*] students may become acquainted with the pedigree of the Prophet's wife. And yet we continue to assert that our policy in reference to education is one of non-interfe-

**Friends of India* (Serampore), 31 July 1856.

rence with religious tenets.

The Mussalmans [*sic*] have the right to know and learn their own traditions and history. We object only to the direct communication of such knowledge in our colleges. We would give grants-in-aid to schools owned and instructed by Mussalmans [*sic*] without stint and limit. The Government in that case simply stands aside. It pays for arithmetic and for geography, for instruction in history and for mensuration. Whatever the teachers choose to impart, whether it be the dogmas of Mohammed [*sic*], or the sentences of the Buddha, the laws of Munoo [Manu], or the purer precepts of Christianity, rests on their own responsibility. (Such plan for State instruction in Christianity could be understood.) We can understand those also who would teach English and the *shastras*, though we question the soundness of their discretion. Western learning destroys the false creed of itself, and geography and Hinduism are incompatible. But we cannot understand those who advocate the teaching of Mohammedan [*sic*] traditions, even accompanied by English instruction. That creed [*viz.* Islam] is not the belief of [the] governing Power. It is not one which knowledge, however acquired, must necessarily destroy. Its teaching is, therefore, inconsistent with that policy of non-interference avowed by the Government of India. (Suppose Osad Ally learns of the father of Aisha [Aysha]: it would make him a complete Mussalman [*sic*], but [it] would not serve the purpose for which we are spending a considerable amount of revenue, as he would be devoid of new knowledge.)

Experience has proved that they [*i.e.* the Muslims] will not study Western science unless we teach them also Arabian theology. We attract all classes by different devices to the same means of improvement. The Hindus of Bombay demand actual bribes; the Hindus of Bengal ask for social distinction and monopoly of place. The Mussalmans [*sic*] demand that a portion of their time shall be devoted to the Arabic scholiasts. Neither bribes, places, nor creed are the objects of the Government. They are means to an end. Objectionable perhaps, but still less objectionable than suffering whole classes to continue in ignorance. Sugar plums are not the end of education, but if the child will not learn without them it must have sugar plums. Perhaps so, but they should not contain poison. Our argument is that Government is deli-

berately teaching that which it deliberately confesses to be injurious and absurd. We are compressing [suppressing?] Mohomedanism [sic] in Constantinople, longing for its downfall in London, and sharpening its weapons in Calcutta.

GLOSSARY

[This is a list of Hindustani/Persian/Arabic words used in this book with their literal meanings and, in some cases, with their special or wider connotations in the context of the subject matter of the book.]

Adhān	The summons to prayer.
ahl-i Kitāb	People of any religion which derives its sanction from a revealed scripture.
āindār	One skilled in the law; an officer.
akhbār navīs	A writer of news; an informer.
āmīl	A superintendant of finance; a collector of revenue.
āmildār	A tax-gatherer.
amīr-i jihād	Commander of the Holy War.
amīr-al muminīn	Commander of the Believers.
aqliyā	Rational.
ashvamedhayajna	The horse sacrifice common among ancient Hindu empire-builders.
bai'ah	Acceptance of the discipleship of a saint.
bīgha	A measure of land.
choghā	A kind of garment.
dahri, dahriyā	An atheist.
dār-al amn	A country of peace.
dār-al harb	An enemy country (in the religious sense).
dār-al Islām	A Muslim country.
darbār	A court.
daroghā	A superintendant of police; a prefect of a town or village.
dhimmī	A non-Muslim/non-believing subject of a Muslim Government.
faqīr	A beggar; a man who leads a pious life of voluntary poverty.
farāid	Divine commands; religious duties.
fatvā	A judicial decree or judgement; a sentence delivered by a qādī.
firangīs	The Europeans.

ghāsib	A usurper.
ghazal	An ode.
ghāzī	Conqueror who fought, defeated, and killed the infidels.
Ghoshes	Members of a certain caste in Bengal of the last century.
gulfām	The leading character of a play.
gumāshtā	An agent; a factor; an envoy with full powers.
hadīth	The traditional sayings of Prophet Muhammad, which now bear the force of law.
hajj	Pilgrimage to Mecca.
hamd	A poem in praise of God.
ibn-al vaqt	A time-server.
Īd	A Muslim festival.
ijtihād	Exertion with a view to forming an independent judgement on legal questions.
imām	A priest; a leader in religious matters.
imām-al Muslimīn	The leader of the Believers.
jāgīr	An estate.
jāgīrdār	A landlord; one who has been conferred an estate or <i>jāgīr</i> by royal decree.
jamādār	A native officer of the army; the head of a body.
jihād	A war waged by the Muslims against the infidels.
Jumāh	Friday; the special prayers offered every Friday by the Muslims.
kāfir	An infidel.
Khalīfāh	The Caliph.
khās-mahāl	A district under the direct management of the Government.
Khilāfat	Office of the Caliph.
Khilāfat-i Rāshidā	Early successors of the Prophet.
khil'at	A robe of honour with which the ruler confers dignity on a subject.
khutbāh	A religious address; a sermon or oration.
kotwāl	A chief officer of the police with jurisdiction in a city or town.

kulliyāt	The collected works of a poet.
lakhīrājdār	A holder of a division of land.
mā badaulat	The expression used by the rulers to refer to themselves while in conversation with others.
madrasāh	A school or college for diffusing Islamic learning.
malfūzāt	A collection of conversations; sayings; annals.
mansab	Status; dignity; office; ministry.
marsiyyā	Lament or threnody at the death of a friend, relative, or patron. In a special sense it has reference to Al-Husain, his family and followers, and the tragedy of Karbala.
mashghalā-i nausherwānī-o mashghalā-i sultānī	Wajid Ali Shah's pattern of army reorganization.
māsiyat-i kabīrā	A great sin.
masnad	A throne.
mathnavī	A sort of verse consisting of couplets which rhyme regularly.
maulvī	A learned man.
mīr munshī	A head clerk.
muftī	A judge.
Muharram	The name of the first month in the Muslim calendar held sacred on account of the martyrdom of Al-Husain.
muhr	A seal.
muhalla-i qāflā	A house or quarter set apart for the travellers.
muhtasib	A moral censor.
mujāhid	A warrior, especially in the defence of the Faith.
mujāhidīn	Plural of the word "mujāhid".
mukhtār	Absolute; independent; vested with full authority.
mujtahid	A Muslim adult, wise, well acquainted with the meaning of Arabic words and mandatory passages in the <i>Qurān</i> , and

	learned in the traditions of the Prophet.
munsif	A judge; an arbitrator.
musaddas	A hexastich.
naqliyā	Traditional.
namak harām	Disloyal.
namak harām kī havelī	The dwelling-house of a traitor.
namak khvār	Obedient; loyal.
nasārā nikohīdā	Condemned Christians.
nāzim	A governor, a ruler.
nazm	A thematic poem.
nazr	A gift; a present.
necharī	An admirer of worldly things. (This was a nickname given to Sir Saiyyad Ahmad by the orthodox.)
niyābat	Deputyship; vicegerency.
niyāzmand	An humble, indigent petitioner.
pagrī	A turban.
pardāh	A veil, especially the kind worn by Muslim women for modesty.
parganā	A division of a land.
peshkār	A deputy; a manager; an assistant.
peshkash	A present; a tribute.
qādī	A Muslim judge dispensing justice according to the Islamic principles of jurisprudence.
qādī-i lashkar	A military judge.
qasīdā	A panegyric; a eulogy.
Qurān	The Holy Book of the Muslims.
rayīs	A nobleman.
rāj	A government; a regime.
rājā	A ruler.
rastkhez-i bejā	An unnecessary insurrection.
rekhtī	A style of Urdu poetry.
Rohillās	A race which was originally from the Rooh mountains in Afghanistan and which settled down in what is now Western Uttar Pradesh.
sadr-us sudūr	A chief judge.
sadr amīn	A chief commissioner.

salātīn	Princes.
saltanat	A kingdom; kingship.
sanad	The seal of a magistrate; a charter.
sardār	A chief.
sarishtdār	A chief revenue officer.
savār	A horseman; a rider.
sehbandī	A platoon.
sikhān-i nikohīdā	Condemned Sikhs.
sikkā	A coin.
shaikh-al Islām	A title signifying religious leadership in Islam.
shams-al ulamā	The sun among the learned.
Shari'ah	The Islamic way of life.
Shia	A Muslim sect.
shikdār	An officer in charge of collection of revenue in a division of land.
sūbah	A province.
sūbehdār	The governor of a province.
sūfī	A piousman; a mystic.
sultān	A ruler; a king.
Sunnī	A Muslim following one of the four well-recognized schools of jurisprudence.
svadharma	One's allotted duty in the Hindu scheme of things.
svarāj	Self-government.
tahsildār	An officer in charge of collection of revenue in a part of a district.
tālukdār	An estate-holder.
taqrīz	A foreword.
targhib-i Muhammadiyah	The zeal of Muhammad.
tariqāh-i Muhammadiyah	The way of life shown by Prophet Muhammad.
tavakkul	reliance on the Faith; trust in God; resignation to the divine will or destiny.
tibb	Medicine; magic.
tumrī	A style of music.
ulamā	The learned men of Islam; doctors of divinity in Islam.
ustād	A leader; one who has acquired mastery

	over any subject or discipline; a teacher, especially one who teaches music or poetry; a preceptor.
vakīl	A representative; a counsellor at law.
vakf	A religious trust or endowment.
vazīr	A minister.
vizārat	Office of minister.
Viktoriyānāmāh	In praise of Queen Victoria.
zakāt	Alms; a portion of the property of a Muslim which he gives away in charity as enjoined by the <i>Qurān</i> .
zamīndār	A landlord; a landholder.
zindīq	An atheist; an infidel.
zuhr	Midday; the midday prayer.

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